Accelerated Learning Program for Positive Living and United Service

Mid Term Evaluation Review

ACCELERATED LEARNING PROGRAM FOR POSITIVE LIVING AND UNITED SERVICE

MID TERM EVALUATION REVIEW

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ACRONYMS

AL	Accelerated Learning
ALP	Accelerated Learning Program
ALPP	Accelerated Learning Program for Positive Living and United Service Also referred to as ALP - PLUS
ALS	Accelerated Learning Specialist
CAII	Creative Associates International, Inc.
CEO	County Education Office/r
COP	Chief of Party
DEO	District Education Office/r
EMIS	Education Management Information System
IP	Implementing Partner
LRC	Learning Resource Center
LTTP	Liberia Teacher Training Program
M & ES	Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist
MOE	Ministry of Education
NGO	Non-Government Organization
NIMAC	National Informatics and Management Center
NPSCE	National Primary School Certificate Examination
PERP	Primary Education Recovery Program
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
SC - UK	Save the Children – United Kingdom
SWaP	Sector Wide Approach
THINK Inc	Touching Humanity in Need of Kindness
TL	Team Leader
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WAEC	West African Examinations Council

DEFINITIONS

The **Accelerated Learning Program (ALP)** was developed for and implemented in Liberia starting in 1998. Its goal is to meet the educational needs of primary school drop-outs, and over-aged children and youth, by enabling them to complete their primary education in three years; it is also hoped to prevent further civil wars by engaging young people in schooling. ALP is implemented in ten counties of Liberia by a variety of Implementing Partners (IPs)/Non-governmental organizations (NGOs), including Creative Associates International, Inc. (CAII).

The **Accelerated Learning Program for Positive Living and United Service (ALPP)** was introduced by CAII in October 2006 under contract to the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). It builds on the ALP and emphasizes the contributions of communities and Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs). It enhances the ALP program through the addition of (i) *Youth classes* whose curriculum includes a Life Skills component, which is intended to help students better understand important matters about living well, and Service Learning in which students perform service to their schools and communities; (ii) *training for PTAs* which helps them (a) understand their rightful role in school management, (b) enhance their self confidence, (c) identify and build on community resources to strengthen school programs, and (d) apply for grants from CAII to assist school programs; (iii) *Learning Resource Centers* (LRCs) in each of six counties which (a) provide in-service workshops, (b) produce learning resource materials, (c) provide a reading room with resource materials to enable teachers, students, education officers, and community members to read and conduct research, (d) provide access to computers to enable computer training and permit access to the internet for research purposes as well as communication through e-mails; (e) provide photocopying and printing facilities for schools and education officers; and (iv) *Small Grants scheme* to allow PTAs, communities and youth to access funding to expand and enhance schools and informal learning sites.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Accelerated Learning Program for Positive Living and United Service (ALPP) commenced in October 2006 and is to continue under its present contract with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) until October 2009. USAID contracted DevTech Systems, Inc. to conduct a mid term review of the program in order to evaluate (i) the extent to which it was meeting its objectives; (ii) the strengths of the program and its impact on communities; (iii) any issues arising which needed resolution; and (iv) possible future directions of the program and/or an alternative program.

The evaluation was carried out between July 14 and November 7, based on (i) a critical review of related reports; (ii) a preparatory workshop to outline the proposed methodology and work schedule and to invite expert appraisal of the plan; (iii) extensive interviews with program administrators at central and county levels; (iv) field visits to each of the six counties in which ALPP is operating where (a) interviews and focus group activities were conducted with Education officers, School Principals, Teachers, and Community Representatives; (b) students of ALP and ALPP were tested in Language Arts and Mathematics at Levels II and III and Grades 3 and 5; and (c) classroom observations of teacher performance and inspection of learning resources were carried out; (v) briefings of USAID officers to discuss findings and recommendations; and (vi) workshop discussion and evaluation with officials of the Ministry of Education (MOE), Participating Partners in the ALP program, and related programs.

The review team spent three months in Liberia, one month of which was spent visiting the six counties where ALPP is implemented: Lofa, Bong, Monteserrado, Maryland, Grand Gedeh and Nimba. A total of 18 school sites were visited, covering the educational programs of Accelerated Learning Program Plus (ALPP), Accelerated Learning Program (ALP Regular), and Conventional Primary School Grades 1-6. In total (i) 806 students were tested in Mathematics and Language Arts; (ii) 39 classroom observations were carried out; (iii) 18 school principals were interviewed and/or were members of a Community Focus Group; (iv) seven County Education Officers (CEOs) and District Education Officers (DEOs) were interviewed and/or were members of a Community Focus Group; and (v) five community coordinators were interviewed.

In Monrovia, officers in relevant departments of MOE were interviewed: Education Management Information Service (EMIS); Department for Parent Teacher Associations; Accelerated Learning Program Coordinating Unit; Department of Vocational and Technical Education. Officers of Talking Drum Studio and THINK Inc., sub-contractors to the ALPP program, were interviewed, as were officials of the West African Examinations Council (WAEC). Advice and assistance were also obtained from discussions with officers of the Liberia Teacher Training Program (LTTP) and UNICEF.

Meetings were held with senior officers of CAII who provided the team with all necessary documentation.

Throughout the six counties, there is clear evidence of the overwhelming support for the ALPP Regular and ALPP Youth programs, among students, teachers, school principals, education officers, and community representatives (parents and members of PTAs, Youth leaders, and chiefs). They say that the programs are reasonably resourced, they like the student centered style of teaching, the programs provide basic literacy and numeracy, and the Youth classes with their Life Skills and Service Learning components are helping to make their communities more peaceful and better places to live and work. Almost unanimously they ask for the programs to expand their enrollments, and to reach out further to those communities which do not have ALP or ALPP programs. The programs are allowing over-aged students and youth to complete their primary cycle of education and in some cases to continue on to Junior High School.

Tests of students at Levels II and III of this year's program (students who have recently completed one and two years of the program) show that students in general are performing at least as well as those younger students who are following a conventional six year primary cycle of education.

Total beneficiaries of the ALPP Regular program were 16,288 students enrolled in 2007-2008, and 2,649 graduating with a Primary School Certificate in that year. Total enrollments in the ALPP Youth Program were 5,519, with 768 graduating with a Primary School Certificate. Per capita costs of the ALPP, in terms of the targeted number of students are $200 per ALPP student; $124 per THINK Inc. student/beneficiary; and $14 per Talking Drum Studio student.

The issue of the future of the whole ALP program (currently supported by ten NGOs) and ALPP is uncertain. Within the MOE, some would phase the ALP into an Adult Literacy Program, keeping the focus on basic literacy and numeracy and including Life Skills and Service Learning in the curriculum. An important element of this approach is the consideration that it would free up resources to the conventional primary cycle of education which are currently in the ALP. Against this is the current age range of the ALP students (10 – 18 years); they fall into the broad category of being too old to fit easily in with younger students of the conventional primary cycle, and are too young to fit easily into adult literacy classes which are also held of a night time.

A broader policy question on the future of the ALP and ALPP programs relates to MOE policy, plans and commitments, which are ongoing. Work is continuing on the ALP Policy statement; the policy of Decentralization is still in its early stages; a Sector Wide Approach (SWaP) relating to the working relationship between MOE and NGOs is yet to be investigated; the Education Sector Master Plan 2008-2012 is still under development; and details of the Action Plan for Education For All (EFA), setting out how Liberia will meet its target of all children of school age being in primary school by 2015, are still not clear. Until all of these are clarified, the future role of the ALP and ALPP programs in terms of their efficient and effective contribution to basic education will remain uncertain.

Summary of Findings

Community Support and benefits
1. There is overwhelming community support for ALPP and ALP among school principals, teachers, parents, students, community representatives, and education officers.
2. There is significant expectation, if not demand, for the program to continue into the indefinite future, with most respondents hoping it will continue for at least the next five years.
3. The expectation for the program to continue is strongly associated with requests for the program to expand to service more communities.
4. Communities request more classrooms and more teachers in order that those who are eligible for the program, but are not in it, may enroll.
5. ALP is having a positive impact on the teaching styles and performance of teachers in the ALP and ALPP programs, as well as a positive flow on effect on those teachers who are not in these programs.
6. The ALP and ALPP programs are viewed as providing firmer motivation for teachers to attend classes and teach energetically.

ALP Policy: Findings with Recommendations
7. In some schools that the Team observed, ALP classes are replacing conventional primary school classes. Reasons for this include (i) shortage of teachers; (ii) teachers not willing to work two shifts; (iii) insufficient salary for teachers to work both ALP and conventional shifts; and (iv) parents wanting to compress their children's education into three years as this gives more flexibility to children working around the home. The Evaluation Team (Team) suggests that MOE makes clear to all school principals that only those for whom ALP is intended are permitted to be enrolled in ALP classes.
8. ALP policy is that the duration of the course should be equivalent to at least 190 instructional days. The Team saw many instances in the first month of the school year 2008-2009 where students were not being taught because their teachers were absent in Teacher Training Institutes for in-service training. The Team suggests that MOE make every effort to ensure that all classes receive 190 instructional days per year.
9. ALP Program Management Structure includes a National Focal Person, who is to chair bi-weekly coordination meetings to which all relevant stakeholders are to be invited. These meetings do not appear to be held on such a regular basis. The Team suggests that these meetings be held as regularly as ALP policy states.
10. The role and responsibility of the ALP Management Team includes managing ALP related data collection, analysis and reporting. ALP partners provide information concerning all ALP programs to the Ministry's EMIS division using four pages of the regular school reporting format. EMIS developed data files used by the Ministry for various purposes, but the ALP National Focal Person and the partners were unaware of the existence of the files. The Team suggests that the four-page form be reviewed and revised to reflect specific information needs, and that the data be submitted electronically rather than taken from existing data files, reported on paper, and then re-entered.
11. The ALP policies state that placement and entry requirements for Levels II and III are officially based on standard tests in Mathematics and English, but the Team could find no examples of such tests being developed or used. They suggest that such tests be developed with the guidance of the participating partners and the ALP Management Team.
12. There are no Placement and Entry requirements specified for Level I. However, since the entry range of ages and background is very broad, the Team suggests that screening tests be developed which can determine the instructional levels of the enrollees and also be diagnostic.

Student Test Results

13. *Students in the ALP programs scored as well as or better than their counterparts in the conventional programs.* The scores for the youngest students, most of whom are in conventional classrooms, are lower than many of the other age groups, particularly in mathematics. The oldest students who are nearly all in ALP programs had some of the highest mathematics scores but lower language arts scores.

14. *The average language arts scores for students in all programs that were tested –* conventional, CAII ALP regular, ALP regular supported by partners, and ALP youth - *were very low and indicated that many students are unable to read and answer questions from simple passages.* The lack of emphasis on basic reading skills at the entry level to all education programs, whether conventional or ALP, will limit students' ability to successfully continue their educations.

15. *Average scores on the mathematics exams were also very low, though not as low as the language arts scores.* Observations of student work on the mathematics exam at ALP Level II and grade 3 indicated that an extremely high proportion of students are using counting to answer math questions rather than applying arithmetic or mathematics skills. The students were able to solve some of the addition and subtraction questions, but most students in ALP Level III and grade 5 were still attempting to use counting to work multiplication and division problems. Once again, the lack of basic skills will impact the students' ability to be successful in mathematics.

16. There is an assumption that students who enroll in grade 1 or the ALP program know numbers, letters, the alphabet, and other basic information. The testing indicates that *many students lack the basic foundation necessary to successfully learn to read and to do mathematics.*

17. *A gender gap exists between scores for males and females.* At Level II the gap is narrow but it expands at Level III. The proportion of female students is higher at the lower level and in the urban areas.

18. *The scores from students in rural/rural locations were as high as or higher than students in urban areas.* The students in urban/rural settings scored slightly higher than either of the other groups.

19. *On each exam and at each level, a few individual students received excellent scores.* Their work indicated they had somehow obtained the essential skills necessary to do mathematics and be able to read. But it does not reflect a pattern - there are very few of them, and they are scattered across the schools and the counties.

Teacher Performance and Classroom Instruction Findings

20. In general the quality of CAII Regular and Youth instruction surpassed that of Partner ALP Instruction, and all of these surpassed Conventional instruction. ALP teachers are generally providing adequate to good instruction to students when they use the basic methods in which ALPP has trained them. ALPP student-centered values and participatory methodologies are having a positive influence on instructional approaches used in ALPP classrooms. A smaller number of areas of weak instructional performance were also observed.

21. ALPP instruction is rated higher than acceptable in the qualities of: lesson preparation; use of examples; multi-directional communication; teacher delivery and connecting with students; providing student feedback; student-centeredness and validation; student initiation and contribution to classroom discourse; frequency of questions; teacher enthusiasm; teacher encouragement of students; active participation by students, assessment during lessons, and student self-confidence.

22. There is a need to improve ALPP pedagogy and instructional practices of teachers in these qualities: Part of AL lesson cycle (stating learning outcomes and tying lesson to

wider contexts); critical thinking skills; opportunity for reflection; opportunity for creativity and inventiveness; kinds of questions (yes/no vs. open-ended); follow-up and probe questions for new contexts; inquiry, exploration and problem-solving; adequacy of learning resources; initial student motivation, challenge to learn; effective use of group work; effective methods of classroom assessment; and assessment check of each student at end of lesson.

23. Some ALPP students observed in Level I experienced serious difficulty during ALPP Math and Language Arts lessons due to a lack of a foundation of basic academic skills that were expected of entering ALPP students. Such students did not participate in lessons and were often marginalized.

24. The age range of students in ALPP lessons was within the ALPP guidelines based on teacher interviews and informal questioning of students. Students in evening ALPP Youth classes were noticeably older, more mature, and carried adult responsibilities (jobs and families, including bringing children to school with them).

25. Teachers and School Principals gave enthusiastic endorsement of ALPP instructional approaches.

26. Those teachers who were able to participate in the Talking Drum programs were usually satisfied with the content and delivery mode as a component of their professional development, but expressed a desire for traditional training and workshops as well.

27. Almost all teachers expressed concern that insufficient or no textbooks were provided for students and found it very difficult to access the teaching and learning resources provided by Learning Resource Centers.

Summary of Recommendations

Further Policy and Planning Considerations

The current and future operations of the ALP and ALPP programs can only be determined in the light of the following education policies and plans. The Team understands that MOE is committed to these, and underline suggests that high priority be given to their completion, by MOE and potential donor partners.

1. *Education For All (EFA).* ALP and ALPP needs to be considered in the context of Government commitments to its EFA agreement, whereby all children aged 6-12 years will be in school by 2015. The Action Plan to meet these commitments will include targets by calendar year, age of students, grade, gender, district, and county; it will present an analysis of progression, repetition, and drop-out rates and measures to reduce these; it will identify resources needed such as teachers, classrooms and schools, and teaching and learning resources; it will be based on research to include school mapping. Until this plan is completed, the potential value of the contribution of the ALP and ALPP programs, in providing education to those who might otherwise not receive any schooling, will remain uncertain.

2. *Education Sector Master Plan 2008-2012.* The Team also understands that work is continuing on this plan. The plan should assist in clarifying how MOE sees the role and future of the ALP and ALPP programs, in terms of (i) their possible future continuity; and (ii) their possible phasing into adult literacy and/or vocational and technical education programs.

3. *ALP Policy Statement*. Work is continuing on this document. It sets out clearly the purpose, principles, and practices of the ALP program, and is very ambitious in setting standards for the Management and Structure of the program at national, county, district, and school levels. The Team <u>suggests</u> that capacity building is needed at each level if the ALP program is to be delivered to the standards desired. Additionally, much more input is needed into school resources if ALP programs are to provide for "group work, individual work, a variety of instructional situations and areas for environment and active learning (such as artwork, model making, sports, science experiments, drama, etc)".

4. *Policy of Decentralization*. The Team understands that MOE is committed to developing a policy of decentralization, whose fundamental aim is to improve access to quality education for school age children. Such a policy needs to be based on a program of strengthening school-based management and community participation. This program includes developing capacity at county, district and school levels in planning and management of human, financial and physical resources. The possible role of NGOs/IPs and the contribution of ALP and ALPP under this policy of decentralization should become clear once the policy is more developed.

5. *Sector Wide Approach (SWaP)*. The Team has been told that UNICEF will provide the services of a consultant to work on a Sector Wide Approach (SWaP) to education, commencing in the first half of 2009. Under SWaP implementing partners acknowledge in practical ways the responsibility and management of MOE, such as committing to common data collection, common reporting formats, common reporting time frames, and pooling their resources (including financial) to be managed in partnership with MOE. Once work on this commences, the possible role and contribution of NGO IPs in the future of ALP program will be clearer.

Operational Units in MOE

6. *ALP Unit*. The unit is operated by an ALP Management Team, headed by a National Focal Person. In terms of its role and responsibilities to the national ALP program and all the ALP IPs (coordinate, collaborate, monitor, supervise, facilitate, manage), the unit appears overstretched in relation to numbers of staff and resources. The Team <u>suggests</u> that capacity building of the unit is required, in order to strengthen it in such areas as record collecting, record analyzing, monitoring and evaluation.

7. *Capacity Building of the Research and Planning Unit*. The Team <u>suggests</u> that the Research and Planning Unit of MOE be strengthened in its capacity for policy development and planning, as well as in its operational capacity. This will further assist in identifying options and priorities for the future of ALP and ALPP.

Student Testing: Recommendations

8. *Learning Standards*. That measurable standards be established for what a student should know and be able to do at the beginning and ending of each ALP level, with emphasis on the beginning of Level I. The curriculum speaks to outcomes and skills for each lesson but does not identify what a student should know or how it could be measured when a student completes each level of the program.

9. *Student placement process*. That screening instruments be developed for students entering the ALP program, no matter what the level, to assure that they enter with the necessary skills to allow them to be successful at that level. Because many of the classes are large and attendance may be somewhat erratic, it is essential that students have acquired a foundation prior to the introduction of materials that build on expected skills. A

screening instrument to be used by all ALP programs could be developed that would identify the level of knowledge of at least the most basic and necessary skills. A similar instrument could also be developed to determine if students are ready to move to the next level.

10. *Basic skills program.* That a pre-program be established for students entering ALP with no previous educational experience or with brief or distant experience. The pre-program would include an assessment (screening) for all students to determine if they have the skills necessary to enter the regular program and at what level. The program would be associated with Level and could be designed as the initial four or five-week foundation or a review of the basics that might be expected if a student had the opportunity to attend a pre-primary program: the alphabet, writing and recognizing letters, learning and recognizing numbers, recognizing shapes and colors, and learning simple words.

11. *Female teachers.* That there be a continued emphasis on recruiting women into teaching. Role models are likely to help keep the female students in school and provide them with examples of what they might do with an education.

12. *Available reading materials.* That reading materials be introduced into the classrooms, even if just for the class period. Although there may not be enough books to go around, a set could move from school to school and be used during the class period and collected at the end to be used the next day, or to be taken to another school. Teachers might be encouraged to read stories to the students so they could begin to learn the pleasures of reading. Students will not learn to read if they have nothing to read.

Recommendations for Pedagogy, Instructional Methods and Teacher Support

13. A major restructuring of students' entry into ALPP Level I should be developed, including a common assessment system across all ALPP programs to distinguish between those students who have no or very low prior academic skills and those who have minimal or moderate skills. A two-level entry system accompanied by appropriate new curriculum that better serves the novice Level I learner, and accompanying teacher preparation should be designed to better accommodate both groups.

14. Teacher preparation and training for ALPP Levels I, II and III should embrace instruction of students in skills of wider, more in-depth comprehension, application of skills to practical and community life, critical thinking skills, and extending knowledge to new areas beyond the immediate classroom.

15. A major increase in quantity and variety of instructional resources should be provided to schools and teachers, particularly including official textbooks and other reading material, more paper, pictures and graphics, and more hands-on and concrete materials. Teachers should be trained in how to use these materials and how to develop improvised materials from the local environment and community.

16. Additional in-service training for all ALPP teachers in various instructional methodologies should be developed. Specifically teachers need to understand better how to implement group work, complex problem-solving, critical thinking, student reflection and creativity, and how to use improvised instructional materials, develop real-life applications for academic skills, and conduct student assessment (see 17).

17. Teachers need to learn to design and conduct continuous assessment during lessons that corresponds with performance-based outcomes for the lesson. They should be trained in techniques of monitoring individual students on a daily basis for

accomplishment of specific academic skills associated with the lesson and in re-teaching students who do not learn the skills. Teachers also need to learn to understand and use good assessment practices, how to keep good assessment records, and how to use assessment to track their overall success in helping students learn.

18. Training for ALPP teachers should be gradually merged with certification standards for all teachers in Liberia. However, emphasis should be placed on flexible access and distance learning so that highly rural teachers can participate without encountering difficulties do to location and scheduling. Direct involvement of the Learning Resource Centers and use of technology-based modes such as Talking Drum Studio's professional development system or similar methods should be explored. Linkages to other teacher training initiatives (e.g. LTTP and university programs) should also be investigated.

19. Because the monthly stipend for ALPP teachers is significantly lower than that of other teachers and good teachers may be lost, the incentives for ALPP teachers should be increased immediately.

20. ALPP should be applied on a wider scale through Liberia, bringing it to counties that currently do not offer it. The dysfunctional effects of Liberia's civil war are still apparent throughout the country and are referenced in almost every conversation. There remain many persons, particularly those in other counties, who have yet to benefit from ALPP's outreach and approaches to war-affected persons. If this expansion occurs, a broader management system should be implemented, including either building additional LRCs or more focused outreach by the LRCs to neighboring counties. Appropriate expansion of flexible and accessible teacher training activities and instructional resources and materials should accompany this extended program.

21. ALPP pedagogy should continue to address core academic subjects. However, ALPP should also become a program component within the Vocational-Technical education system where applications to TVET scenarios and job skills, as well as hands-on methodologies for learning academic subjects would fit naturally within ALPP instruction (see Recommendation 14).

22. Talking Drum Studio programs should be disseminated more widely using cassettes and cassette players that are currently being distributed to provide access to all ALPP teachers.

23. The experience and expertise of THINK, Inc. should be extended to interested community leaders, parents and ALPP school staff wherever these persons have indicated an interest, perhaps through a series of demonstration workshops in the LRCs, followed by individual mentoring visits to rural schools and communities.

24. The functioning of the LRCs should be reviewed in light of their goals to provide direct services to teachers and schools. New planning and operations should particularly focus on and embrace the needs of rural schools.

Potential Follow-on Activities

Two potential follow-on activities have been identified. They both address the issue of student assessment, for the purpose of (i) strengthening classroom teachers' knowledge of the principles and practices of student testing; (ii) familiarizing teachers with the elements of higher levels of knowledge to guide them in their teaching and testing: Knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation; (iii) enabling teachers to design and administer tests for formative and summative assessment of students; (iv) providing on-going in-service training of classroom teachers.

The proposal to establish an Examinations Unit within MOE aims to set up the unit with the capacity, expertise and mission to provide school based training and support to classroom teachers so they can administer, analyze and act upon the results of their classroom tests. Such support would strengthen the system of School Based Assessment (SBA), which is a means of providing both diagnostic and performance assessment reports rapidly, directly, efficiently and effectively to students and their parents.

The proposal to develop an ALP entry level program to assess and develop the basic academic pre-skills necessary for success in the Accelerated Learning Programs addresses the need for (i) identifying measurable expectations for what students should know and be able to do for entry and exit from each of Levels I, II, and III of the ALP programs, (ii) the development of screening instruments to identify the extent to which students have acquired the required knowledge and skills; (iii) a pre-program to prepare students with the learning necessary to attain success in the ALP program; and (iv) materials and teacher training to provide appropriate instruction.

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FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Background: Purpose, Objectives, and Methodology of the Mid-Term Review

Purpose

The *purpose* of this mid-term review was to determine the level of achievement of the goal, objectives, and targets of the ALPP, including a comparison with the Accelerated Learning Program (ALP) and the conventional primary education program.

Objectives

The *objectives* of the mid-term review were to determine the level of ALPP success by (a) assessing learning outcomes of ALP students to determine the effectiveness of the program; (b) assessing performance of ALP teachers to determine if training has a long-term impact on their teaching skills and ability to provide quality instruction; (c) assessing impact of ALPP activities in target counties; (d) assessing ALP students by age to ensure appropriate targeting of the Age-factor in the determination of student learning achievement level; (e) providing a common monitoring tool and reliable database to obtain information about quality implementation of the ALP/ALPP; (f) scaling up ALP/ALPP to cater to high enrollments and youth preparation; and (g) determining the contributions of the ALPP sub-contracts to the achievement of the overall goals and objectives of the Program.

Methodology of the Mid-Term Review

The methodology of the mid-term review consisted of (i) a survey of relevant documents; (ii) meetings with representatives of key stakeholders in the ALPP program; (iii) development of a draft Inception Report which set out the objectives of the study, its proposed methodology, its schedule of activities, and its anticipated outputs and outcomes; (iv) conduct of a workshop for all stakeholders to review the draft Inception Report and provide expert advice on the next stages of development of the study; (v) preparation of interview, focus group, and student assessment instruments; (vi) conduct a pilot study of three schools to test the interview and focus group instruments; (vii) preparation of a list of school sites for the survey, taking into account their characteristics in terms of programs offered, the agency conducting the program, whether the sites were Urban, Urban/Rural, or Rural/Rural, and their reasonable accessibility; (viii) conduct a survey of the school sites over the period September 8-October 1; (ix) entering data from the student assessments, classroom observations, and survey and analysis of the data; (x) preparation of the draft Final Report; (xi) conduct workshops of stakeholders and briefings for USAID; (xii) and preparation of the Final Report in the light of comments from stakeholders and USAID.

Photo 1 Evaluation Team in the field[1]

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[1] Left to Right: Mr. Peabody, driver; Mr. Quayeson; Mr. Dahn, Mr. Colley, driver, kneeling; Dr. Nielson; Mr. Bowman; Dr. Prince; Mr. Karnga; Dr. Coyne.

Findings on the Status of Project Implementation and its Impact

Objective 1: Assess Learning Outcomes of ALP Students to Determine the Effectiveness of the Program

Assessment Methodology

Assessment instruments in mathematics and language arts were developed for ALP Levels II and III. Both tests were administered to 806 students in September and early October of 2008. Tests were administered in schools in the six counties where Creative Associates supports ALP regular and ALPP youth programs: Bong, Grand Gedeh, Lofa, Maryland, Montserrado, and Nimba. To provide comparative data the tests were also administered to students in grade 3 (compared with CAII ALP Level II regular and youth programs) and grade 5 (compared with CAII ALP Level III regular and youth programs) and to students in ALP partner programs. Even with careful planning, the issues of difficult access, short time frame, and time of year (beginning of school year, rainy season, number of programs offered at a single site) combined to prevent selection of a true stratified sample.

Because this assessment took place at the beginning of the school year, the tests were designed to assess learning outcomes that could be expected after completion of Levels I and II. Students who had just begun Level I were not tested since they were in the first few weeks of the program. In one instance the Team was incorrectly guided to testing a grade 6 classroom and those results were also analyzed.

The exams were designed to assess proficiency in specific skills, for example: subtraction, division, use of pronouns, comprehension. Students were asked to apply their knowledge by working problems and answering questions rather than selecting an answer from among several choices. The items were developed after examination of the ALP curricula, syllabi, teacher's manuals, Liberia's conventional classroom textbooks, and prior exams given to Liberian students. A team of five Liberians with experience in both ALP and testing reviewed the items and provided constructive criticism. Their concerns and suggestions were incorporated into the design of the test and the process for administration. Two Liberian college graduates who were also graduates of the UNDP national volunteer program were trained to administer the exams to students to assure consistency and student understanding during test administration.

The assessment instruments, instructions for administration, and purpose for testing are explained in detail in the Technical Discussion of the Student Testing Program in the Appendix. The extent of the testing is showing in Table 1.

Table 1. Number of students tested by subject, level and county

Students Tested with both Mathematics and Language Arts Exams								
Location for Testing	**Number**	**Conventional**		**ALP Regular**		**ALPP Youth**		
County	**Programs**	**3**	**5**	**II**	**III**	**II**	**III**	**Totals**
Lofa County	4	21	20	61	58	0	0	160
Nimba County	3	20	20	0	0	41	40	121
Bong County	3	0	0	60	60	0	0	120
Montserrado County	2	20	20	20	21	0	0	81
Maryland County	5	20	20	43	38	29	26	176
Grand Gedeh County	3	20	20	38	23	23	24	148
Totals	20	101	100	222	200	93	90	806

Test Results

The testing focused on key skill areas that were identified as critical to the learning processes introduced at the next level. At Level II and grade 3, the majority of the students could not independently read a short passage and answer any of the questions. Those same students did addition and subtraction by either counting on their fingers or making hash marks on paper. By Level III and grade 5 the lack of basic reading and mathematics skills placed considerable limitations on the students' academic progress. Students cannot comprehend written material if they are unable to read. And they cannot multiply and divide if they have not learned to add and subtract.
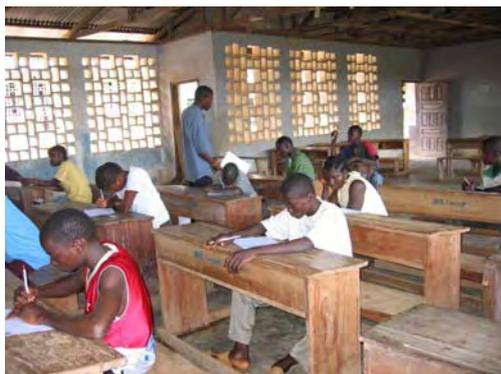
Photo 2 Student Testing

An examination of individual scores indicated some students had high overall scores. However those students were scattered across counties, ages, levels, and locations and were not concentrated in any area. Somehow they had obtained skills that allowed them to be successful on the exams, even though the majority of the students did not show evidence of those basic skills.

Average test results were quite low – 44 percent correct in Mathematics and Language Arts at Level II and grade 3, and 27 percent correct in Mathematics and 28 percent correct in Language Arts at Level III and grade 5. Overall achievement scores assist with understanding the effectiveness of a program, but valuable details hide within those averages. More important information was obtained from analysis of specific skills and groups of students. The overall test results were analyzed in a variety of ways – by program, subject, age, gender, and locale (urban, urban/rural, and rural/rural). Comparisons were made between students in conventional classrooms, ALP Regular program served by CAII, ALP regular programs served by other NGOs, and ALPP Youth programs. When scores were examined using those groupings, some major discoveries came to light.

The overall scores for ALP students were as good as or higher than the scores for students in conventional grades 3 and 5. The scores for the youngest students, most of whom are in conventional classrooms, are lower than many of the other age groups, particularly in mathematics. The oldest students, most of whom are in ALP programs, had some of the highest mathematics scores but lower language arts scores.

There is a slight gender gap at ALP Level II and grade 3 with boys scoring 4 percentage points higher than girls. The gap widens to a 9 and 10 point difference between girls and boys at Level III and grade 5.

The average scores for students in rural/rural locations are higher in mathematics than the scores for students in urban areas. The rural/rural scores in language arts are lower than urban, and the urban/rural students' scores were the highest in all four exams.

There were major discoveries in both the language arts and mathematics areas. Because students had to work problems and write in answers, instead of selecting one of four choices, the skill areas could be examined and problem items identified and analyzed. In language arts, 60 percent of the students at Level II and grade 3 were unable to answer any of the four simple questions about the short section they had to read on their own. Other portions of the

exam were read to them and their ability to comprehend what was read to them was much better, However, it appears that a large majority of the students who were tested at this level cannot read. The testing for Level III and grade 5 assumed that students could read simple instructions and passages themselves, so only a small portion of the exam was read to them. The overall scores for this level were much lower than at Level II and grade 3. One-third of these students received a zero on the comprehension/reading section of the exam. None of the areas received even moderate scores.

In mathematics, a major discovery came from observing how students worked their mathematics problems on the worksheets they were given. The students in Level II and grade 3 did fairly well in addition and subtraction. However, they were counting, not doing arithmetic or mathematics. They solved even the simplest problems by counting their fingers or using hash marks on paper. That method may work with small numbers like 3 + 5 or 17 - 2 but it will not allow students to move on to more complicated mathematics. By Level III and grade 5 students were inefficiently attempting to use hash marks to solve problems like 750 divided by 50 and 304 times 12.

More detailed information is available in the Technical Discussion of the Test Results in the Appendix.

Community Groups Opinions on Student Learning

Regular Classes. Focus Groups are very pleased with the outcomes of student learning in literacy and numeracy. They speak of students learning to write their own name, of being able to read simple and short sentences. They remark that students speak better English, noting their grammar has improved. They claim that students become able to calculate fractions and proportions in everyday market dealings, and of no longer having to count on their fingers. Community views on student achievements are therefore higher than actual test scores show. Also at issue is whether their expectations will change over time as they perceive that basic literacy and numeracy does not alter their life styles or their employment very much. That is, an investment of three years full time education might not appear to translate into significant changes for the better for them.

Life Skills. Focus Groups report highly favorably on the Life Skills component of ALPP, with many examples of how young people are improving as a result of the intervention. These are: giving a sense of direction and purpose in life; helping to reduce the incidence of public and domestic violence, of drunkenness, of crimes; how to deal with domestic violence; teaching youth how to treat those with HIV/AIDS with respect and kindness; knowing where to go to complain about violations of human rights (e.g. UNHCR).

Youth Classes. ALPP Youth Classes have been in operation for only one full academic year. Focus Groups welcome the curriculum and feel that students, parents, and their communities are benefiting in general ways from the knowledge gained. There are two matters to consider here; (i) knowledge does not necessarily translate into related actions – knowing about family planning, the dangers of smoking, how to eat healthy foods, etc does not always or necessarily mean that students will apply this knowledge; and (ii) it is far too early to judge any medium to long term effects on individuals, families, and the communities.

Objective 2: Assess the Performance of ALP Teachers to Determine if Training has a Long-Term Impact on their Teaching Skills and Ability to Provide Quality Instruction

Lesson Observations to Assess ALP Training Impact on Teachers' Performance and Instructional Outcomes (For details, see Lesson Observations Technical Report, Appendix)

To assess the performance of teachers and the effects of ALPP methodology on students' activities in classrooms, 39 lessons were observed in classrooms in 19 school programs in the six CAII ALPP counties:

<p style="text-align:center">Table 2. Lesson Observations Summary</p>

Program Administration	Program	Level/ Grade	Number of Lesson Observations				
			Math	Language Arts	Social Studies	Science	Total
CAII	ALP Regular	I	1	3	1	1	6
	ALP Regular	II	2	1			3
	ALP Regular	III	3	5			9
						Total CAII Regular =	18
CAII	ALP Youth	I	2	3	1	1	7
	ALP Youth	II					
	ALP Youth	III		1	1		2
						Total CAII Youth =	9
ALP Partners	ALP Regular	I	2	2	1		5
	ALP Regular	II					
	ALP Regular	III	1	1			2
						Total ALP Partners =	7
MOE	Conventional	1	1				1
	Conventional	2	1	1			2
	Conventional	3		1			1
	Conventional	4-5				1	1
						Total MOE Conventional =	5
	Total Lessons		13	18	6	2	39

While the majority of observations were of ALPP Regular (18) and Youth (9) lessons (totaling 27 lessons), a small number of ALP Partner lessons (7) and MOE Conventional lessons (5) were also observed to provide comparison and perspective. Since CAII ALPP was the focus of the study, fewer observations of Partner and Conventional lessons were conducted and the study did not evaluate the non-CAII programs. Observations included the three Levels I, II and III of CAII ALPP and ALP Partners and Grades 1, 2, 3 and 4-5 of Conventional schools. Subjects observed featured Language Arts and Mathematics, the main focus of the student assessment, and occasionally a few Science and Social Studies lessons were which were also beneficial for studying teachers' performances.

Lessons in this study are viewed as *opportunities for both teaching and learning*. Variables include communication interactions and dynamic exchanges *between and among* teachers, students, resources, and even the physical classroom environment that have the potential to produce learning, knowledge and skills in students, rather than one-sided teacher performances, "delivery" of content, uni-directional transmission of information, or use of teaching techniques as isolated entities. Nevertheless, teachers' primary role and responsibility for creating effective instruction is reflected in the analysis of these lessons.

Lesson Observations Variables and Lesson Observation Instrument
Thirty-two lesson variables are expressed as rubrics of lesson attributes that are desirable for generating learning in each student, within seven broad categories: 1. Teacher Organization; 2. Teaching/Learning Effectiveness; 3. Communication and Interaction Dynamics; 4. Questions, Inquiry and Investigation; 5. Learning Resources; 6. Learner Participation and Engagement; and 7. Student Assessment and Evaluation. In addition a simple checklist of 64 items was used to document the presence of specific instructional methods, resources, and student support activities without rating these.

The MTR Lesson Observation Form developed for the Mid-Term Review (Appendix) consists of 32 variables selected for their relevance to the ALPP program (for example, AL cycle,

student-centeredness, learning resources, student participation and engagement, and student assessment). Some variables have been used previously in lesson observations in Namibia, Uganda, and rural areas of the United States. This combination of variables was chosen to provide a diagnosis of instructional effectiveness in classrooms where limited resources exist but education nevertheless has the potential to succeed, rather than in high-resourced schools where comparisons would be unrealistic and unfair.

Observation and Analysis Procedures
During each lesson, detailed observations were made of basic class makeup (size, gender and approximate age), instructional activities and incidents, teachers' presentations, and students' responses. Hand-written notes and scores on instructional performance and effects on students ranging from 1 (weak or low) to 2 (adequate or acceptable) to 3 (strong or high) were used to document significant events and outcomes during lessons. Upon completion of all observations, the average scores across all lessons for each variable and for the seven broad categories were used to identify lessons that exemplified strong, adequate and weak pedagogical practices. The notes that matched these scores were then located on the original Lesson Observation Forms to examine specific lesson practices that contributed to the score. Thus, effective and ineffective instructional practices that were actually observed have been highlighted to give documentation for the recommendations that are proposed in Recommendations section of the report.

Results of Instructional Performance
In general, on scores for lesson variables, Regular ALPP and Youth ALPP instruction scored higher than Partner ALP instruction, and these surpassed Conventional instruction. However, since the main purpose of the study was to understand ALPP pedagogy, fewer observations of Partner and Conventional lessons were conducted and a broad sample of non-ALPP lessons was not observed. The non-ALPP lessons were used only to develop comparisons, not to analyze their own intrinsic instructional merits.

Lesson Observations: Overview of Findings

Class Sizes
The smallest classes observed included 4 students, while the largest consisted of 86 students. This wide range of sizes and averages was seen across all program types however, though ALPP Youth classes were somewhat smaller. Class sizes are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Classes observed by Class size

Organization/Program	Classes Observed	Class Size Range	Average Class Size
CAII ALPP - Regular	18	11 - 72	31.8
CAII ALPP - Youth	9	4 - 25	17.3
CAII ALPP - Total	27	11 - 72	27.0
Partner ALP	7	10 - 41	23.9
MOE Conventional	5	7 - 86	33.2
Total =	39	4 - 86	27.2

Participation of Traditionally Excluded Students

Participation by Students with War-Affected Conditions and Health and Disability Barriers. Students were not systematically surveyed about their backgrounds and many conditions that traditionally might exclude them from participation (for which ALPP provides added solutions), were not visible to the observer (e.g., emotional, health and physical

disability, war-related barriers, previous combatant participation). There did not appear to be any official or unofficial policies in place to exclude such students. In fact, teachers, when interviewed, often cited having such students in their classes and were pleased that ALPP reached out to and included such students. While ALPP students are not charged regular school fees, other costs of attending school (uniforms, books, special fees) may have prevented some from enrolling according to some students who were interviewed. One indication that ALPP is serving war-affected students was that many students in Grand Gedeh and Maryland Counties spoke French as well as English having learned the language while in exile in Cote d'Ivoire (over one-third were counted by the observer in one class).

Participation of Students with Weak Prior Academic Preparation. A wide range of prior learning levels in students who were entering Level I during September and in expectations by teachers and the ALP curriculum was observed. Some Level I students experienced severe learning difficulties during lessons due to an apparent lack of basic academic skills. It appeared that in some schools, entering ALPP students were expected to have already accomplished basic academic skills such as holding pencils, writing letters, using numbers, copying from the blackboard, and understanding simple questions and directions. In only the first or second week of Level I, some lessons (presumably from the ALP teachers' manual) used advanced concepts as manuscript writing in Language Arts and unions and intersections in Math. Students without the necessary skills or understanding did not participate in these lessons and were often bored and distracted by other students, or ignored or marginalized by teachers.

Participation by Age. A quick visual scan of ALPP classes by the observer suggested a wide range of ages among students, including some who appeared to be over-aged, and some who looked younger than the recommended ages for ALPP. However the when observer asked teachers about the age range of their students, and on a few occasions asked each student in a class his or her age, the range of ages cited were within the ALPP guidelines. In some cases, ALPP Youth students who were asked their age were older than 35 (e.g., 42, 65, and 45).

Participation of Persons with Adult Responsibilities. While backgrounds of most ALPP day students were not known, students in evening ALPP Youth classes were noticeably older and more mature, had adult responsibilities such as jobs and families, and were generally more congenial with each other and their teachers. Many brought their children to school with them, some even caring for and feeding them during lessons. Reasons they cited for their participation in ALPP include skills needed for jobs, assuming community and organizational leadership roles, personal academic goals, encouragement to enroll by their family and social development). Teachers spoke of reaching out and encouraging older students to enroll, even when they had children, became pregnant, or lacked sound family support.

Participation by Gender. Total numbers of students observed in lessons by gender were 541 male students to 520 females, totaling 1,061 students. However interesting discrepancies exist. CAII ALPP students included 372 males and 356 females. Males in CAII ALPP Regular classes outnumbered females (339 to 233). However, a notable difference was the total of 123 female ALPP Youth students compared to 33 male ALPP Youth students. Female Partner ALP students outnumbered male Partner ALP students (101 to 66). However these Partner numbers were almost exactly reversed for MOE Conventional students (103 males to 63 females). However, gender imbalances within ALPP classrooms did not appear to affect teachers' ability to address the needs of all students equitably. Table 4 shows gender of students.

Table 4. Gender of students by program

Organization/Program	Total Students	Males	Females
CAII ALPP - Regular	572	339	233
CAII ALPP - Youth	156	33	123
CAII ALPP - Total	728	372	356
Partner ALP	167	66	101
MOE Conventional	166	103	63
Total =	1,061	541	520

Findings of Instructional Performance from Lesson Observations

Since no zero scores were given, a variable that scored an average of 2 to 3 represents a range of adequate to high performance, while a variable score of 1.9 to 1 represents inadequate to poor performance. The findings of the MTR lesson observations indicate that ALPP teachers are generally providing an adequate, good or high level of instruction (2.0 to 3.0) when they use the basic methods for which ALPP has trained them. In general, the ALPP values and methodologies are having a positive influence on several key ALPP instructional approaches used in ALPP classrooms. Several areas of weak instructional performance were also highlighted which deserve special attention, especially in light of poor student performance on the academic tests administered by the MTR team.

Lesson Observation Variables with High Scores. In ALPP lessons, 22 of the 32 variables averaged 2.0 or more compared to 9 variables in ALP Partner lessons, and none in Conventional lessons. Among these, 13 of the 22 variables in CAII ALPP lessons received scores that were well above adequate (2.3 or over). These variables are closely linked to ALPP's student-centered and participatory philosophy promoted in ALPP teacher training. They support the finding that ALPP is succeeding in many of its pedagogical goals. By contrast, only two variables in ALP Partner lessons received at least 2.3 (lesson planning and student-centeredness), and no Conventional lesson variables received 2.3 or more.

Table 5. Lesson Observation Variables with high scores

CAII ALPP Instruction that Scored Considerably Higher than Adequate			
	Var. #	Variable	Score (2.3 or higher)
A. Teacher Organization			
	1.	Lesson planning before class	2.3
B. Teaching / Learning Effectiveness			
	9.	Use of examples and illustrations	2.3
C. Communication and Interaction Dynamics			
	10.	Multi-directional communication	2.4
	11.	Delivery and connecting with students	2.5
	12.	Providing feedback	2.4
	13.	Student-centeredness and student validation	2.6
	14.	Student initiation and contribution to class discourse	2.3
D. Questions, Inquiry and Investigation			
	16.	Frequent use of questions	2.9
F. Learner Participation and Engagement			
	24.	Teacher enthusiasm	2.4

CAII ALPP Instruction that Scored Considerably Higher than Adequate		
25.	Encouragement of students	2.5
26.	Active participation by students	2.4
G. Student Assessment and Evaluation		
29.	Assessment of learning during the lesson	2.3
32.	Student self-confidence as a learner	2.7

Variables with Moderate or Acceptable Scores. Most ALPP variables scored in the "adequate-acceptable-moderate" range of 2.0-2.1. While not entirely detrimental learner success, their development would support improved instruction. Several variables in this moderate range are recommended for creating new awareness among teachers and introducing new concepts for teacher training and support:

Table 6. Lesson Observation Variables with moderate or acceptable scores

CAII ALPP Instruction that Scored Considerably Higher than Adequate		
Var. #	**Variable**	**Score**
A. Teacher Organization		
2.	AL Cycle (AL sections: big picture, statement of outcomes, and review	2.1
3.	Timing and pacing	2.0
D. Questions, Inquiry and Investigation		
15.	Source of questions (teacher vs. student ask)	2.1
F. Learner Participation and Engagement		
22.	Student motivation, challenge and reason to learn	2.1
G. Student Assessment and Evaluation		
31.	Student self-knowledge and awareness of own learning accomplishment	2.1

Variables with Weak or Exceptionally Low Scores, ten variables that were scored between 1.0 and 1.9 highlight a need for special consideration for improving ALPP pedagogy and instructional practices of ALPP teachers. (By contrast, 22 Partner ALP variables and all of the Conventional variables scored between 1.0 and 1.9, indicating ALPP's relative strength compared to other programs).

Table 7. Lesson Observation Variables with weak or very low scores

CAII ALPP Instruction that Scored Lower than Adequate		
Var. #	**Variable**	**Score (1.0 – 1.9)**
B. Teaching / Learning Effectiveness		
6.	Cognitive level of learning. Use of critical thinking skills	1.9 (Youth only)
7.	Opportunity for thoughtfulness, reflection and deliberation	1.1
8.	Opportunity for creativity and inventiveness	1.2
D. Questions, Inquiry and Investigation		
17.	Kinds of questions (yes/no vs. open-ended)	1.9
18.	Follow-up, extension, probe questions for new contexts, and applications	1.8

CAII ALPP Instruction that Scored Lower than Adequate			
	19.	Inquiry, exploration, discovery and problem-solving	1.1
E. Learning Resources			
	20.	Adequacy of resources	1.0
F. Learner Participation and Engagement			
	22.	Initial motivation and reason to learn. Challenge to students.	1.8 (Youth only)
G. Student Assessment and Evaluation			
	26.	Effective methods of classroom assessment	1.6
	30.	Assessment check at end of lesson	1.8

Examples and illustrations of how strong and weak variables actually appeared during lessons, showing details of activities, interactions and incidents of both teachers and students, appear in the Technical Report in the Appendix.

Implications from Lesson Observations for Instructional Practices
Lesson observations indicate that the ALPP philosophy and much of what occurs in ALPP teacher training has had a positive impact on ALPP teachers who then practice these in their lessons. ALPP lessons are lively, interactive, student-centered, and seldom boring. Most ALPP teachers adequately prepare their lessons in advance and use most (though not all) of the AL lesson cycle components advantageously. Noteworthy are their consistently high scores for the Communication and Interaction Dynamics variables demonstrated in the multi-directional qualities of classroom communication, students' ability to initiate and contribute to the classroom discourse, and the constructive feedback for both success and errors given to students. Teachers' verbal delivery techniques were usually strong and enthusiastic, lending encouragement and validation to students, and resulting in active student participation and apparent student self-confidence in their own ability to learn. One of the most pervasive routines in classroom discourse was the frequent use of questions which were intended to activate oral responses from the entire class. During the lessons, teachers frequently assessed the class verbally as a whole soliciting a chorus of identical responses from students as indication of accomplishment of learning. These lesson qualities are commendable as far as they go. They make learning a positive experience for students and are certainly preferable to the weaker, often less interactive practices seen in many of the ALP Partner and Conventional lessons.

However, several ALPP variables that averaged below the 2.0 level point to weak or dysfunctional instructional practices that should be addressed. These practices are particularly relevant in light of difficulties that many students experienced when taking the Student Assessment Tests (Appendix). Interestingly, most of the low-scoring variables are actually associated with the positive variables that are strong, but do not go far enough to make a real difference in student learning. The high-scoring variables are valuable in themselves and create energetic lessons, but fall short at five critical junctures related to assuring true academic accomplishment:

1. A misconception that all students in Level I enter with the same academic background and preparation when, in reality, students have significantly different levels of prior learning accomplishment.
2. A serious deficiency in classroom resources and materials beyond the blackboard, chalk and copybooks, plus only occasional dealing with this insufficiency by teachers.
3. A lack of wider contexts and practical applications for students to learn skills and acquire knowledge that is relevant to their home life, job, future career, and

community environment. Lack of knowledge that becomes useful, versatile and enduring.

4. A failure to take students beyond the immediate prescribed skills and content of the teacher manual and challenge them to use higher levels of processing information; to apply critical thinking, creativity and reflection skills; to solve complex problems; and to "think outside the box." These are largely mental activities that can be accomplished even in low-resourced classrooms.

5. Inadequate assessment tied to the performance outcomes of lessons to determine each student's progress or lack of learning on a continual, daily basis.

Focus Groups and Individual Interviews to Understand the Impact of ALP Pedagogy and Student Learning

During the Team's visits to schools, both focus groups and individual interviews were used to elicit perspectives on ALPP. Since the assortment of ALPP participants and stakeholders available for these interviews was irregular, the Team used all opportunities to interview a variety of persons both individually and in groups, including teachers, principals, community leaders, LRC Training Officers, and Youth students. Twenty-five interviews of individuals and groups with various responsibilities and relationships to ALPP instruction were conducted, some with the assistance of Liberians who assisted with dialect interpretation. Highlights of information gathered from these persons include the following:

Youth Students. ALPP Youth students have both practical and inspirational reasons for making the decision to enroll in ALPP. Many cited the need to learn to read, write or do math in order to enhance their employment potential or to overcome personal academic deficits. Some had lived in exile during the civil war and had not attended school during that period. A few had never been to school before and had been encouraged by their family to enroll. A 47 year old woman was entering a classroom as a student for the first time in her life the night she was interviewed. Many Youth students stated that their own children support them attending the ALPP program. Students proudly cited being able to write their names or handle math in the market for the first time in their lives. Evening Youth students brought their children to school, sometimes caring for them during lessons. Youth students appear very dedicated, one group even continuing to copy from the board during a lesson and another taking assessment tests with flashlights after the generator in one school broke down. Youth students endorsed ALPP and recommended its continuation. Even a student, who had dropped out of ALPP and rejoined Grade 6 because her peers had left, nevertheless endorsed the program.

ALPP Teachers and Principals. Interviews and focus groups with ALPP teachers elicited several strong commonly held positions and experiences. All interviewed felt decisively that ALPP and ALP should continue. They cited their enthusiastic endorsement of the ALPP instructional approaches (particularly student-centeredness, participatory learning, student engagement), the use of the AL lesson cycle, and the use of different learning styles. Several teachers spoke of seeking out prospective ALPP students and ALPP dropouts in the community, going to their homes, and encouraging them to return to school.

Focus groups and interviewees spoke of factors which lessened the impact of ALP pedagogy and of student learning. Almost all teachers expressed concern that insufficient numbers or, in some cases, no textbooks were provided for students. Some teachers said they did not have a complete set of textbooks even for themselves for preparing lessons. Teachers spoke of improvising to augment their limited teaching resources, and a few said they used the ALPP kits. However most were greatly concerned about the lack of teaching resources. Another key concern of teachers was their low incentive pay of only $15 per month. Most

cited the unfairness of this salary compared to higher salaries given to Conventional teachers. Numerous teachers also expressed concern that no certificate was awarded to them after completing their ALP training mandatory of all ALP and ALPP teachers. Most teachers also requested more teacher training, some saying they had had no additional refresher training since the opening ALP training. Some suggested learning more of the Accelerated Learning (AL) cycle, while others asked for more subject knowledge. LRC Training Officers said they go out in the field to visit schools and observe and mentor teachers using an ALPP checklist, though this travel to rural areas is logistically difficult. This practice apparently does not reach teachers frequently and some teachers not at all. Some teachers participated in the Talking Drum programs and usually were satisfied with their content. Some said they could not receive the broadcasts in their villages. Teachers are eager for additional training and support. A series of recommendations are set out in this report to address these limiting factors.

LRC Training Officers. Interviews with LRC Training Officers revealed concerns that many teachers are not accessing the LRCs as intended, and do not use them to support their planning and instruction. While teachers are encouraged to use the LRCs, they are located in the urban centers of counties where CAII may not operate ALPP programs. The predominant use of LRCs seems to be by community persons and NGO staff from the urban community who wish to access the Internet and library; this is a commendable use, but one that does not serve rural teachers. Yet the resources and equipment available at LRCs are very much needed by teachers in rural schools where materials, books and other supplies are not readily obtainable. Distance also prevents much teacher training from taking place in the LRCs. One Training Officer noted they were arranging a reading contest for young persons to increase use of the LRC library.

Community Groups. Community groups were highly supportive of ALPP and identified many benefits to families and the community. The perspective of community persons and parents focused on the involvement of ALPP in solving home and community problems. Feeling happy about ALPP was a common expression. Community groups stated that before ALPP, young persons didn't have a chance to succeed, and that ALPP was a real opportunity for them. Before ALPP, one PTA chairman observed that people were ashamed to come to school because of their age. Now ALPP teaches them that they can stand before an audience, freely talk and not be ashamed. They also cited better behavior in a girl who was arrogant before she started ALPP. They told of a boy who always stayed out of the house late at night. Before ALPP, some students were involved in street fighting and hostile and aggressive behavior, including stealing. Now these persons show positive behavior and have become serious students. In the past, according to community members, when they did not attend school, these students felt left out and were embarrassed to learn, but now they use the same books as Conventional students and age doesn't matter to them.

Community groups noted with pride that mothers and pregnant women can attend school as well. They reported that teachers encourage these students to attend, saying that it is not impossible for them to come to school, that there is room for them. A combined group of community members and teachers suggested that a solution for mothers would be having a child care center for children adjacent to the school. Another community group recommended feeding children in the community so that mothers would attend school and not stay home if their children were hungry.

According to community groups, students' new academic skills include calculating money at the market, and understanding their children's education as they learn reading, writing and doing calculations. This community group also cited the need for textbooks. Some community members thought ALPP should provide job skills as well, but they also noted that most want to continue their education to junior high schools. They suggested that both job

skills and academic skills could be learned together. Vocational skills such as carpentry and agriculture should be taught to students and should include academic as well as vocational skills and the teaching of life skills.

Objective 3: Assess The Impact Of ALPP Activities In Target Counties

Pilot program. Among Community Representatives, a common view was that the ALPP program had completed only its second year of operations, so the full number of potential students and graduates had not yet been reached. Several speakers therefore spoke of the need to view the first three years of ALPP as a pilot program, from which lessons could be learned and the program strengthened. They also expressed the hope that the program might be extended and expanded.

Photo 3 Community Focus Group

Impact

Life Skills. The Life Skills program is intended to help students better understand important matters about living well. These matters are (i) deciding what type of job or career they want; (ii) finding a job or starting a business of their own; (iii) knowledge of and using family planning; (iv) knowing about and protecting against HIV/AIDS; (v) knowing about good health and nutrition; (vi) knowing about the dangers of drugs and smoking; (vii) knowing how to avoid conflict, how to work towards peace and harmony, how to be a good citizen in Liberia; (viii) knowing how to protect against child abuse, home violence, rape; and (ix) understanding voting and citizenship rights and responsibilities.

Schools and community groups reported that the program is in only its second year. In addition, the skills are intended to have a long term rather than immediate impact. But community representatives (including parents and youth representatives) report favorably on the program's objective and its content, and some feel they can discern some early benefits of the program. Informants speak of the program in terms of (i) giving a sense of purpose and direction in life; (ii) making youth aware of where and how to complain to authority (such as approaching UNHCR for assistance); (iii) teaching youth to treat those with HIV/AIDS with respect and kindness in their sickness; and (iv) the skills helping to reduce the incidence of conflict, of public and domestic violence, street crimes. In terms of helping to decide on job or career orientation or actually finding a job or starting up a business, community representatives thought this would come about only in the most general and indirect ways, through building self-confidence or providing basic skills such as reading, writing, basic arithmetic skills. From this basis youth would be able to continue their current employment such as carpentry but with skills to assist them in running their business.

Service Learning. As a result of the service learning program among youth, community groups identify the following specific activities youth carry out: planting rice for the school; cutting grass; cassava gardening; collecting wood for fences, especially around wells; keeping school grounds clean; cleaning classrooms; cleaning up drains; filling in potholes in roads; and building toilets.

They also spoke of these general results among youth: Being generally more helpful in their community; raising their level of consciousness of their responsibilities to school and

community, and their knowledge and understanding of what they can contribute and how they can contribute; and helping in conflict resolution among people and among communities, instead of going to the police, for example in cases of rape.

Basic Literacy and Numeracy. Focus Groups are very pleased with the outcomes of learning and student achievements in literacy and numeracy. However, their expectations are usually low. They speak of learning to write their own name, of being able to read simple and short sentences, of no longer having to count on their fingers. They remark that students speak better English, noting their grammar has improved. At issue is whether their expectations will change over time as they perceive that basic literacy and numeracy does not alter their life styles or their employment very much. That is, an investment of three years full time education might not appear to translate into significant changes for the better for them.

Confirmation of low levels of expectation in literacy and numeracy came with the testing of ALP students. At Level II in Language Arts, 60 percent of students received a zero on the reading comprehension section, while at Level III one-third of students received a zero on their reading comprehension section. In Mathematics, at Levels II and III, students were still using hash marks or counted on their fingers to perform simple addition and subtraction.

Improved Behavior Patterns. Focus Groups regularly compared the present situation with that during the war years, and how ALP and ALPP has helped to change the situation, from one of violence to one of peace. They say that during the war years many young people did not know how to behave properly towards their parents and relatives, other people of their own age, and children. They instanced such changes in behavior as fetching water from the well without being asked; washing clothes for their mother without being asked; of seeking advice from parents, family members and community elders.

Small Grants Scheme. The scheme operates through the PTAs and training provided to it by CAII. The most common grant is a generator with 10 gallons of fuel and lights for classrooms, to enable Youth Classes to be conducted after sunset. Applications have also been made for seeds and garden tools to establish a school garden which would generate funds to support school activities. While the grants for generators are initially successful, we were sometimes told of (i) the generator needed repairing; and (ii) there was no fuel after the initial 10 gallons had run out. Schools and their PTAs claim they cannot raise funds for these. The team has been advised that the supply of generators was intended as a strategy to get youth classes started. Plans are underway to develop and provide cheap, solar energy powered, sources of lighting for classes conducted at night.

Learning Resource Centers. These are very well resourced, having a well stocked library, computers with internet access, photocopying facilities, and reading room. Staff appear welcoming and competent. The centers are accessed by students, teachers, education officers, and such community members as NGOs. Some provide office space and store rooms for CEOs and DEOs. An issue is the extent of Outreach of the centers. They are located in the capital of each County, but most schools are a long way from the capital, making access for the majority of teachers and students very difficult if not impossible. Some education officers and community members asked if more LRCs could be established in each county, to provide more outreach. This, and "traveling library" buses with resources, could be explored.

Objective 4. Assess ALP Students By Age To Ensure Appropriate Targeting The Age-Factor In The Determination Of Student Learning Achievement Level

ALP appears to be a suitable option for students 15 years and older. Two-thirds of the students tested for this project were in that age group. The Level II testing indicated that 91

percent of the students who were aged 15 or older were enrolled in ALP and 9 percent in grade 3. Level III data showed that 81 percent of those who were 15 or older were enrolled in ALP and 19 percent were in grade 5. Except for some limited circumstances in rural communities, ALP appears to be targeting the older students. Ninety-four percent of the students ages 18 or older were enrolled in ALP programs.

When the test data is analyzed by age, the results are mixed. For students 15 years and older, the average mathematics scores were higher in the ALP regular and youth programs at both Levels II and III than the average scores for conventional grades 3 and 5. In the Language Arts exams the students 15 years and older in the regular ALP programs had scores consistent with the same age group in conventional classes, while the ALP Youth scores were lower.

The oldest group of students scored higher in mathematics than most of the other age groups. Students aged 18 and older in Level II and grade 3 had higher average scores in mathematics than any other age group – and 90 percent of them are enrolled in the ALP programs. In Level III and grade 5 in mathematics that same age group scored slightly above the overall average but not quite as well as some of the other ages – and 97 percent of them are enrolled in the ALP programs. The Language Arts scores presented a different picture. At Level II and grade 3 the average Language Arts score for that age group was somewhat lower than the overall average and lower than most of the other age groups. At Level III and grade 5 the average score was considerably lower than the average and lower than all the other age groups.

The scores for the youngest students – ages 12 and under, most of whom are in conventional classroom, are lower than nearly all the other age groups, particularly in mathematics.

Objective 5: Provide a Common Monitoring Tool And Reliable Database to Obtain Information about Quality Implementation of The ALP/ALPP

Background

As the ALP program is implemented in eleven Liberian counties by ten IPs, collecting and managing information about students, teachers, administration, and programs is critical to current and future programming decisions. An attempt to develop a common ALP reporting process was initiated by the ALP partners in 2006-2007 and was an adaptation of the EMIS report for all schools, utilizing four of the 12 pages required of all schools. The ALP data was extracted from existing partner data files and submitted on paper to MOE, where it was necessary to input the data back into another data file.

The Team found it difficult to obtain a copy of the ALP database. After some searching, the data was found in the EMIS division of MOE, where it has been used for a variety of purposes, but has never been made available to the ALP IPs. The MOE ALP focal person did not appear to be aware of existence of the database. The database has never been verified with the IPs, nor does it distinguish between buildings and programs with different administrators, or provide information relating to the unique features of the ALP programs.

EMIS personnel have developed a well designed coding system for the schools, but they have not shared it with schools or the ALP IPs. EMIS is attempting to improve and expand their data systems, recognizing the need to share the coding systems so that all entities are able to better integrate their data. They also recognize the need to develop more useful and efficient reporting tools.

Capacity Building Workshops:

Understanding the necessity for reliable information about the ALP programs, two capacity building workshops were delivered on October 20 and October 21 to 16 education practitioners. These were the second and third workshops of this kind provided over the course of the evaluation. A previous workshop was held with the six county coordinators of the LRCs to provide them with information about the results of the student testing and classroom observations that had taken place in their counties.

The goals of the two final capacity building workshops were two-fold: (i) to increase the capacity of ALP IPs to develop instructional assessments to collect and use data on ALP student learning outcomes and (ii) to improve the ability to collect, manage and analyze data through improving database skills and developing a common monitoring tool and reliable database for ALP/ALPP programs.

The workshop on October 20 focused on the how and why of student testing, and was presented in three sections. The first emphasized the differences between *achievement testing* that provides a broad understanding of student achievement and *instructional assessment* that evaluates the level of attainment of instruction goals. Participants were involved in discussions related to establishing standards for what students should know and be able to do as well as designing instruments to measure that knowledge. The second section included presentations by the two Liberian enumerators who administered the mathematics and language arts exams to the students. Discussions centered on the importance of uniform administration and observation of student processes. The final section of this workshop examined the results of the testing and the potential for the instruments to be used as prototypes for future ALP instructional assessments.

The Team highly recommends that instructional assessments be developed to determine appropriate instructional levels for students, for use as tools for teachers to diagnose and adapt instruction to respond to students' skill levels, as well as to evaluate the quality of ALPP implementation.

The October 21 workshop was a hands-on workshop aimed at collecting, managing, and analyzing data. Participants expanded their database skills by learning new applications of Excel operations while working on MOE EMIS ALP files that they had not previously seen. Despite concerted efforts to bring together personnel from the various groups involved with the ALP programs, the majority of workshop participants were CAII and LRC employees responsible for program measurement and evaluation, and/or curriculum and instruction. EMIS personnel indicated their intent to attend this workshop but did not appear.

The Team strongly recommends that the ALP Management Team, Implementing Partners, and EMIS personnel undertake a joint effort to develop a more relevant common reporting form that reflects the needs of all involved entities, and that the design allows the data to be submitted in electronic format.

Objective 6: Scale Up ALP/ALPP to Cater to High Enrollments and Youth Preparation

ALP Teacher Education, Training and Certification. ALP guidelines currently recommend that (i) ALP (and therefore ALPP) teachers have post high school experience; (ii) undergo ALP teacher training; (iii) embrace and practice ALP teaching methods; (iv) speak 'standard English' if they teach Language Arts; and (v) if they possess only a high school diploma, pass an MOE test to demonstrate their capability (not required of persons holding a formal

teachers' certification). However, the Team recognizes that these limited qualifications are only recommendations and were introduced to generate an initial supply of ALP teachers soon after Liberia's conflict. They are not to be considered ideal, permanent credentials. In addition, in-service training for ALP and ALPP teachers has often been irregular and inaccessible, even though ALP policy states that teachers should receive refresher training at least twice each academic year, leaving teachers with only limited opportunity to develop professionally beyond their initial level. (However, LRC support and Talking Drum Studio programs provide ongoing limited support, and CAII is offering a new yearlong in-service workshop series beginning in December 2008.)

The Team recommends that ALP and ALPP teacher qualifications should be no less stringent than, and gradually merged with, MOE certification standards for all teachers in Liberia. These should be criterion-based and rigorous, yet implemented gradually in order to be accessible and adaptable to current ALP/ALPP teachers while they continue to teach. New certification policies should include ample opportunity for current ALP/ALPP teachers who have appropriate skills to demonstrate their equivalent knowledge through alternative methods (proficiency testing, portfolio documentation, and on-the-job demonstration of skills, etc.). In-service training content and standards should parallel those of the pre-service program, so that all teachers, whether novice or experienced, eventually accomplish the same formal certification. Flexible access to assure the participation of rural and working teachers, regardless of location and schedule, can be provided through distance learning systems, time-flexible technologies, and alternative delivery modes (e.g., work-place applications using personal mentoring and coaching; and computer and Internet-based learning that builds on the current expertise of the LRCs, Talking Drum Studio, and CAII's teacher support programs).

Teachers currently receive no certificate or formal recognition by the MOE at the end of their ALP training, and many teachers express concern at this practice. Acknowledgment of accomplishment of ALP training through an official certification status should become a regular component of ALPP pre-service and in-service training.

A serious concern among ALPP teachers in all ALPP counties is their monthly stipend, which is significantly lower ($15 per month) than that of other Liberian teachers. It appears that this initial low level was to be increased incrementally but has not been to date. The incentives for ALPP teachers should be adjusted upward as soon as possible to reflect their current equitable contribution to the national education system. A long-range plan that financially rewards the accomplishment of teacher qualifications through new training and demonstrated skills should also be designed and implemented.

ALP/ALPP materials supply, demand and suitability. A severe lack of classroom resources and materials was noted during lesson observations and also documented in teacher focus groups and individual interviews. Textbooks and improvised materials are rarely incorporated into lessons. Just as important, familiar contexts and practical applications from home, community or jobs are seldom used. Instructional content (often from teachers' manuals and intended to be tips for teachers only) that has been written by teachers on the blackboard is copied by students into copybooks, a practice that effectively replaces textbooks in most classrooms. Students almost never read books for pleasure nor reference them for information, nor are audio-visual aids, telecommunication media, computers or the Internet used. While expecting the latter in highly rural, resource-limited areas may be unrealistic, continually setting low expectations for ALPP instructional resources dramatically undermines opportunities for these students to ever achieve parity with their more urban or international counterparts. In addition to providing teacher training in the use of these resources (see Objective 2), a new initiative to purchase and disseminate textbooks and other learning resources on a much larger scale is recommended.

Scaling Up ALPP to Cater to Higher Enrollments. ALPP is performing a unique educational service for populations who were denied education during the war, providing special accommodations such as evening classes, service learning, and life skills curriculum. However these offerings only exist in the six ALPP counties, and even there, only a limited number of students have been able to take advantage of the program to date. There are considerably more persons in Liberia who have the potential to benefit from ALPP, given that the war ended only five years ago and many are still reorganizing and making adjustments to their lives. Five years is actually a short period for social, economic and personal post-conflict recovery.

Scaling up ALPP to a geographically wider scope and extending its duration in time would allow access to similar groups throughout Liberia, not just in the six counties where ALPP currently operates. The potential advantage of ALPP for Liberia's vocational and technical education should also be considered where practical hands-on TVET instruction would benefit greatly from incorporating ALPP's academic approaches, enabling participants to not only gain immediate job skills but academic skills to ensure flexible future employment opportunities. The scaling up process, however, would require training many new teachers, expanding instructional resources, and building new managerial and financial capacity. In the current ALPP program, these concerns are only partially successful at the moment. While these concerns are addressed individually elsewhere in this evaluation, a comprehensive analysis should be conducted to thoroughly study the opportunities and complexities of scaling up and extending ALPP to additional counties, to TVET programs, as well as to additional students within the current ALPP counties.

Recommendations

1. Training for ALPP teachers should be gradually merged with certification standards for all teachers in Liberia. However, emphasis should be placed on flexible access and distance learning so that highly rural teachers can participate without encountering difficulties do to location and scheduling. Direct involvement of the LRCs and use of technology-based modes such as Talking Drum Studio's professional development system or similar methods should be explored. Linkages to other teacher training initiatives (e.g. LTTP and university programs) should also be investigated.

2. Because the monthly stipend for ALPP teachers is significantly lower than that of other teachers and good teachers may be lost, the incentives for ALPP teachers should be increased as soon as possible.

3. ALPP should be applied on a wider scale through Liberia, bringing it to counties that currently do not offer it. The dysfunctional effects of Liberia's civil war are still apparent throughout the country and are referenced in almost every conversation. There remain many persons, particularly those in other counties, who have yet to benefit from ALPP's outreach and approaches to war-affected persons. If this expansion occurs, a broader management system should be implemented, including either building additional LRCs or more focused outreach by the LRCs to neighboring counties. Appropriate expansion of flexible and accessible teacher training activities and instructional resources and materials should accompany this extended program.

4. A major restructuring of students' entry into ALPP Level I should be developed, including a common assessment system across all ALPP programs to distinguish between those students who have no or very low prior academic skills and those who have minimal or moderate skills. A two-level entry system accompanied by appropriate new curriculum

that better serves the novice Level I learner, and accompanying teacher preparation should be designed to better accommodate both groups.

Photo 4 ALPP Youth Class in Language Arts

An insight into age-learning factors was gained through a comparative analysis of learning efficiency in age-appropriate classes versus performance in ALP/ALPP over-age classes. The scores of students at ages 15 and 16 were examined to compare student scores in ALP programs with students in conventional programs. The data indicated that students in those age groups who are in ALP regular and youth programs score higher than students in conventional classes.

Objective 7: Determine the Contributions of the ALPP Sub-Contracts to the Achievement of the Over-All Goals and Objectives of the Program

Talking Drum Studio – Teacher Training by Radio

The effective date of commencement of the sub-contract between CAII and Talking Drum Studio was May 1, 2007 to cover an initial period of two years to August 30, 2009, with the option of a third year of operations. The program was reviewed by the team in August 2008, 15 months after it began. Its objectives are to (i) increase teacher proficiency in ALPP curriculum content (including ALPP Regular and ALPP Youth topics) and student-centered teaching methods; and (ii) increase student performance through the provision of educational radio-based support programs. More generally, Radio Teacher Instruction can (i) communicate modern teaching methods to teachers; (ii) reinforce existing face-to-face teacher training; (iii) reach the vast majority of teachers at the remotest areas; and (iv) reach female teachers who have fewer training opportunities. Its counties of operation are those in which CAII operates its programs, namely Montserrado, Bong, Grand Gedeh, Lofa, Maryland and Nimba; it has a target of reaching 270 schools.

Production of the programs appears soundly based. The program contents reflect the curriculum of ALP and ALPP programs including Service Learning and Life Skills. After the programs are scripted they are recorded in model schools in three counties for inclusion in broadcast programs. These model lessons are then edited for broadcasting. During the third week of August 2008, focus group discussions were held with 135 teachers from 45 schools in three counties. The objectives of the focus groups were to (i) gauge the level of awareness and usage of the program; (ii) measure the quality and applicability of the lessons; and (iii) assess the effects of the program on students' grades and work. The Team was not able to obtain a copy of the report of this workshop at the time of preparing this final report.

The project has encountered a number of challenges: (i) it was able to produce only 30 of the planned 45 programs in its first year of operations; (ii) not all community radio stations are operating all the time, with that of Maryland not being operational for some months; (iii) in at least one instance, the community radio did not broadcast the program as arranged; (iv) radio reception varies according to location, time, date, and weather; and (v) teachers are not always able to listen to the programs which are broadcast twice a week on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

The response to these challenges has been to (i) increase efforts to complete the remaining 15 programs as soon as possible and then produce a further 60 programs in the second year of the project; (ii) provide funds and other assistance to enable community radio stations to function reliably; (iii) dub programs on to cassettes and distribute these to schools where radio reception is poor or non-existent.

In relation to the terms and conditions of its contract, and the level of achievement of Talking Drum Studio, the Team *concluded*:
- Its objectives are strongly focused on strengthening teacher performance and therefore on student achievement
- It is an efficient method of reaching a considerable number of teachers targeted under the program
- It is an efficient method of reaching those teachers disadvantaged by distant or remote locations, including female teachers
- Programs are well designed and implemented to ensure they represent good classroom based teaching and learning practices
- Program management has taken steps to overcome difficulties with teachers receiving the broadcasts.

Evaluation of Talking Drum Teacher Training by Radio

Training teachers presents immense challenges in a nation where long distances, rural school locations, fragile communication systems and difficult transportation make bringing teachers together difficult and infrequent. Talking Drum Studio (TDS) programs offer an innovative solution to ALPP teachers, engaging them in radio programs on implementing ALP lessons. Interviews with TDS Staff indicated that these programs are designed and developed with great attentiveness to content, using the ALP curriculum, ALP Master Trainers and expert ALPP teachers to develop and vet them.

Just as important is the presentation style of programs which engages listeners in a lively, energetic, yet professional approach using local speakers and contexts. Programs, which pertain to specific ALP lessons, are broadcast twice a week over local radio stations throughout the nation during the school year. Teachers who use the TDS programs listen at home to a lesson early in the week and then meet together at their school later in the week to listen again and participate in a discussion led by either their principal or another teacher.

Teachers who experienced these programs truly like them, although two teachers said they do not take the place of real workshops. However because of limited broadcasting coverage and schedule limitations, many teachers, particularly ALPP Youth teachers who teach at night, have no access to these programs. CAII, working with TDS, has taken inventive steps to solve these problems, by supplying schools with wind-up radios, audio cassettes of the programs, and cassette players. At the time of the field study, however, not all programs and equipment had been delivered nor were they being used widely this school year.

This project holds great promise for teacher training, particularly if ALP is to be scaled up to meet wider demands.

THINK Inc. – Learning Enrichment

The sub-contract between CAII and Touching Humanity in Need of Kindness (THINK Inc.) was signed on December 7, 2007 and runs for a period of two years concluding on September 30, 2009, with its first year concluding on November 30, 2008. The project runs through four cycles, each of six months. Its objectives align with and supplement those of the

ALPP program and are described as (i) by the end of the program youth/children with deficiency in subject areas such as math, reading, writing, spelling, health and hygiene, arts, etc. will be able to articulate these subject areas; (ii) students/youth, and community dwellers will be able to discuss their rights, current issues, and participate in conflict resolution methods; (iii) life skills such as interpersonal skills, decision making skills and skills of knowing oneself will be taught and practiced as service learning; (iv) institutions (school/community structures) capacity will be improved through training; and (v) the percentage/number of school/drop-outs will be reduced by enrolling them into the schools.

The Team held briefings with the officers of the program, observed lessons being taught to community members many of whom were females, observed the crèche for the babies and young children of mothers attending classes, and interviewed some students of the program.

Photo 5 Children in crèche while mothers attend THINK Inc. classes

That this is a pilot program is clear from the contract which states that *This proposed Enrichment Program will demonstrate for communities through Liberia how schools, libraries and other resource centers can offer learners at all levels, ages and capabilities opportunities to deepen their learning and sharpening their skills despite the complex list of problems that plague Liberia's schools.* In addition, it is a program on a micro scale, having its office and classrooms in the Montserrado LRC and having an outreach to five communities within 3-4 blocks – about half a kilometer according to the estimate of the program center supervisor.

Review of the program was undertaken earlier than its mid term, so such results as were observed are more indicative than conclusive. The mid term review of the program was undertaken during the month of August, eight months after the commencement of the program and two months into the second of its four cycles. There was therefore only one class of graduates and the second class of students were only half way through their program. It was not possible to revisit the program at a later date because of other commitments by the Team to sites and programs in other counties and the production of a draft final report before leaving Liberia. The Team suggests that a second review of the program be carried out, following the graduation of the second of four classes of the program.

In their assessment of the level of achievement of the terms and conditions of the THINK Inc. contract, the Team concluded that:

- The program is very popular
- It is providing an educational and social service
- It is connecting well with its immediate communities
- It is meeting its targets in terms of numbers of people being recruited and inducted into education programs.
- It addresses the needs of mothers who need both an education and child care

Whether, and to what extent the program should continue and expand is dependent on a number of issues. In evaluating the program, the Team considered the following matters: (i) it is a pilot program; (ii) it is on a micro scale; and (iii) it was in its third month of the second of four cycles of the two year period – about only one third into its full term of two years.

This is an expensive program, with a total budget of US$52,000. Of this, $41,244 is for administration and related activities (personnel, travel, and evaluation), representing 79 percent of the budget. If the program is to be replicated in other counties and districts, ways must be found to reduce the relative costs of this administration.

From a determination of ways in which activities carried out support the chances of providing increased access to and quality of Basic Education, the Team *recommends* that

- Another review of the program should be carried out when its impact is clearer; December 2008 is suggested.
- There is a need for much greater connection between the program and related education programs, particularly ALP and ALPP, to allow easier transition of graduates to these programs. The present THINK Inc. program is a "stand alone" program in this regard.
- There is a need to provide some guidance and support to the programs "graduates". Having recruited its targets and retained their enrollments for the six month period of each cycle, the program then does not provide ongoing support to its "graduates".
- It would be helpful to its students, particularly young mothers who bring their children to the center, if meals could be provided as occurs in ALP school programs.
- Since this is a pilot program on a micro scale, much greater emphasis could be placed in advertising its presence, its objectives and programs, and its impact. This could be done through radio, through a series of workshops, through individual visits to schools and communities in the immediate vicinity of Monrovia, and through the ALP unit in MOE.
- If the program is to be replicated and/or continued, ways must be found to reduce the relative costs of its administration.

Specific Issues for consideration by USAID

The Team was asked to address the following specific issues:

a). How many of the 54,000 over-aged and 34,000 youth, and 8,000 community youth have benefited?

54,000 over-aged youth (10-18 years): the figure is a mis-statement in the original contract. As explained in internal memos (Creative Associates International, Inc. November 2006, July 2008), the assumption in the contract was that from Year 1 (2006/07) the total enrollment would be 18,000 students (33 students x 3 levels x 30 schools x 6 counties). By the end of the three year program this figure would have totaled 54,000, with no repeaters or drop-outs.

In fact, by the end of Year 1, total enrollments were 10,541 and by the end of Year 2, total enrollments were 16,572 (an average of 31 students per class in 177 schools). This is enrollment represents 92 percent of the target for that year, a commendable figure given that target enrollments could not be reached in Year 1 because of the late start to the school year, and that the total number of participating schools is 177 instead of the targeted 180 schools.

- Total beneficiaries of the over-aged youth were 10,541 in 2006-07, with 16,288 enrolled in 2007-08.
- The number of over-aged youth graduating with a Primary School Certificate was 1,674 in 2006-07, and 2,649 in 2007-08.

Youth. The figure for 34,000 Youth (those aged 15-35) is incorrect. The contract with CAII sets a target of 13,500 out-of-school youth over the three years of the contract (4,500 students per year, coming from 6 counties x 15 schools per county x 50 students per school.

♦ Total beneficiaries of the Youth program were 249 in 2006-07 and 5,519 in 2007-08.
♦ The number of Youth graduating with a Primary School Certificate was 768 in 2007-08.

Total beneficiaries for the ALPP and ALPP Youth programs are set out in Table 5.

Table 8. Total Beneficiaries of ALPP and ALPP Youth Programs

Program	Enrollments & Graduates	Students	
		2006 - 2007	**2007 - 2008**
ALPP	Total Enrollments	10,541	16,288
	Graduated with Primary Cert.	1,674	2,649
ALPP Youth	Total Enrollments	249	5,519
	Graduated with Primary Cert.	-----	768

Recommendation. Construct annual statistical reports so that throughputs are readily understood. Throughputs could be reported in one table for each level and by each year to show gross enrollments, drop-outs, numbers not promoted, numbers promoted, and new entrants.

Community Youth. The figure of 8,000 community Youth is a sub-set of the targeted number of Youth (15-35 years). No statistics are available of the number of community youth who have participated in community service, known as the 1,000 Brushes. However, responses from community representatives are very supportive of the program of associated program Service Learning and its beneficial impact on schools and community life. See data and analysis for Objective 3 for more details.

b).   What is the level of work readiness/orientation acquired through the youth program, service learning and life skills?

There is no specific data on the level of work readiness or orientation acquired through the Youth program. There is general agreement among community representatives and others that the youth program is basic: it provides information, but does not develop specific skills which are marketable. It is also necessary to allow time for maturation and experiment on the part of the students in order to apply the learning acquired.

For more detailed information, see analysis of data for Objective 3.

c).   What lessons learned so far affecting program components such as enrollments, the use of learning resource centers, training of teachers, training and certification of master trainers, female participation as teachers or trainers community/youth participation, school administrators and supervisors?

The Learning Resource Center (LRC) in each of the six counties is intended to help MOE provide support to teachers and students through in-service workshops, education messages, reading and research, production of resource materials and opportunities to practice computer literacy. This support also assists MOE in the decentralization of quality educational services. The task of the Training Officer in each LRC is to provide Pre-service and in-service teacher training in ALP methods; training of trainers for Master Trainers; Community Mobilization (youth) training; Parent Teacher Association (PTA) training and Management training to LRC staff. The task of the Monitoring and Evaluation Officer is, once

a month, to track information and indicators required by USAID and is based on the Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP) (CAII. LRC Overview, July 2008, page 1).

LRCs are performing their designated tasks, in terms of (i) providing support to teachers and students through their library, their internet network, their computer training; (i) providing training for the targeted groups; (ii) tracking information and indicators required by USAID under the PMP; (iv) providing support to PTAs in their applications for small grants; (v) providing a form of decentralized education management to MOE by assisting each CEO and DEO in carrying out their tasks. In some cases that the Team observed, LRCs also assist MOE through the provision of office space for the CEO and/or a DEO, and storage space for MOE materials.

The Team observed the following limits on the capacity of LRCs to meet their objectives completely: (i) LRCs, being located only in the capital of each county, cannot serve the majority of teachers and students; (ii) their outreach to school clusters is similarly limited to 2-3 clusters at best in each county; (iii) the Monitoring and Evaluation Officer is mainly focused on target indicators which relate to inputs, rather than educational objectives which are outputs/outcomes; (iv) because of the large number of schools and teachers in each county, the Training Officer is able to observe only a small proportion of teachers throughout the school year.

LRCs have the potential to further strengthen the quality of educational provision through such key activities as (i) extending their outreach to schools through (a) targeting the school cluster program; (b) providing some form of mobile delivery service of resources to schools; (iii) advertising their services and resources more widely and directly to schools, including invitations to school principals; (ii) engaging more directly with, and working through, District Education Officers; (iii) encouraging PTAs to use their resources as a means to attract teachers and students; (iv) if possible, engage the support of local businesses; (v) coordinate the project activities of partner NGOs at county level – this is an original aim of LRCs which did not occur but could be implemented while the office of the MOE ALP county coordinator is strengthened.

The percentage of girls enrolled in Liberian education programs is lower in rural areas and declines from level to level in conventional and ALP regular programs. However, the women appear to be returning to education via the ALP youth programs. Female role models and mentors would appear to be important to support the effort to education young women in Liberia.

*d).	How useful/effective are the small grant projects to community and the entire ALP scheme?*

The small grants have benefited programs and communities through (i) supply of generators and fuel for night youth classes; (ii) provision of tools and seeds for school gardens, which in turn can generate funds for school development; (iii) investigation into the possibility of providing solar powered for classroom lighting. They also have the potential to provide support for females to attend ALP programs, and help establish simple crèches for mothers who are attending classes. For more detailed information, see analysis of data for Objective 3.

*e).	Levels of support of Learning Resource Centers to student study habit formation, professional development of teachers and students.*
LRCs have useful resources for teachers and students, and provide useful community resources such as photocopying and internet access for NGOs and Education Officers. The Team observed some students using the libraries and computers/internet. Access to LRCs

by teachers and students is limited because of their location in each County capital; the majority of schools are too far away for students and teachers to access the resources. For more detailed information, see section (c) and analysis of data for Objective 3.

Specific Issues for consideration by Ministry of Education

The Team was asked to address the following specific issues:

a).   *Should ALP be considered the most suitable option for students who are 15 years or older?*

The question of whether 15 years is a suitable entry point for the ALP program arises in the context of the commonly accepted age range of 6-12 years for primary schooling grades 1-6. In Liberia, as in most developing countries, a common later starting age combined with repetition and dropout rates, means that the average student is likely to finish primary schooling at the age of 14 years. In that context, ALP could be considered as the most suitable option for anyone who is beyond the most common age of primary schooling, at 15 or more years.

Data from testing of students also supports the idea that ALP appears to be a suitable option for students 15 years and older. Two-thirds of the students tested for this project were in that age group. They might be most uncomfortable in conventional classrooms at the lower levels. The Level II testing indicated that 91 percent of the students who were aged 15 or older were enrolled in ALP and 9 percent in grade 3. By Level III 81 percent were enrolled in ALP and 19 percent were in grade 5.

Testing data indicates mixed results for those 15 and older. In mathematics at both Levels II and III ALP students in both regular and youth programs had higher average scores than students in the conventional grades 3 and 5. However, in the Language Arts exams the students in the regular ALP programs had scores consistent with the conventional classes, but the ALP Youth scores were lower.

b).   *Could the ALP/ALPP be run as a parallel to the mainstream primary school program or adopted to suit adult Literacy Education, with suitable portions adapted in the T-VET Program?*

ALP/ALPP is running as a parallel to the mainstream primary school program, and provides for over-aged youth (10-18 years). It is designed primarily to cope with a post-conflict situation where so many young people, who were not able to attend primary school classes during the years of conflict, are given the chance to attend school. Its key advantage is providing a condensed primary school program over three years instead of the six years of the mainstream program, focusing on the basics of Mathematics and Language Arts, with Science and Social Sciences as part of the curriculum. Any consideration of its future must take into account the following: (i) the successes of the program will help to alleviate post-conflict issues, and make the need for the program less urgent, even unnecessary; (ii) the population served by the program, those youth affected by civil conflict, are ageing and will be more suited to the ALPP Youth program; (iii) in the next few years, the population aged 10-18 years will increasingly not have been affected by civil strife; (iv) as a consequence, careful planning is necessary to provide for the expansion of mainstream primary schooling with decreased reliance on the ALP/ALPP program..

Adult Literacy Classes. The over-aged youth group is considered too old to mix easily with those who are in the conventional primary cycle of education (ideally 6-12 years old), but

conversely they are too young in most cases to mix with adults in Adult Literacy Classes. Additionally, such adult classes are almost always conducted at night time, when most of the 10-18 age group would not be allowed to venture out on their own. It is therefore better to view Adult Literacy Education as being provided for those aged 18 or more, those more able to venture out into night time classes. Such Adult Literacy Classes would profit from including such key elements into their curriculum as Life Skills and Service Learning, for development of the individual and the betterment of the community.

Potential Follow-On Activities

The Team was required to identify a potential follow-on activity for the ALPP program. Two such activities have been identified, both addressing the basic need to strengthen the capacity of classroom teachers to design and administer student tests, and interpret and act upon the results.

Proposal to strengthen School Based Assessment through the establishment of an Examinations Unit within the Liberian Ministry of Education

A.   Background and rationale

The Team visited schools and programs in six counties of Liberia throughout September and early October 2008. In particular they conducted student testing of Language Arts and Mathematics at Grades 3 and 5, and Levels II and III of the ALP program, as well as classroom observations of teacher performance. They analyzed the achievements of students. They noted that there is a great need for teacher pre- and in-service training in the principles and practice of testing. They concluded that (i) teachers are largely unfamiliar with the principles and practices of student testing; (ii) teachers are unfamiliar with the principles and practices of multiple choice questions; (iii) teachers are unfamiliar with the elements of higher levels of knowledge – most testing is at the levels of basic knowledge; (iv) there is a need for teachers to carry out regular diagnostic testing of students, apart from testing for achievement; (v) the reports by the WAEC of public examinations in Liberia at the levels of Grade 6, 9, and 12 could be much more subject specific; (vi) MOE needs to have its own examinations unit with assessment specialists in order to provide ongoing in-service training and support to schools.

B.   Need for an Examinations Unit

Under the current situation, the WAEC is responsible for constructing, marking, analyzing, and reporting the results of the national public examinations held annually at Grades 6, 9, and 12 levels. It is not responsible for the conduct of the examinations in schools at other levels, for providing a technical report to schools by subject, on what level of knowledge the examiners were testing (comprehension, application, etc), how this knowledge was tested, how students performed on individual test items, and/or comparing the performance of students over successive years. It is also not responsible for providing in-service training programs of a technical nature to principals, and teachers, especially those teaching at the levels of Grades 6, 9, and 12.

What is therefore needed is an Examinations Unit with the capacity, expertise, and mission to provide school based training and support to classroom teachers so they can develop, administer, analyze and act upon the results of their classroom tests. With an Examinations Unit this support could commence at the levels of schools and teachers who teach at Grades 6, 9, and 12, which are the levels at which students take the public examinations. Over

several years, and with the support of principals and County and District Education Officers, training could extend to all classroom teachers.

Such support would strengthen the system of School Based Assessment (SBA), which is International Best Practice. SBA is a means of providing both diagnostic and performance assessment reports rapidly, directly, efficiently and effectively to students and parents.

The need for an Examinations Unit has also been identified by Knight and Marcos (2006) in their report *Strengthening the Ministry of Education in the Republic of Liberia*. They recommend a division which "will need testing specialists for each learning level: 6th, 9th and 12th grade examinations as well as vocational-technical learning. It will also need an office to handle/coordinate all examination documentation, diplomas and attestation" (pp82-3).

C.   Benefits of an Examinations Unit

Examinations are the key element in determining what is taught. There are many factors influencing what is taught in the classroom and what students learn: teachers own level of knowledge, what teachers learn in their pre-service and in-service training, the curriculum, and textbooks. At the levels of Grades 6, 9, and 12 where public examinations are held, what has been examined in previous years and what teachers anticipate will be examined in the current school year, has been shown to be the major determinants of what teachers will teach and what students are expected to learn.

An Examinations Unit can therefore be a significant factor in determining what is actually taught, the level to which it is taught (knowledge, comprehension, etc), how it is taught, how it is learned, and the level of knowledge acquired by students. It would also have a key role in developing curriculum and textbooks.

Establishment of an Examinations Unit would ensure the location of technical expertise within MOE relating to (i) identification of levels of desired academic achievements by school grade and subject; (ii) test design and development; (iii) analysis and evaluation of test data; and (iv) conduct of in-service training programs for classroom teachers and other education personnel.

As a unit within MOE, the unit would have management powers to train and supervise examination supervisors who would in turn be responsible to the unit. This should assist in ensuring the security of the examinations process.

D.   Possible Role and Functions of an Examinations Unit

In collaboration with WAEC,
- Prepare test items for trialing for the annual public examinations (Note: the unit would not be responsible for the final selection of test items, nor for the overall level of knowledge tested, which is the responsibility of WAEC).
- Have overall management responsibility for the conduct of the examinations, in particular their security.
- Prepare technical review reports, by subject and Grade, of the performance of students.
- Conduct annual workshops in each county, to explain and distribute the technical reports.
- Conduct initial in-service training for CEOs, DEOs, and school principals. Principals in turn would provide training for teachers in their schools at the levels of Grades 6, 9 and 12. This training in turn would flow to teachers at other grade levels within the school

E.   Possible structure of an Examinations Unit

Note: staffing is indicative of start-up only.

- Director of Examinations Unit
- Principal/Senior Examinations Officer
- Examinations Officer/s x 2
- Clerical assistant/s x 2

F.   Critical elements of the work of the Examinations Unit

As outlined in Section D, the WAEC is responsible for the conduct of the public examinations at Grades 6, 9, and 12. The principal purpose of the proposed Examinations Unit would be to develop and sustain knowledge, understanding and application of the principles and practice of valid and reliable assessment of students in the classroom. In carrying out this mission, the Unit's initial priority would be to conduct in-service training/refresher courses for County and District Education Officers and school principals in this area. They in turn would conduct school based (perhaps using cluster schools) in-service training courses for classroom teachers, initially for those teaching at Grades 6, 9, and 12. This "cascade" form of training has proved very effective in similar situations.

In addition, the Examinations Unit would provide annual workshops in each County, attended by County and District Education Officers and School Principals, at which the results of the annual WAEC examinations were critically reviewed and explained, to ensure that schools understood what academic standards were being measured against, how they were assessed, and how they performed, in each subject. The basis of these workshops would be an annual report for each subject at each level, prepared in conjunction with WAEC, discussed and presented to each school principal. This would assist in strengthening the necessary school based knowledge and training for an appreciation of the public examinations.

G.   Intended Impact and Outcomes of the establishment of an Examinations Unit

- ➢ A permanent unit with strengthened technical expertise in testing.
- ➢ Capacity building at school, district, county and national level in principles and practice of classroom based testing.
- ➢ Annual workshops to review performance of students at Grades 6, 9 and 12 public examinations, to enhance understanding of teachers and students in what is being tested, and what standards are to be met.
- ➢ Enhanced capacity at school level to develop and administer student tests, and analyze and act upon the results of this testing for the betterment of student performance.

H.   Possible USAID support

- Technical equipment: computers, photocopier, technical references
- Office furniture: desks, chairs, tables, air conditioners.
- Fellowship/Scholarship for Director to study abroad.
- Consultant/s to assist in
    o establishment of the Examinations Unit
    o assisting with selection of suitably qualified and experienced officers
    o planning of annual program of work
    o preparation of technical review reports
    o conduct of annual workshops to review the examination technical reports
    o in-service training for County and District Education Officers and School principals

I.   Work Program for Consultant/s

Year 1. 8.5 months

- Selection and orientation of Unit officers   1.5 months
- Development of annual work program   1.5 months
- Initial on-the-job training of Unit officers   1.5 months
- Assist WEAC to prepare test items   2.0 months
- Commence in-service training of principals, CEOs and DEOs   2.0 months

Year 2. 7.0 months
- Prepare technical review reports   3.0 months
- Conduct annual workshops to distribute technical reports (15 counties x 2 days)
                                                                                          2.0 months
- Continue in-service training for principals, CEOs and DEOs   2.0 months

Year 3. 7.0 months   Final phase of consultancy support.
- Assist Unit Officers to prepare technical review reports   3.0 months
- Assist Unit Officers to conduct annual workshops to distribute technical reports.
                                                                                          2.0 months
- Conclude in-service training for principals, CEOs and DEOs   2.0 months

Table 9. Indicative Financing for an Examinations Unit Project

Physical Establishment of Examinations Unit Office	
• Technical equipment & furniture (6 staff + consultant)	$35,000
• Unit SUV vehicle	$35,000
Consumables for 3 years	
• Office	$6,000
• SUV vehicle (Fuel & maintenance)	$36,000
Sub-total	**$112,000**
Fellowship/Scholarship for Director (Assume three month program in USA)	
• Travel to USA	$4,000
• Registration & academic allowance	$25,000
• Accommodation @ $100 per day	$9,000
• Personal allowance @ $90 per day	$8,100
Sub-total	**$46,100**
Consultant:	
• International Travel x 3 journeys	$12,000
• 22.5 months @ $13,000 per month	$292,500
• Daily allowance (accommodation, meals, travel) @ $200/day x 675 days	$135,000
Sub-total	**$439,500**
In-service training of Principals, CEOs & DEOs	
$30,000 x 3 years	$90,000
Sub-total	**$90,000**
Annual Workshops	
(60 days per year x 3 years x 4 officers + consultant)	
• Transport x $300 per day x 180 days	$54,000
• Accommodation: $30 x 5 personnel x 180 days	$27,000
• Meals: $15 x 5 personnel x 180 days	$13,500
Sub-total	**$94,500**
Grand Total	**$782,100**

Summary of Inputs and Activities

♦ Examinations Unit established, fully equipped and staffed
♦ Scholarship/Fellowship for Examinations Unit Director
♦ Consultancy services for 22.5 months to assist in establishing and strengthening unit
♦ In-service training provided for Examinations Unit staff, all CEOs, all DEOs, and all School Principals
♦ WEAC assisted to develop examinations which are more school-based at levels of Grades 6, 9 and 12
♦ Annual workshops in each county to review WEAC examination papers and results
♦ Classroom teachers strengthened in their knowledge of the principles and practices of student assessment by their principals, CEOs and DEOs
♦ Preliminary estimated cost of project: $782,100.

Proposal to develop an ALP entry level program to assess and develop the basic academic pre-skills necessary for success in the accelerated learning programs

A.   Background and rationale

Classroom observations and student testing were conducted in Liberian schools in six counties of Liberia throughout September and early October 2008. A total of 806 students were tested in both Language Arts and Mathematics at Levels II and III of the ALP program and Grades 3 and 5 in the conventional education program. Teacher observations took place in a variety of levels and subject areas. The student testing results revealed serious deficits in basic skills necessary for success in reading and mathematics. Over 60 percent of the students at Level II and grade 3 were not able to correctly answer any of the questions about a simple reading passage. At Level III and grade 5, 37 percent were unable to answer any of the reading comprehension questions.

Students taking the mathematics exam were observed using counting methods to do their math problems – counting fingers and toes and making hash marks to work even simple addition and subtraction problems. The use of counting and lack of basic arithmetic and mathematical skills was obvious in their scores in all the other math areas that were tested.

Students in the ALP programs, both regular and youth, are proud to be in school, and excited about getting an education. They have positive attitudes about learning and are treated with respect by teachers who are utilizing the ALP teachers' manuals to provide instruction. But somehow the basic skills have slipped through the cracks. These students want to be part of the future and leave the past behind. They know they need an education to provide a better life for themselves and their families. But that future won't be any closer at the end of the ALP program if they move from level to level without acquiring a basic foundation in reading and math.

B.   Need for an entry level ALP program

The students in ALP did not perform at a lower level than their counterparts in the conventional education system. The current ALP curriculum and teachers' manuals rely on the Liberian national curriculum and textbooks as the basis for the lessons. However the first grade materials assume that many of the basics have been acquired before students enter first grade. That assumption leaves many students at a severe disadvantage, especially those in the ALP programs. Many of them have little or no familiarity with letters and numbers. Others may have some background, but that was many years in the past. The

current ALP manuals do not provide teachers with the lessons necessary to provide basic skills instruction for reading and mathematics.

Staff from MOE, the LRCs, and CAII's office in Monrovia indicated there have been past discussions about the need for orientation to formal education, especially for those in the ALP programs. They share an understanding of the importance of students being prepared to learn.

C.   Structure of an entry level ALP program

The entry level program would provide a downward extension of the ALP program, which would add depth and substance to the three-year accelerated learning process. Components would include.

- Measurable expectations for what a student should know and be able to do at each ALP level – entry, end of Level I, end of Level II, and end of Level ll.
- Screening instruments to identify if students meet those measurable expectations at each level. The instruments would be easy to administer and available to all ALP programs.
- A pre-program with a duration of from 4 to 6 weeks that would prepare students with the learning essential to success in the accelerated learning program. It could be integrated as a component of the current Level I program or it could be a stand alone program that takes place over the summer prior to the school year.
- Materials and teacher training to provide this basic instruction to an adult audience.

D.   Intended Impact and Outcomes of an entry level ALP program

- Planting the seeds of literacy before formal instruction.
- An increase in literacy and numeracy skills for students in the ALP program.
- A change in instructional emphasis from a focus on what the teacher is teaching to a focus on what the students are learning.
- Introduction of the concept of classroom assessment to determine if students are learning what they are expected to learn.
- Reduced dropout rates for students enrolling in the ALP programs and expanded opportunities to continue their education.
- An opportunity for a better educated citizenry for Liberia.

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APPENDICES

Terms of Reference

Objective 1. Assess learning outcomes of ALP students to determine the effectiveness of the program. Objective outputs will be an assessment of ALP student performance and recommendations on improving/maintaining high level literacy and numeracy.
  a. Illustrative activities:
  I. Conduct quick assessment of literacy and numeracy learning outcomes.
  II. Comparative review of test scores among randomly selected schools.
  III. Focus groups to review life skills training.

Objective 2. Assess performance of ALP teachers to determine if training has a long-term impact on their teaching skills and ability to provide quality instruction. Output will include an assessment of ALP teacher performance and recommendations on improving/maintaining high skills level.
  b. *Illustrative activities:*
  I. Use the ALP Teacher Training Manual to prepare a Classroom Observation Instrument / Checklist of Alp pedagogical skills, etc.
  II. Select a level 3 ALP school with APL 'Master Teachers', observe and grade their teaching skills, (and other delivery methods) against items on checklist.
  III. Conduct a Focus Group at the community level on ALP pedagogy and impact on student learning.
  IV. Administer a common test to students in the ALP level 3 class you observed and students of an equivalent grade (5/6) in a 'good' conventional public or mission school.
  V. Analyze achievement levels of the two groups of students.

Objective 3. Assess impact of ALPP activities in target counties. Output will include a report on ALP PLUS impact and recommendations for future of the program.
  c. Illustrative activities:
  I. Obtain ALP program goals and objectives and the program implementation plan with performance indicators.
  II. Conduct structured interviews with community leaders, Youth group leaders, Chiefs and parents.
  III. Conduct focal group discussions with the PTAs, local Education Officers and Local Government Officials.
  IV. Summaries responses into groups of 'Impact' and 'Recommendations'.

Objective 4. Assessment of ALP students by age to ensure appropriate targeting the Age-factor in the determination of student learning achievement level.
  d. *Illustrative activities:*
  I. Prepare a 'standard' test in Reading Skills and Mathematical Skills for level 1, 2 and 3 of the ALPP. Select three ALP schools in the Urban, Rural and Rural-rural Communities.
  II. Select three Conventional schools one public, one private-community, and one private-mission.
  III. Administer the same test to mixed-age students in the selected schools.

Objective 5. Provide a common monitoring tool and reliable database to obtain information about quality implementation of the ALP/ALPP. Outputs will include standard questionnaires, checklists, plans for monitoring and data collection instruments and data storage and retrieval program/software.

 e. Illustrative activities:
 I. Examine existing instruments and procedures for school data collection used by ALP/ ALPP Creative.
 II. Examine monitoring and data collecting tools used by other ALP implementing partners.
 III. Design comprehensive tools and procedures.
 IV. Share/pass back drafts for inputs and validation.

Objective 6. Scale up ALP/ALPP to cater to high enrollments and youth preparation. Outputs will include revised ALP/ALPP that is cost effective and with quality.
 f. Illustrative activities:
 I. Make specific recommendations on teacher education, training, certification and incentives for the ALP/ALPP.
 II. Make concrete suggestions on ALP/ALPP materials supply, demand and suitability.
 III. Provide an insight on age-learning factors to include, a comparative analysis of learning efficiency in age-appropriate classes' vs. performance in ALP/ALPP over-age classes.
 IV. Recommend any future application of the ALPP pedagogy in an emergency and non-emergency education programs.

Objective 7. Determine the contributions of the ALPP sub-contacts to the achievement of the over-all goals and objectives of the Program : Talking Drum Studio – Teacher Training by Radio and THINK Inc. - Learning Enrichment project for in and out-of-school students with special learning difficulties..
 g. Illustrative Activities:
 I. Review / study the sub – contracts awarded to both Talking –Drum Studio and THINK Inc. by ALPP to determine their relevance to the objectives of program.
 II. Assess the level of achievement as indicated by the terms and conditions of contract awarded.
 III. For the Talking –Drum project evaluate the challenges in implementing a teacher training by radio program in Liberia.
 IV. For the THINK project, determine ways in which activities carried out supports the chances of providing increased access and quality of Basic Education.

Constraints on the Survey

Students assessed. The original design called for testing of students at ALP Levels I, II, and III, and Grades 2, 4, and 6. This was to occur towards the end of school year 2007-08. In practice, the study had to be conducted in the first weeks of the new school year 2008-09, so it was inappropriate to test the beginning classes of Level I and Grade 1. Therefore only Levels II and III, and corresponding Grades 3 and 5, were tested.

Selection of sites and programs. Sites were selected in each County, taking into account Urban, Urban/Rural, and Rural/Rural characteristics. They had also to be selected to take into account their accessibility in terms of travel time each day from the base of overnight accommodation. The number of school sites visited (including number of students and programs), should be therefore considered as a series of case studies of schools and programs. Case study theory states that each such study provides an indication of the phenomenon under investigation, while collectively such studies provide a useful indication of the direction and strength of the phenomenon under investigation.

Informants. At each school visited, the principal was interviewed, as well as some teachers. The number of community representatives who were able to attend for interviews and/or focus group work varied from site to site. In addition, the time they were available for such information gathering was usually limited; most could come only in the morning and stay for one to two hours. In practice therefore, it was often not possible to interview community members but only to hold focus group discussions with them.

ALPP Youth. For the first three weeks of the site visits, students were still being recruited for many of the ALPP Youth programs. It was therefore not possible to observe as many of these programs as had been planned. In addition, in several cases, Youth classes were not being conducted because the generator which provided lighting was not operational. It was possible to observe only five Youth classes which were operational.

Record keeping. Enrollments for the year 2007-08 were obtained from each school visited. For LRCs, the attendance records were available only for the current and previous 2-3 weeks. As schools were only commencing to function during this period, it was difficult to gain first hand valid knowledge of the numbers of teachers, school administrators, or students of ALP/ALPP programs who would normally attend, or the reasons for their attendance.

Relationship between Teacher performance and Student Achievements. Students were being assessed on their learning from previous years. The teachers observed were, in almost every case, not those who had taught the same students in these years. No direct causal relationship could therefore be inferred between student and teacher performance. Observed Teacher Performance is therefore only an indirect indicator of likely student achievement in the coming school year.

Cost effectiveness of the ALPP

The following figures are a preliminary estimate of per capita costs per targeted student.

Table 10. Cost Effectiveness of the ALPP

Creative Associates International, Inc

Total Budget		**$14,504,921**
Less: Sub-contracts		
Talking Drum	$949,388	
Think Inc.	$52,000	
Total sub-contracts	$1,001,388	
Net Budget CAII		$13,503,533
CAII Targeted Students		
Over-aged students (8-18 years)	54,000	
Out-of-school Youth (15-35 years)	13,500	
Total Students	67,500	
Per capita cost of students		$200.00
Think Inc.		
Total Budget		$52,000
Total students	420	
Per capita cost of students		$124.00
Talking Drum[2]		
Total Budget		$949,388
Targeted students	67,500	
Per capita cost of students		$14.00

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[2] Talking Drum is a project to produce and distribute Radio Instruction Programs with the objectives of (i) increase teacher proficiency in ALPP curriculum content and student-centered teaching methods; and (ii) increase student performance through the provision of educational radio-based support programs. The cost-effectiveness of the project is based on the targeted number of students.

Technical Discussion of Findings

Student Testing Program

> *"…to develop programmes that ensure the irrevocable belief that universal education is not only desirable, but also essential for the success of our democratic society…"*
>
> Constitution of Liberia

To help determine if current programs are providing the essentials of the universal education addressed in the Liberian Constitution, assessment instruments in mathematics and language arts were developed for ALP Levels II and III, and both tests were administered to 806 students in September and early October of 2008. The tests were administered in schools in the six counties where Creative Associates supports ALP regular and ALPP youth programs: Bong, Grand Gedeh, Lofa, Maryland, Montserrado, and Nimba. Even with careful planning, the issues of difficult access, short time frame, and time of year (beginning of school year, rainy season, number of programs offered at a single site) combined to prevent selection of a true stratified sample.

The number of students tested, programs, and locations have been identified in Table 1.

Test design

The assessment instruments for this project were intended to inform instruction rather than provide a general overall score. The skills areas included in each instrument were identified from observation of the identified Liberian curriculum categories within the ALP curricula and syllabi, ALP teachers' manuals, and conventional textbooks: knowledge of numbers, knowledge of letters, listening skills, reading and comprehension, working with numbers – addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, fractions, decimals, geometry, measurement. Students were asked to apply their knowledge by working problems and answering questions rather than selecting an answer from among several choices.

A team of five Liberians with experience in both ALP and testing reviewed the items and provided constructive criticism. Their concerns and suggestions were incorporated into the design of the test and the process for administration. Two Liberian college graduates who were also graduates of the UNDP national volunteer program were trained to administer the exams to students to assure consistency and student understanding during test administration.

Some items on the exams were expected to be difficult for many students – finding errors in a sentence or working with decimals and fractions for example. However, in order to test the best students, some difficult items must be included. And there were students who had high scores in all four of the exams, but only a few reached scores of 75 percent correct. Those students were not concentrated in any one area. They were scattered across gender, county, program, age, and location.

Creative Associates developed and administered multiple choice tests in five subject areas (mathematics, language arts, social studies, science, and life skills) in the spring of 2008. The purpose of those tests was to try to determine if students in their ALP programs were performing at the same levels as those in conventional public schools and ALP partner programs. Those tests, as well as the West Africa Examination Council exams for Liberia, were designed to provide overall achievement scores but no sub-scores for skill domains. In addition those exams do not ask students to apply skills but rather use multiple choice items.

The results of those exams are not yet available but it did not seem useful to repeat that format.

Student Demographics

The tests assessed learning outcomes that could be expected after completion of Levels I and II. Students who had just begun Level I were not tested since they were in the first few weeks of the program. The project was unable to assess learning outcomes at the end of ALP Level III, because the testing was conducted at the beginning of the school year.

To provide comparative data, the tests were also administered to students in grade 3 (compared with ALP Level II regular and youth programs) and grade 5 (compared with ALP Level III regular and youth programs) and to students in ALP partner programs. In one instance, incorrect information guided the project to test a grade 6 classroom and those results were also analyzed. The number of students tested at each program level is shown in Table 11.

Table 11. Number of students tested by programs

Mid-term Evaluation - ALP Plus			
Students tested in October 2008			
Programs	Number of Students		
	Conventional	ALP Level II	ALP Level III
Grade 3	102		
Grade 5	80		
Grade 6	20		
ALP reg CAII		169	159
ALP partner		52	41
ALPP Youth		90	93
Totals	202	311	293

Student demographics relative to gender and locale are identified in Table 12. The testing included more males than females, which is representative of the proportions enrolled in schools. Over 40 percent of the tested students were in urban settings. Thirty percent were in rural/rural locations, and about the same proportion were in semi-urban settings.

Table 12. Student demographics

Numbers and ratios of students tested in October 2008				
	Level II & Gr 3		Level III and Gr. 5	
Gender				
Female	189	45%	168	43%
Male	227	55%	222	57%
Total	416		390	
Locale				
Urban	173	42%	170	44%
Urban/rural	120	29%	102	26%
Rural/rural	123	30%	118	30%
Total	416		390	

Findings

Key skill areas were identified that are critical to the learning processes introduced at the next level. At Level II and grade 3, the majority of the students could not independently read a short passage and answer any of the questions. Those same students did addition and subtraction by either counting on their fingers or making hash marks on paper. By Level III and grade 5 the lack of basic reading and mathematics skills placed considerable limitations on the students' academic progress. Students cannot comprehend written material if they are unable to read. And they cannot multiply and divide if they have not learned to add and subtract.

An examination of individual scores indicated some students had high overall scores. However those students were scattered across counties, ages, levels, and locations and were not concentrated in any area. Somehow they had obtained skills that allowed them to be successful on the exams, even though the majority of the students did not show evidence of those basic skills.

Although average results were quite low, more important information was obtained from analysis of specific skills and groups. Overall achievement scores may assist with understanding the effectiveness of a program, but valuable details hide within those averages. The overall test results were analyzed in a variety of ways – by program, subject, age, gender, and locale (urban, urban/rural, and rural/rural). Comparisons were made between students in conventional classrooms, ALP Regular program served by CAII, ALP regular programs served by other NGOs, and ALPP Youth programs. When scores were examined using those groupings, some major discoveries came to light.

Program

The bold figures in Table 13 identify the programs with the lowest scores on each exam, although none of the scores were dramatically different from the average. Because of misinformation, a grade 6 class was tested and that data was analyzed, too. It appears that an additional year in the conventional classroom has improved the scores for conventional students. The ALP youth scores are the lowest at Level III, but at Level II the scores for all ALP programs exceed the scores for conventional grade 3 classrooms.

Table 13. Testing results by program

Mid-term Evaluation - ALP Plus			
Testing results by program - average percent correct			
Program	Level II Math	Level II LA	Level III Math	Level III LA
Conventional 3	**41%**	**41%**		
Conventional 5			30%	28%
Conventional 6			37%	46%
ALP Reg CAII	45%	44%	28%	27%
ALP Reg Part	46%	47%	30%	31%
ALP Youth	44%	47%	**24%**	**24%**
total	44%	44%	28%	27%

At the next testing level (Level III and Grade 5 students) those in the regular ALP programs had the same average math scores as the conventional grade 5 students, but those in the youth programs had lower scores. By Level III (and grade 5) the use of counting to answer mathematics question is inefficient for students in all programs, and the inability to do

multiplication and division is pronounced. Nearly 30 percent of the students could answer none of the 8 questions related to multiplication and division, one as simple as dividing 18 by 6. The other area that indicated a glaring lack of knowledge was fractions and decimals. Three-fourths (74%) of the students could not answer correctly any of the 7 questions related to fractions or decimals, and that was evenly distributed across the conventional and ALP students.

Subject

<u>Language Arts</u>

A key finding in the Language Arts testing at Level II and grade 3 was that so few students could read the one passage that students had to read on their own. Recognizing the oral traditions and teaching methods as well as testing difficulty for younger students, the entire first page of the Language Arts exam for Level II and Grade 3 was read to the students. The overall average score on this exam was 44 percent correct. The strongest score was 75 percent correct in the listening portion identifying letters, but that is a very basic skill for Level II and grade 3. The ability to comprehend and answer questions about a paragraph that was read to them was relatively good. The average score for that section was 51 percent correct. However, over 60 percent of the students were unable to correctly answer any of the four questions that they had to read themselves. Fully 68 percent of the girls and 54 percent of the boys received a zero on the four simple questions related to the reading passage. The overall score for that section PLUS 19 percent correct.

Testing in the Language Arts area revealed a great deal of difficulty with reading skills at Level III and grade 5 also. The average score for Language Arts testing at this level was lower than Level II at 27 percent. By Level III and grade 5 students were expected to be able to read the exam themselves. The vocabulary and items were similar to what is found in the textbooks and teachers' manuals for this level, but 49 percent of the girls and 27 percent of the boys received a zero on the items related directly to reading and comprehension. None of the areas showed strong skills – use of pronouns, meanings of words, capitalization, or punctuation.

<u>Mathematics</u>

There was also a key finding in the Mathematics area. The average score for Mathematics at Level II and grade 3 was 44 percent, the same as the Language Arts score for this level. Students did very well in basic number skills, and averaged 59 percent correct in addition and subtraction. However, other areas appeared very difficult or not understood at all – fractions, basic shapes, and simple multiplication. Students were given an extra sheet of paper to use if they needed to work out their problems. Observation of student work during the mathematics exam indicated the use of counting to complete the addition and subtraction problems at Level II and grade 3. It was clear that nearly all students used counting to solve problems, and were not doing mathematics or even arithmetic. They added and subtracted by counting on their fingers if the numbers were small, or making hash marks on paper if the numbers were higher. They did not know basic math facts – like 2+6 or 5+4.

That lack of knowledge of basic math facts may not cause much difficulty with small numbers but it is unwieldy and will not allow students to move on to other levels of mathematics. At Level III and grade 5, the overall average score was 28 percent – nearly the same as the Language Arts score for this level. Forty-one percent of the girls and 18 percent of the boys were unable to solve any problems in multiplication and division. The majority of the students used hash marks to try to solve more complicated problems. Many students actually

attempted to divide 750 by 50 by making 750 marks on the paper and trying to determine groupings of 50.

Gender

The percentage of girls enrolled in Liberian education programs is lower in rural areas and declines from level to level in conventional and ALP regular programs. However, the women appear to be returning to education via the ALP youth programs. Female role models and mentors would appear to be important to support the effort to educate young women in Liberia.

An examination of scores obtained by males and females shows that the average percent correct for the females is 4 percentage points lower for students taking the exam given to students at Level II and grade 3 (Language I and Mathematics I). However, at Level III and grade 5 (Language II and Mathematics II), the gap between the male and female students has increased to 9 and 10 percentage points. Table 14 shows those differences.

Table 14. Results of student testing by subject area

Mid-term Evaluation - ALP Plus			
Results of Student Testing by subject area			
	Average percent correct		
Subject	Male	Female	Overall
Language I	46%	42%	44%
Mathematics I	46%	42%	44%
Language II	30%	21%	27%
Mathematics II	32%	22%	28%

The testing for Level III and Grade 5 anticipated stronger reading skills than in the exam for Level II and Grade 3. Therefore the students were expected to read the exam themselves, but instructions were read to them, students were encouraged to ask questions, and assistance was provided if some words were difficult for the student. The scores for girls were lower than the boys in Language Arts.

Age

ALP appears to be a suitable option for students 15 years and older. Two-thirds of the students tested for this project were in that age group. The Level II testing indicated that 91 percent of the students who were age 15 or older were enrolled in ALP and 9 percent in grade 3. Level III data showed that 81 percent those who were 15 or older were enrolled in ALP and 19 percent were in grade 5. Except for some limited circumstances in rural communities, ALP appears to be targeting the older students. Ninety-four percent of the students ages 18 or older were enrolled in ALP programs.

When the test data is analyzed by age, the results are mixed. For students 15 years and older, the average mathematics scores were higher in the ALP regular and youth programs at both Levels II and III than the average scores for conventional grades 3 and 5. In the Language Arts exams the students 15 years and older in the regular ALP programs had scores consistent with the same age group in conventional classes, while the ALP Youth scores were lower

The oldest group of students scored higher in mathematics than most of the other age groups. Students ages 18 and older in Level II and grade 3 had higher average scores in mathematics than any other age group – and 90 percent of them are enrolled in the ALP programs. In Level III and grade 5 in mathematics that same age group scored slightly above the overall average but not quite as well as some of the other ages – and 97 percent of them

are enrolled in the ALP programs. The Language Arts scores presented a different picture. At Level II and grade 3 the average Language Arts score for that age group was somewhat lower than the overall average and lower than most of the other age groups. At Level III and grade 5 the average score was considerably lower than the average and lower than all the other age groups.

The scores for the youngest students – ages 12 and under – most of whom are in conventional classroom, are lower than nearly all the other age groups, particularly in mathematics.

Locale

The average scores for students in rural/rural locations are higher in mathematics than the scores for students in urban areas. The rural/rural scores in language arts are lower than urban, which might be expected considering the lack of printed materials and media in general in the rural areas. Average scores for urban/rural students were slightly higher in all four exams.

Teacher Performance

Technical Analysis: Strong and Weak Instructional Practices based on Mid-Term Review Lesson Observations

(Each bulleted quote or description is from a different lesson or section of a lesson. Most of the 39 observed lessons are represented here, some more than once.)

Broad Category	Variable	Examples from Notes on Strong Activities with High Scores	Examples from Notes on Weak Activities with Low Scores	Recommendations
A. Teacher Organization	1. Lesson planning and teacher organization	• Teacher used ALP lesson plan but had rewritten the lesson in his own planning book. He was sufficiently familiar with his plans to not refer to his planning book very often. When reviewing his book, it was done quickly without disrupting the lesson.	• Teacher faced away from the students during most of the lesson, frequently yawning, denying students eye contact and personal interest. She repeatedly reread her notes before turning around and speaking to the class during each segment. Students grew restless and bored. She later told the observer that school had started two weeks late and "It's very difficult to teach." • Teacher reads directly form ALP manual. • Uses lesson notes. Reads from them. Writes from them.	Recommendations: Teacher Organization ALPP teachers should receive training, coaching and professional development to: 1. Use the ALP manual only as a guide to develop teachers' own lesson plans. This will produce more coherent, well-timed lessons and less classroom inactivity and poor pacing.
	2. AL Lesson structure	• "Good morning class!" Class: "Good morning Mr.__!" • 6-8 phases of the AL Cycle are used. • Recalls yesterday's lesson. "Yesterday we ta ked about….. Today we…. • "After the lesson you will be able to …." • "At the end of the lesson you will be able to identify how things expanded in the Republic of Liberia." • "Who can tell us the last topic?" • Teacher checks students' recall of previous lesson. • Links to previous and future lessons. Gives out tests from previous day, saying "Yesterday, we talked about ___ and today we are talking about ___." At end, ties end of lesson to homework for tomorrow.	• 3 or fewer phases of AL Cycle are used. • Lesson Outcomes section of AL Cycle become statement of topic only, not the skills and knowledge students will have after the lesson. • Gives topic of lesson only, not learning outcomes.	2. *Distinguish between lesson topics and learning outcomes, Identify specific skills and knowledge that students will demonstrate at the end of each lesson. Write learning outcome statements as part of lesson plan in terms of student performance using action verbs.* *By framing the lesson in student skill outcomes, teachers will be guided to teach and assess for student performance rather than "covering" a topic (See Continuous Assessment models, Category G).*
	3. Timing and pacing of lesson	• Smooth pacing. • Well-planned lesson leads to good pacing.	• Downtime while some student copy from blackboard and others have finished but have nothing to do. • Teacher keeps looking at his watch and announces how much time is left. • Teacher keeps stopping to look at his notes.	

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Broad Category	Variable	Examples from Notes on Strong Activities with High Scores	Examples from Notes on Weak Activities with Low Scores	Recommendations
			• Teacher leaves to get textbooks [he could have had them ready at the beginning of the class].	
			• Teacher scolds students for bad timing: "You are supposed to be finished by now. No time to waste!"	
			• Substitute teacher starts class 25 minutes late, and then only conducts a review of previous lesson [to please the observer?]	
			• Late students enter the classroom throughout the lesson. No attempt is made to help them catch up.	
B. Teaching & Learning Effective-ness	4. Clarity of content, information and skills	• Clarity of information is presented on Sets. • Detailed and organized information is presented on use of capitals and small letters.	• Teacher reads from his notes. He writes many spelling errors which are in his notes on the blackboard. • Spelling, grammar, and content errors on board: <u>puls</u> for plus; <u>slippa</u> for slipper; <u>misson</u> for missing "sense of <u>felling</u>" "The way the <u>scientis</u> work is called_____." <u>Hopsial</u> for hospital. • "An equivalent <u>sets</u> of kitchen utensils." • Language teacher writes on board: "The <u>things is</u> in the box" and "Write the beginning letter of <u>each words</u>." • Teacher taught about pre-fixes but the lesson topic was suffixes. • Lesson topic was carrying in addition. Level of content too high. Most students had not learned that much math in less than a month in Level i. • Most students are just copying math problems from blackboard, not actually understanding the problems. • Teacher defines a sentence as needing a period, but doesn't correct hisown sentences which lack a period. • Level I Youth students, some of whom have never been to school in their lives, are expected to understand Unions and Intersections in Math. Teacher offers an explanation, "U represents a simple plus," but students appear confused. • Teacher writes on board for students to copy: "Manuscript writing is one in which letters are separated…." Content seems appropriate for teacher manual, not for student learning. • Teacher uses hash marks on blackboard to demonstrate how to solve math problem. Students copy hash marks. However hash marks are an inappropriate method for math calculation.	Recommendations: Teaching & Learning Effectiveness ALPP teachers should receive training, coaching and professional development to: 3. Identify and correct spelling and grammar errors when they write on blackboards. 4. Use a variety of methods and examples in each lesson. Match these to AL-recom-mended learning styles. 5. Use examples from contexts and locations familiar to students (family, village, jobs, schoolyard, Liberia), 6. Design lessons that cultivate thinking skills, analysis of facts, creative applications, and hands-on experiences, not just copying, verbal repetition and duplication of content. 7. Use students themselves to initiate

Broad Category	Variable	Examples from Notes on Strong Activities with High Scores	Examples from Notes on Weak Activities with Low Scores	Recommendations
				lesson examples and problems. Have other students critique them. 8. Teach Level I subjects for entering students of different levels of prior learning. ALPP curriculum and manual should be adjusted and revised to:
	5. Variety of methods & opportunities for learning	• Teacher uses many drawings to clarify points in addition to other methods. Students make their own drawings on board as well. • Teacher writes many letters, having students pronounce them, and giving both written and verbal examples of each.	• Teacher uses fill-in-the-blank exercises on the board, almost exclusively. Little variety. • Students mostly read aloud in unison from lesson content written on blackboard. • Teacher mostly gives lectures using the blackboard. Students seldom actively participate.	9. Accommodate the variety of skill levels of entering Level I students. An initial assessment and two-level entry should be considered. A form of two-level entry into Level I should be developed.
	6. Cognitive level of learning. Thinking skills required of student	• Teacher: "Try to understand the meaning of prefix." Students analyze words with prefixes during group work. • "Why is the mother beating the rice?" Students asked to analyze sentence to determine if it is a full sentence. Teacher gets three reasons why this is a sentence from students. • Teacher gives definition of a "sentence." Students go to board and write sentences. Teacher has class analyze if students' sentences follow the definition. • Class is asked to explain why a student's solution to problems he put on the board are correct.	• Social studies lesson becomes a language lesson only. Students aren't challenged to think about family or social concepts. • Teacher to student: "You aren't writing. Don't you know how to use a pen? This is not an A,B,C class. You have to write in notes." • Students copy math instructions for doing sums exactly from board. After copying, all students read aloud with the teacher, reciting word for word. Math skills are not practiced.	10. Emphasize that students' copying the manual's unedited "learning points" from the board is not an appropriate lesson strategy. Teachers should be advised to use Learning points only to plan their own lessons.
	7. Thoughtful-ness, reflection, del beration	• Teacher asks thought-provoking question: "What would be your approach if you had trouble with your government in today's world? Would you go back to war?"	• Instruction is mostly a drill and recitation of the alphabet. • Students are supposed to only copy math equations from board, not solve math problems.	11. Review content of ALP Level I curriculum for appropriateness to learning needs of ALPP students.
	8. Creativity, inventiveness, imagination	• Students made up their own problems and wrote them on the board for other students to solve. • Students draw their own sets on the blackboard. • Teacher's assignment: "Go home and draw the sets from your community."	• Students only copy word for word from the "learning points" the teacher has written on board.	
	9. Examples and illustrations	• Teacher asks students if they know of other words that start with "a." Students attempt to think of words. • Teacher asks students to name different types of visitors to their school: Students' suggestions are used: PTA, parents, NGOs, education officer, community leaders, government officials. • Teacher writes familiar L berian places on blackboard as examples of proper nouns: Gbarnga, Tusu, Selega, Tennebu, Sorza, Kakata, Monrovia.	• Teacher of evening Youth students, one of whom is holding a baby in her arms, doesn't use students' own families as examples when teaching about families. Instead she uses the more abstract lesson elements. She drills class on labels for "family" members from ALP manual. Group discussion about families would have been highly effective for these adult Youth students, but was not used.	
C. Communi-	10. Multi-	• Group work creates opportunity for multi-directional	• Teacher mostly lectures and writes on the blackboard. Does	Recommendations:

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cation & Interaction Dynamics	directional communication	learning. (multi-directional) • Teacher makes it clear she expects student communication. Lots of active calling out of answers and feedback to and from students. (multi-directional) • Teacher tells students to become the teacher. (multi-directional)	not often interact with students (uni-directional). • Students stayed in fixed seats and no interaction at all with each other took place. (two-directional) • Teacher talks only to students at front of class. Students at back are ignored. (two-directional) • When an individual student works at blackboard, exchange exists only between student and teacher, while rest of class doesn't pay attention.(two-directional)	Communication & Interaction Dynamics ALPP teachers should receive training, coaching and professional development to: 12. Design lesson episodes that have multi-directional exchanges (teacher-to-student-to-teacher; and student-to-student)
	11. Delivery. Connection to students	• Teacher engages class throughout lesson with loud, compelling voice and frequent questions. Students give him their full attention. • Teacher has a soft voice but Youth students listen to her and pay attention.	• Teacher tries to control class, but class doesn't pay attention. Students just ta k to each other. • Teacher looks down and reads from notes all the time. • Teacher talks to blackboard as she writes, not to students. • Noise intrudes from class on the other side of grass mats that divide classes. Also noise on roof from rainfall. No one can hear. • Students who are in schoolyard outside open classroom window distract students during lesson. No classroom management skills exist. Constant chaos. Teacher has no authority. Interruptions as students enter, leave, and reenter classroom. • Playground noises and chanting drown out voices of teachers and students. • Teacher mostly looks to left side of classroom. Students in rest of classroom are not engaged. • Teacher remains at front of classroom. Does not circulate where students are seated.	13. Look around and communicate with students in all areas of the classroom, not just those in front. 14. Encourage the practice of saying "thank you" and giving frequent constructive feedback to students. 15. Know how to engage students in dialogue, group discussion, and giving formal and informal oral presentations. ALPP school administrators should:
	12. Feedback & reaction to student	• "Are we there? Is she correct?" • Clapping by students for correct students. • "Good. Very good. Thank you." Repeats "thank you" throughout lesson. • Teacher asks whole class about a student who has performed a math problem, "Is she right? Are you sure?" All students answer. • Teacher says "Very fine." Also jokes gently when correcting students' errors. • Students clap when a student is correct. When one student is incorrect, teacher does not embarrass student but asks another student the same question. • "Thank you, thank you, thank you."	• Teacher yells "Quiet" to students. "Why can you not remember?" • Teacher (critically) "You are wasting time. What happened to you? You aren't writing. Don't you know how to use a pen? This class is not an A B C class. You have to write notes." • Very little feedback is given to students at all.	16. Develop policies and procedures that restrict students in the schoolyard from creating noise distractions that interfere with ongoing lessons.

Broad Category	Variable	Examples from Notes on Strong Activities with High Scores	Examples from Notes on Weak Activities with Low Scores	Recommendations
	13. Student-centered. Respect & validation of students	• "Thank you" to students. • "Thank you very much." • Students who perform correctly are recognized by teacher and by whole class.	• Teacher takes gum from student and rubs it in his hair and scalp. • In only second week of school, for first-time student, teacher says loudly to Level I student who is not able to write letters: "If you cannot write A B C D E, you will have to go back to K-3. You won't stay in the class. Am I right?"	
	14. Student initiation & contribution to lesson ideas	• "Go to the board and write something down your friends can understand." Students go to board and create their own math problems. • "Do you understand? Tell me if you don't." • Not only teacher, but students go to board to draw ducks. • "Who can tell us about sounds of letters?" One student holds up hand and answers. Teacher: "who else can help us?" Teacher elicits "blue" and other "b" words from students. • "We need your participation. We need your ideas. Is that so?"	• Teacher does not expect students to contribute. Students sit in their seats and listen only.	
D. Questions, Inquiry, Investigation	15. Source & initiation of questions	• "Who has a question? Ask if you don't understand." • Students are encouraged to ask questions about the five senses. One student asks about the brain. • Teacher :"Anybody who doesn't understand?" Student: "What does 'problem' mean?" Teacher: "Anything that is not good for you." • "Who can tell us about ___? Who else can help us?"	• Students are not expected to ask question. They never ask questions. Teacher is the only person to ask questions. • Teacher asks questions exclusively.	Recommendations: Questions, Inquiry, Investigation ALPP teachers should receive training, coaching and professional development to: 17. Use skillful techniques to solicit responses from each and every student, including those who are quiet, shy or reluctant to answer questions. 18. Use open-ended, probing and follow-up questioning techniques to develop analytical thinking skills in students.
	16. Frequency of questions	• Teachers ask questions of class throughout lesson. • Frequent asking of questions is main mode of instruction. • Teacher reuses same questions twice during lesson, to give second opportunity for shy students to answer.	• Minimal use of questions. Students are expected to only copy from information teacher has written on blackboard.	
	17. Kinds of questions (yes/no vs. open-ended)	• Teacher: "If you have a question, ask me. Any question." When students did not answer his questions, "I can ask from here [front of room] but if you don't' answer, I can't get into your heart." • "Who can tell me about ___?	• Teacher: "Is she correct?" All students in unison: "Yes!" Teacher: "Are you sure?" Students: "Yes."	

Broad Category	Variable	Examples from Notes on Strong Activities with High Scores	Examples from Notes on Weak Activities with Low Scores	Recommendations
	18. Follow-up & extension questions	• Teacher relates questions about using capital letters to life skills example: "How will you feel if someone in the class is infected with HIV/AIDS?" [HIV/AIDS is offered as an example of a word with capital letters.] • Students analyze each other's sentences to see if they are complete. • Teacher asks whole class about problems that students put on board: "Are they all correct? Who can tell me why?" • Group work enables students to answer basic questions in new contexts with new content.	• Questions have fixed answers. Teacher does not probe for extended ideas.	19. Replace some of the oral group recitation with thoughtful responses.
	19. Exploration, inquiry, and problem-solving	• Teacher asks thought-provoking question: "What would be your approach if you had trouble with your government in today's world? Would you go back to war?" Students are given time to think of answers.	• No use of inquiry or problem-solving is observed.	
E. Learning Resources	20. Adequacy of Resources	• No classroom observed had adequate resources.	• Most lessons lack textbooks, supplemental reading materials, maps, charts, pictures, plants, hands-on materials, or other resources. Only blackboard and copybooks are used. • Science class needs real materials for teaching science. • Copying from the blackboard becomes the substitute for textbooks. • Classrooms have nothing in them but benches and blackboard. No materials are used to stimulate interest in learning. • Class is in corner of auditorium with second noisy class elsewhere in room. • 32 students were jammed into a tiny room that had about 14 desks. Teenage students sat two to a desk.	Recommendations: Learning Resources ALPP teachers should receive training, coaching and professional development to: 20. Create improvised instructional materials such as math problems or language exercises from schoolyard, students' family, home, village, jobs, road signs, and marketplace. Use, everyday, the resources and textbooks that are provided through ALPP school kits, and other `formal sources. 21. Assure that every student has regular experience with reading and handling books for
	21.Accomp-	• Room too crowded. Students share small desks.	• Teacher writes an entire section on consonants' sounds from	

Broad Category	Variable	Examples from Notes on Strong Activities with High Scores	Examples from Notes on Weak Activities with Low Scores	Recommendations
	lishment in low-resourced environment	Students in very small classroom pick up arm-desks and carry them to the schoolyard for group work. • Teacher sends student to schoolyard to bring in a live ant to demonstrate word beginning with letter "a." • Students share textbooks. Teacher says, "You do it [read textbooks] together." Students read textbooks to each other in pairs.	the ALP manual on the board. All students copy this long section into their copybooks. Some oral learning activities take place, but students do not use textbooks. • Students have little to learn from beyond oral presentations by the teacher and copying from the cha kboard. They do not learn using materials or examples from their environment.	information and pleasure. ALPP administrators should: 22. Identify budgetary, donor or other assistance to assure that every school has a supply of textbooks for information and other books for pleasure reading.
F. Learner Participation & Engage-ment	22. Initial motivation and challenge to student	• Teacher introduces L beria's wars as topic for students to learn. Students are attentive.	• Teacher spends considerable time at beginning writing sections of teachers' manual on the board. Students are not engaged or challenged.	Recommendations: Learner Participation & Engagement ALPP teachers should receive training, coaching and professional development to: 23. Assure that all students actively participate each day in each lesson, including those who are shy, reluctant or disruptive. 24. Gain skills of motivating and involving all students, even those in large classes. 25. Develop techniques for making group and team work productive: understanding roles and interpersonal dynamics; planning group questions; assuring all group members participate (creating small groups of 5 or fewer students); assuring all group members discuss
	23. Ongoing engage-ment and interest	• After writing names of Liberian places on the board, teacher says, "Give me 5 names of places." Students then offer names of more places. Also students give names of people and objects, which leads to teacher's description on common versus proper nouns.	• Most students sit passively and do not even copy in their copybooks.	
	24. Teacher enthusiasm	• "Good morning class!" Class responds. Teacher leads students in rubbing hands, clapping, with two fingers. All students smile and laugh.	• Teacher turns her back to students throughout class. Yawns constantly. Doesn't make eye contact with students. Room is almost silent. Tells observer, "it's very difficult to get school started this late in the year."	
	25. Encourage-ment of students	• "Write good notes [in your copybooks]. You can use them later." • "If you are correct, I'll give you a prize!" • "We are not going to beat you. Go to the board and write down something your friends can understand….very good." • "Don't be afraid. You are our children. Be glad. Be free. Take your own time. Don't hurry up."" • Tomorrow you can be President of the country. It will benefit you and your people tomorrow. Keep the torch burning."	• Teacher says loudly to Level I student (in only second week of school) who is not able to write letters: "If you cannot write A B C D E, you will have to go back to K-3. You won't stay in the class. Am I right?"	
	26. Active student participation	• Students go up to board to write their answer to problems given by teachers.	• Students are quiet and unresponsive. Teacher tries to stimulate them to respond, but his efforts are actually nagging and even criticizing them for not responding.	

Broad Category	Variable	Examples from Notes on Strong Activities with High Scores	Examples from Notes on Weak Activities with Low Scores	Recommendations
		• Teacher: "You will come up to the board, and introduce yourself." Students go to board, show their letter, write their name and letter [E = Esther, V = Victoria, O = Oldman, S = Sia] and say "Good morning friends" and their name. Teacher says, "She says who she is!" All students clap for each performance. Students are very pleased. • Students suggest words that begin with letters given by students. Teacher writes words on board. • A student writes on blackboard. Whole class decides if he is correct. All clap when he is correct. • Most students are very involved in lesson. Students eagerly raise hands to participate. All yell "Yes" and "No" loudly.	• Only second day of school for these Level I students, and already they seem bored and unmotivated. • Teacher goes to benches and wakes up a sleeping student. Another student falls asleep. Another looks sleepy.	together and one or two students do not dominate; managing group work in small classrooms with rigid seating; students reporting group outcomes to whole class.
	27. Students learn in groups and teams	• Students in very small classroom pick up arm-desks and carry them to the schoolyard for group work. • Teacher allows groups to teach each other: "Don't write this down [blackboard information on consonants]. We are going to divide ourselves in groups.' Teacher forms students into 3 groups, passes out paper to each group, and lets one student read the instructions. Teacher circulates among groups to check for their progress. After group problem-solving, a student from each group goes to front and reads his/her group's answers.	• Groups of 9, 9 and 10 students. This use of group work doesn't engage the entire group. Most watch while one child does all the work. Teacher lets this happen. • Groups have 7 to 8 students in a group. Groups are too large for all to participate effectively. • Once again, group work doesn't engage the entire group. • Group work failed as a method. Size of groups is too large for collaboration (12, 13 and 9). Use of group work did not mean students actually communicated with each other.. No interaction or teamwork. Benches and seating space too close. Extended time not given for group discussion.	
G. Student Assessment & Evaluation	28. Assessment appropriate for lesson objectives	• Teacher hands out tests from previous lesson. Gives each student feedback on his or her progress. • Teacher uses continuous assessment methods.	• No assessment is observed. • Assessment is only all-class oral response. Individual students are not checked.	Recommendations: Student Assessment & Evaluation ALPP teachers should receive training, coaching and professional development to:
	29. Checking for accomplishment of learning during lesson	• Students are asked if other students are right. "Are you sure?" • A teacher goes to most students and checks their work. Writes down their scores. Circulates often in class. They show him their completed work. He reads their work at their desk, gives feedback and grades their work. • Teacher checks to see if all students copy down the definition of a "noun" which she has written on board. • Teacher goes through classroom and collects students' written math problems that they have worked on during class session. Teacher marks each at front of room and returns them at end of lesson. • Teacher often circulates in student desk area. Checks each student's notebook for completion of writing of	• Doesn't check students individually. Only verbal response to entire class is given. • One-way. Doesn't really check for student learning. Teacher only goes through motions of checking. • Teacher: "Do you understand?" Students all together: "Yes." Teacher: "Do you?" Students: all together: "Yes." But teacher does not know if individual students understand. • Teacher checks to see if all students are copying. But copying is not an assessment of a student's skills. • Group assessment. Not Individual assessment. • Teacher checks most students' class work but doesn't give them feedback.	26. Know how to design student assessment methods that evaluate student's' accomplishment of the specific learning outcome goals of the lesson. 27. Know how to design

Broad Category	Variable	Examples from Notes on Strong Activities with High Scores	Examples from Notes on Weak Activities with Low Scores	Recommendations
		alphabet. Students show him their work and he reads this, gives verbal feedback, and writes a score on each copybook.		and conduct daily continuous assessment techniques to check on students' learning accomplishment during class time
	30. Checking for accomplish-ment of learning <u>at</u> <u>end</u> of lesson	• Teacher circulates around class as students work on assignment. At end of class, teacher collects these and will review them overnight.	• At end of lesson, teacher writes extended definition of "equivalent sets" on blackboard. Some students copy. Teacher says "You got it?" but doesn't check to see if they have learned.	28. Develop techniques for knowing, at the end of each lesson, whether each student has learned the objective of the lesson that day.
	31. Student knows own learning accomp-lishment.	• Teacher says, "Is she right?" All students say, "Yes." All students clap for correct student. • Teacher asks, "What is a set?" He moves back and forth and asks different students. Gets different examples of marketplace items that belong in sets. • Whole class evaluates each student who goes to board and writes words. • Student defines "sentence." Another student goes to board and writes his own sentence. Teacher says, "Class is he correct?" Class says "Yes." • Student to observer's question regarding how does he know he is learning: "We write it in our notes [learning content written by teacher on the blackboard]. They [teachers] are teaching us good, so we learn many things. If we don't understand, we ask the teacher. He helps you read by yourself."	• Teacher teaches to 3 to 5 "good" students only. Rest of the students are not taught, and rest do not pay attention.	29. Develop skills to give appropriate feedback to each student to assure the student knows he/she has accomplished learning and feels confident as a learner.
	32. Student self-confidence in own learning. High self-image.	• Students write their initials and names on blackboard. Each introduces him/herself to the class. All in class respond. All clap for each student.	• Class comes to an end abruptly with little or no conclusion.	

Table 15. Summary of Student Testing Program: Schools and Programs.

School	Location	County	SC	Date	Conventional		ALP Regular		ALPP Youth		Program	Programs
				2008	3	5	II	III	II	III	Targets	Tested
Balahun Public	Balahun	Lofa	2112020	9/8			20	20			3	2
Voinjama Public	Voinjama	Lofa	2118028	9/9			20	20			1	1
Gorlu Public	Gorlu	Lofa	2114002	9/10	21	20	21	18			2	2
William V. S. Tubman Elem	Kpein	Nimba	3318047	9/11	20	20			20	20	2	2
Flumpa Elem & High	Flumpa	Nimba	3314020	9/12					21	20	2	2
William V.S. Tubman Elem/JH	Gbonkonimah	Bong	0614060	9/15			20	20			2	2
Dorothy Cooper Elem & JH	Gbarnga	Bong	0604022	9/16			20	20			1	1
Kpakolakoyaja Community	Kpakolakoyaja	Bong	0610008	9/17	20	20					3	2
Bardnersville Public	Kebba town	Montserrado	3006196	9/19	20	20	20	21			3	2
John Hilary Tubman Elem &JH	Harper	Maryland	2710002	9/23	20	20	21	20			3	2
A. Dash Wilson Elem & JH	Harper	Maryland	2710011	9/23					20	22	1	1
Pleebo Demonstration	Pleebo	Maryland	2704007	9/24			7	12	5	16	3	2
Harper Elem Demonstration	Harper	Maryland	2710004	9/25			12	1			1	1
E. L. R. Z. Community	Zwedru	Grand Gedeh	1508057	10/2			18	3	3	4	3	2
J.C. Barlee Elem & JH	Zwedru	Grand Gedeh	1508057	10/3	20	20	20	20			1	2
Tubman Wilson Institute	Zwedru	Grand Gedeh	1508035	10/3					20	20	1	1
		total									32	27

Total numbers:	Student count:		3	5	II	III	II	III	
students tested 806	Tested in Lofa County		21	20	61	58	0	0	160
tests given 1,612	Tested in Nimba County		20	20	0	0	41	40	121
- two per student (math/LA)	Tested in Bong County		20	20	40	40	0	0	120
locations 16	Tested in Monserrado County		20	20	20	21	0	0	81
test settings 23	Tested in Maryland County		20	20	40	33	25	38	176

Table 16. Summary of Lesson Observations

Summary of Lesson Observations – Mid-Term ALPP Review						
Date	**County**	**School**	**Subject**	**Level/Grade**	**Admin Org**	**Reg/Youth/Con**
9-Sep	Lofa	Voinjama Pub Sch	Lang	I	Part ALP	R
9-Sep	Lofa	Voinjama Pub Sch	Lang	I I I	Part ALP	R
10-Sep	Lofa	Gorlu	Lang	I I I	CAII	R
10-Sep	Lofa	Gorlu	Math	I I I	CAII	R
11-Sep	Nimba	Tubman (Nimba)	Math	I	CAII	Y
12-Sep	Nimba	Flumpa	Lang	I	CAII	Y
12-Sep	Nimba	Flumpa	Math	1	MOE	Conv
12-Sep	Nimba	Flumpa	Math	2	MOE	Conv
12-Sep	Nimba	Flumpa	Lang	2	MOE	Conv
15-Sep	Bong	Tubman (Bong)	Lang	I I I	CAII	R
15-Sep	Bong	Tubman (Bong)	Soc Stud	I	CAII	R
15-Sep	Bong	Tubman (Bong)	Math	I I I	CAII	R
15-Sep	Bong	Tubman (Bong)	Lang	I I	CAII	R
15-Sep	Bong	Tubman (Bong)	Lang	I	CAII	R
16-Sep	Bong	Dorothy Cooper	Soc Stud	I	Part ALP	R
16-Sep	Bong	Dorothy Cooper	Math	I	Part ALP	R
17-Sep	Bong	Kpakolokoyaja	Lang	I I I	CAII	R
17-Sep	Bong	Kpakolokoyaja	Lang	I	CAII	R
17-Sep	Bong	Kpakolokoyaja	Science	I	CAII	R
19-Sep	Montser	Barnardsville	Soc Stud	I I I	CAII	R
19-Sep	Montser	Barnardsville	Math	I I I	CAII	R
23-Sep	Maryland	J Hillary Tubman	Math	I I	CAII	R
23-Sep	Maryland	J Hillary Tubman	Lang	I I I	CAII	R
23-Sep	Maryland	A. Dash Wilson	Lang	I I I	CAII	Y
24-Sep	Maryland	Pleebo Demonstr	Math	I I	CAII	R
24-Sep	Maryland	Pleebo Demonstr	Lang	I I I	CAII	R
24-Sep	Maryland	Pleebo Demonstr	SocStud	4,5	MOE	Conv
25-Sep	Maryland	Harper Elem Extens	Math	I	Part ALP	R
25-Sep	Maryland	Harper Elem Extens	Lang	I	Part ALP	R
25-Sep	Maryland	ELRZ Community	Soc Stud	I I I	CAII	Y
2-Oct	Gr Gedeh	ELRZ Community	Math	I	CAII	R
2-Oct	Gr Gedeh	ELRZ Community	Lang	I	CAII	R
3-Oct	Gr Gedeh	Barlee	Math	I I I	Part ALP	R
3-Oct	Gr Gedeh	Tubman Wilson Inst	Soc Stud	I	CAII	Y
3-Oct	Gr Gedeh	Tubman Wilson Inst	Science	I	CAII	Y
3-Oct	Gr Gedeh	Tubman Wilson Inst	Math	I	CAII	Y
3-Oct	Gr Gedeh	Tubman Wilson Inst	Lang	I	CAII	Y
3-Oct	Gr Gedeh	Tubman Wilson Inst	Lang	I	CAII	Y
3-Oct	Gr Gedeh	Tubman Wson Inst	Lang	3	MOE	Conv
	Totals:	CAII ALPP Lessons			27	
		CAII Regular		18		
		CAII Youth		9		
		Partner ALP Lessons			7	
		MOE Conventional Lessons			5	
		Total Lesson Observations			39	

Table 17. Summary of Interviews and Focus Group Activities of Community Representatives and Professional Officers

Date	Institution	Interview	Focus Group
August			
11 Montserrado County	C.D.B.King Elementary School	• Principal • Community Reps.	Community Group
12	Bardnersville Public School	• Principal • Community Reps.	Community Group
13	Cecelia Dunbar Public School	• Principal • Community Reps.	Community Group
September			
8 Lofa County	Balahun Public School Education Office	• Principal • Community Reps. • A/CEO • DEO	Community Group
9	• Voinjama Public School • Learning Resource Center	• Principal • Community Coordinator	
10	Gorlu School		Community Group
11 Nimba County	William V S Tubman School	Principal	Community Group
12	• Flumpa Elementary School • Education Office	• Principal • DEO	Community Group
15 Bong County	WVS Tubman School Education Office Learning Resource Center	• CEO • DEO • Community Coordinator	Community Group
16	Dorothy Cooper Elementary & Junior High School		Community Group
17	Kpakalokayaja Community School		Community Group
22 Maryland County	Learning Resource Center	Community Coordinator	Community Group
23	John Hillary Tubman Elementary School A. Dash Wilson Elementary & Junior High School	Principal	Community Group
24	Pleebo Demonstration School		Community Group
25	Education Office	CEO	
October			
2 Grand Gedeh County	ELRZ Education Office	CEO	Community Group
3	J C Barlee Learning Resource Center	Community Coordinator	Community Group
Totals	**Interviews** • School Principals • CEOs and DEOs • Community Coordinators **Focus Groups**	8 7 5 15	

Survey Instruments

Student Tests

Instructions for Administering Student Exams - Grade 3 and ALP Level II

Exams are being administered to students in selected schools in the six counties where Creative Associates implemented the ALPP project. Students in conventional school programs, ALP regular, and ALP youth will be tested. Each student will take a brief exam in Mathematics and Language Arts. Exams will be given to approximately 20 students in both Grade 3 and in ALP Level II.

General Instructions: before handing out the exams – an explanation

We are in Liberia to look at the Accelerated Learning Program – ALP – to see what progress students are making toward learning to read and to do mathematics. Students in the ALP program are learning the same things are students in grades 1 through 6. We want to know how much students have learned about language arts and mathematics.

Because this is the beginning of the school year, the tests will cover some of the things you learned last year. We know students forget some things over the summer, so this will help us understand what things you can remember and what things you forgot.

We will not know who took these tests – your name will not be on the papers. But we do want to know what grade (Level) you are and whether you are a girl or boy (male or female). We really appreciate you helping us do this.

You will first take a short mathematics test. Then we will take a short break and you will take a short Language Arts test. Each test will take from 45 minutes to an hour.

Do the best you can.

Do it by yourself – without help from anyone else.

We will read part of the exam to you, but you will do most of it yourself.

We will provide pencils and if you need extra paper to work problems, we will give it to you.

If you don't understand what to do, you may ask questions, but we cannot help you with the answers.

Again – remember to do this work by yourself so we can learn something.

> *Provide each student with a mathematics exam that has been numbered in the right hand corner, as well as a pencil and a blank sheet of paper. The number on the exam will be matched to a number on the Language Arts exam.*

Mathematics I – Administration Instructions

Do not start the test yet. First I want you to fill in the box at the top.

For Grade 3: Look at the box on the right side of the paper (show them where - not the shaded one). Check the line for grade 3. Write your age on the next line (how old are you). Then check whether you are a girl or a boy.

For ALP: Look at the box on the left side of the paper (hold it up and show them). Check whether you are in a regular or a youth program. Write your age on the next line (how old are you). Check either male or female.

Since this is a mathematics test and not a reading test, some of the questions will be read to you. I will read the instructions for each item at least twice. Students who do not quite understand may ask me to repeat it, but I cannot help with the answer. You may write anywhere on this paper if you need to work a problem or use the sheet of paper I have given you.

1. Write the number 9 on the line.

2. Write the number 56 on the line.

3. Which of these two signs makes the statement true < or >? Write one of the signs in the box. *(the two signs may be written on the board for explanation but not named)*

4. These are two sets. What do you get when you add them together?

5. Which fraction is larger (bigger)? Write your answer on the line.

6. Which fraction is larger (bigger)? Write your answer on the line.

7. What fraction of this circle is shaded? Write that on the line.

8. What fraction of this item is shaded? Write that on the line.

9. In the box, draw a triangle. Do the best you can.

10. In the box, draw a square. Do the best you can.

11. Two weeks equals how many days? Write the answer on the line.

12. Look at the picture of the clock. What time is it? Write it on the line.

I will not read the rest of the questions to you. You will work them by yourself. Again, do the best you can. If you have questions, raise your hand. When you finish raise your hand again – and I will collect your exam.

Before you collect the exam, have the student write the same student number on a language exam, complete the information box, turn it over, and take a short break.

Language Arts I – Administration Instructions

Check to make sure the information box has been completed and the identification number written on the top.

This is a language arts tests and you will have to do some reading. But I will read most of the questions to you. I will read the question at least twice. If you do not quite understand, raise your hand and I will read it again.

Do this work yourself – do not look at other papers or give help to others.

  1. Write the letter K on the line. It can be either a capital or a small letter.

  2. Write the letter S on the line – either a capital or small letter.

  3. Write the first two letters of the word "tree" (*describe a tree*).

  4. Write the first two letters of the word "plum" – (*describe a plum*).

  5. Write each of the small letters for the four that are listed: D *(pause)* E *(pause)* F *(pause)* G.

  6-8. Correct the mistakes in each of the sentences (numbers 6, 7, 8). The mistake could be in punctuation, capitalization, or verb usage. Write in the corrections. *Read the sentences to the students.*

 9-10. Write the correct word in the sentence. *Read the sentence and explain that they will use one of the words in parentheses.*

 11-12. Choose the word with the same meaning. Write the letter on the line. *Read the words and explain that they will choose one from the second column.*

 13-16. I will read this paragraph with you. Follow the words on the paper and then read them after me. *Ask them again to follow the words on the paper as you read. Read it twice. Then read the questions (pause for them to answer).*

 18-20. On the next page is a short reading passage and four questions. You are to read this page yourself and answer the questions the best you can.

Give the students a few minutes to go back over the exam and complete any parts they may not have completed. Answer any questions, but do not help with answers. When a student is finished, collect the paper, and thank the student for providing assistance to the project.

Tell them to please keep the pencils.

ALP

Regular _____
Youth _____
Age _____

Male _____
Female _____

LANGUAGE ARTS I

Grade 3

Age _____
Boy _____
Girl _____

Listening

1. _____	2. _____	3. _____	4. _____	

Communication

Write the small letters for **D E F G** **5.** _____	**Correct the mistake in each of these sentences. The mistake could be punctuation, capitalization, or verb usage. Write in the corrections.** **6.** Are the girls in school today **7.** We are going to the village to see thomas and Kofa. **8.** I drops a cup yesterday.	

Write the correct word in the sentence:
 	
(are   is   am)
 	
9. The boys _____ playing by the river.
 	
10. Mary _____ riding her bicycle.
	Choose the word with the same meaning. Write the letter on the line.
	
	11. fast _____ **a.** ugly
	                          b. quick
	12. kind _____ **c.** surprise
	                          d. good	

Comprehension

Joseph played football with his friend Peter. He kicked the football over Peter's head. The ball hit a tree. The ball fell in the river. Joseph will swim in the river to get the ball.

13. Who kicked the football? _____

14. Did the tree fall in the river? _____

15. Who is Joseph's friend? _____

16. How will Joseph get the ball? _____

Two children walked to the village. Jebeh carried a blue basket. Saa carried a red box. Bananas were in the basket. A radio was in the box. They stopped to eat some food.

17. Who was carrying the bananas? _____

18. What color was the basket?_____

19. Can you eat what was in the box? _____

20. What food do you think Jebeh and Saa ate? _____

ALP
Regular _____
Youth _____
Age _____
Male ____
Female ____

Mathematics I

Numbers **1**.	**2.**	**3.** Which sign makes this statement true? **< or >**	**4.**	
_____	_____	8 ☐ 4	**+** **=**_____	
Fractions 5. Which fraction is larger? $\frac{1}{2}$ or $\frac{1}{5}$ _____	6. Which fraction is larger? $\frac{1}{7}$ or $\frac{3}{4}$ _____	**7.** What fraction is shaded? _____	**8.** What fraction is shaded? _____	
Geometry **9.** Draw a triangle.	**10.** Draw a square.	**Measurement** **11.** 2 weeks = ___ days	**12.** What is the time? _____	
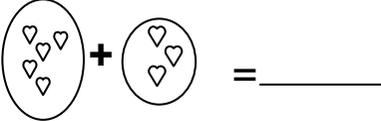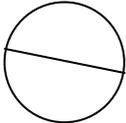
Addition			
13. 2 + 3 + 7 = _____	**14.** (7 + 2) + 3 = _____	**15.** 42 + 15	**16.** 37 22 + 14
Subtraction			
17. 10 – 2 = _____	**18.** 6 - 1	**19.** 58 - 37	**20.** 70 - 24
Multiplication			
21. 4 x 4 = _____	**22.** 3 x (1 x 2) = _____	**23.** 1 x (2 x 3) = _____	**24**. 5 x ☐ = 15

Instructions for Administering Student Exams – Grade 5 and Level III

Exams are being administered to students in selected schools in the six counties where Creative Associates implemented the ALPP project. Students in conventional school programs, ALP regular, and ALP youth will be tested. Each student will take a brief exam in Mathematics and Language Arts. Exams will be given to approximately 20 students in both Grade 5 and ALP Level III.

<u>General Instructions:</u>

Before handing out the exams – an explanation:

We are in Liberia to look at the Accelerated Learning Program – ALP – to see what progress students are making toward learning to read and to do mathematics. Students in the ALP program are learning the same things are students in grades 1 through 6. We want to know how much students have learned about language arts and mathematics.

Because this is the beginning of the school year, the tests will cover some of the things you learned last year. We know students forget some things over the summer, so this will help us understand what things you can remember and what things you forgot.

We will not know who took these tests – your name will not be on the papers. But we do want to know what grade (Level) you are and whether you are a girl or boy (male or female). We really appreciate you helping us do this.

You will first take a short mathematics test. Then we will take a short break and you will take a short Language Arts test. Each test will take from 45 minutes to an hour.

Do the best you can.

Do it by yourself – without help from anyone else.

We will read part of the exam to you, but you will do most of it yourself.

We will provide pencils and if you need extra paper to work problems, we will give it to you.

If you don't understand what to do, you may ask questions, but we cannot help you with the answers.

Again – remember to do this work by yourself so we can learn something.

Mathematics II – Administration Instructions

Do not start on the test yet. First I want you to fill in the box at the top.

For Grade 5: Please look at the box on the right side of the paper (not the shaded one), check the line for grade 5. Write in your age (how old are you) on the next line. Check whether they are a girl or a boy.

For ALP: Please look at the box on the left side of the paper (hold it up and show them). Check whether you are in a regular or a youth program Write your age on the next line - how old are you? Check either male (boy) or female (girl).

This is a mathematics test and not a reading test. Most of the questions require very little reading, but you will have to do some. I will read the questions for the first four items. I will read the questions at least twice. Students who do not quite understand may ask me to repeat it, but I cannot help with the answer.

  1. Write the number eighteen on the line.

  2. Write the Roman numeral for 5 on the line.

  3. Which sign makes this statement true? Write it in the box. *Do not read the signs but point them out – this sign or this one? Perhaps put it on the board.*

  4. Write the following number: 7 hundreds, 6 tens, 5 ones.

You will have to read and work the rest of the questions yourself. You may ask questions if you need some explanation, but remember, I cannot help you with the answer. Do not look at other students' papers and do not give help to others.

Do the best you can. If a question is too difficult, go to the next one. You may write anywhere on the paper to work the problems or use the extra sheet of paper.

When you finish the exam, please raise your hand and I will collect the exam from you.

Before you collect the exam, have the student write the same student number on a language exam, fill in the information box, and turn it over on the desk. The student can take a short break and return to the same desk for the Language exam.

Language Arts II – Administration Instructions

Each student should have an exam with the same number as their Math exam and the identification box already filled in.

Turn your tests over.

This is a language arts test and you will have to read the test questions yourself. I cannot help you with the answers, but if you do not quite understand the instructions, raise your hand.

I cannot help you with the answer. Do not look at other students' papers and do not give help to others.

Do the best you can do.

If you find that some parts of the test are too difficult, move on to another part to see if you can do that part. At the end of _____ minutes we will collect the exams from all of you.

Deal with the student quietly unless you think there is some confusion that should be cleared up for all the students.

If any finish early, collect the papers, thank them, and let them leave quietly.

Tell them to please keep the pencils.

LANGUAGE ARTS II

Communication

Write the correct pronoun in each sentence.

(him   they   them   he)

1. Kofa worked very hard on the farm. The work made _____ tired and hungry.

2. The children were laughing. _____ were very noisy.

**3. Write in the correct capital letters and punctuation in this paragraph. Do
   not rewrite the paragraph. (8 items)**

seven birds were sitting on a box by kofas house five of them flew up into a tree the others flew away because they were hungry and wanted to eat

4. Write in the letter of the word that is the opposite (antonym).

start _____   a. cry
laugh _____   b. old
up _____   c. down
young _____   d. stop

Write the correct word in the sentence.

(short   shorter   shortest)

5. February is the _____of all the months of the year.

(tall   taller   tallest)

6. Joseph is _____ than Yema.

Comprehension

7. Read the sentences and number them in the right order to make a story.   Use 1, 2, 3, 4.

_____ The plants shoot up and grow well during the wet season.
_____ Farmers sell the food they grow at the market.
_____ Farmers plant seeds when the soil is wet.
_____ When the plants are ripe the farmer gathers them.

Read the stories and answer the questions.

The river near Peter's house is very wide and deep. Peter must cross the river to get to school and to the village. He does not have a boat.

 8. What must Peter do to get to school?_____

_____

 9. How do you think Peter can cross the river without a boat?_____

_____

■ ■ ■ ■ ■

Peter likes to go to the river with his friend Kofa to catch fish. They caught seven fish yesterday. Peter dislikes going to fish with Joseph because Joseph is very noisy.

 10. What friend does Peter like to go with to catch fish? _____

 11. How many fish did Peter and his friend catch yesterday? _____

Mathematics II

Numeration

1. Write the number eighteen. _____	**2.** Write the Roman numeral for 5. _____	**3.** Which sign makes this statement true**?** **< or >** 5 ☐ 8	**4.** Write in numbers. 7 hundreds, 6 tens, 5 ones _____	

Story Problems

5. Mother bought 24 bananas on Monday and 27 bananas on Tuesday. How many bananas did she buy in two days? _____

6. The school has 59 students. There are 29 boys. How many students are girls?_____

Multiplication

7.   12
      x   4
	8. 423
	      x 5
		9. 304
		      x 12
			10. Find the square of the number 3.
			
			$3^2 = $ _____	

Division

11. 18 ÷ 6 = _____	**12.** 3 ⟌ 66	**13.** 11 ⟌ 242	**14**. 50 ⟌ 750	

Fractions/Decimals

15.

$$\frac{1}{3} + \frac{1}{3} = \underline{\hspace{1cm}}$$

16.

$$\frac{2}{4} + \frac{1}{4} = \underline{\hspace{1cm}}$$

17. Write the fraction for the decimal.

0.6 _____

0.25 _____

18. Write the decimal for the fraction.

$$\frac{1}{2} = \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$$

$$\frac{1}{10} = \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$$

19. Write the fraction for the shaded part.

_____

Measurement/Money

20.
$$\begin{array}{r} \$\,100.50 \\ +\quad\ \ .50 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

21.
$$\begin{array}{r} \$\,14.12 \\ +\ \ \$\,10.75 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

22. How many $5 in $100? _____

23. How many minutes in 2 hours?_____

Geometry

24. Find the perimeter? _____

9 cm

4 cm   4 cm

9 cm
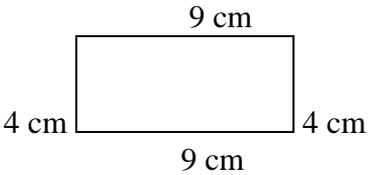
25. Line AB is the _____ of the circle.

(radius   diameter   center   area)

B

A
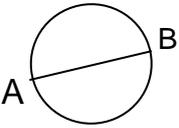
Lesson Observation Form

LESSON OBSERVATION FORM
ALPP Mid-Term Review

Lesson Observation # _____   Date _____

School_____   County_____

Subject _____   ALP Level _____   Reg / Youth _____   Conventional _____   Grade ____

Topic _____

M ____   F ____   Total _____   Teacher Name _____

			1	**2**	**3**	**Notes**
A. Teacher Organization						
1.	Organization and Preparedness	Lesson planning. Teacher's organization of lesson elements before class.	Teacher not prepared. Relies on manual only	Some planning and preparation is evident	Well prepared. Elements well organized and suitable for lesson	
2.	AL Lesson Structure	Phases of AL lesson: _____ Pre-stage, ready to learn. Sets expectation for learning. 1.____ Connection to previous learning 2.___ Big picture, Lesson part of wider context. 3.___ Outcomes stated 4..___ Range of inputs, resources 5.___ Activities 6.___ Demonstration 7.___ Review, recall for retention	3 or fewer AL phases	4-5 AL phases	6 or 7 AL phases	
3.	Time and pacing of Lesson	Effective use of class time. Begins on time. Management of time segments, transitions. Pacing. Effective ending.	Minimal time management. Chaotic, disruptive, confusing or boring	Adequate time management. But may be boring, rushed or fragmented	Exceptional use of time. Effective lesson flow and transitions. Timely ending	
B. Teaching / Learning Effectiveness						
4.	Clarity of content and information	Clear presentation of accurate knowledge of subject. Mastery of lesson content and skills. Competent information	Minimal. Inaccurate, or incomplete.	Adequate. Accurate and complete	High competence Information is unambiguous and clear	
5.		Variety of methods and opportunities for learning. Single vs. multiple methods to learn lesson objectives.	One or two methods only	More than two methods	Many methods and variety	
6.		Cognitive level of learning. Level of thinking skills required of student	Copying, memorization, recitation, repetition	Understanding Active use of knowledge	Critical thinking. Analysis of facts	
7.		Thoughtfulness and reflection. Opportunity for deliberation.	Little or new opportunity to reflect	Moderate opportunity to reflect	Frequent opportunity to reflect	
8.		Creativity, inventiveness,	Little or no	Moderate	Frequent	

			1	2	3	Notes
		imagination	opportunity to be creative	opportunity to be creative	opportunity to be creative	
9.		Examples and illustrations	No or few examples used to illustrate a concept	Moderate number of examples	Numerous examples	
	C. Communication and Interaction Dynamics					
10.	Learning impact of classroom communication	Uni-, two-way or multi-directional communication.	Uni-directional	Two-way only. Teacher-to-student-to-teacher	Multi-directional	
11.		Delivery. Gestures. Voice. Movement. Eye contact. Connection with students.	Poor delivery. Minimal connection. Does not make contact	Moderate connection. Adequate delivery	High connection. Delivery reaches students	
12.		Feedback on student performance. Negative criticism or constructive praise. .	Negative and critical. Gives feedback for errors only	Feedback adequate for both errors and success	Success is praised or reinforced. Errors receive constructive comments	
13.		Student-centered. Respects and validates students as learners.	Little respect for student. May show negativity	Moderate respect for student	High respect. Validation of each learner	
14.		Initiation and interaction. Contribution to ideas and opinion. Student role in discourse.	Students are passive. Teacher initiates and controls all communication	Students actively participate but do not initiate ideas or opinion	Students initiate, communicate and interact. Contribute own ideas	
	D. Questions, Inquiry and Investigation					
15.		Source of questions and answers. Who initiates? Who answers?	Teacher asks questions exclusively.	Students may ask a few questions	Students are encouraged to ask questions	
16.		Use of questions to engage learners	No or few questions	Small number of questions	Frequent use of questions	
17.		Kinds of questions/answers. Open > closed/ fixed-answer. Yes/no or requiring thought.	Only questions with ye s/no or closed answers	Some questions require thought	Most questions are open ended and require thoughtful answers	
18.		Follow-up and probe questions. Extended questioning. Application in new contexts.	No follow-up or extension	Minimal follow-up or extension	Effective use of follow-up and extension	
19.		Exploration, inquiry, discovery, research, investigation, experimentation, problem-solving	None	Small use	Considerable use	
	E. Learning Resources					
20.		Adequacy of learning resources and materials available for teaching and learning.	Very inadequate resources	Moderate resources	Abundant resources	
21.		Accomplishment of teaching and learning in low-resourced environment.	Low resources have negative impact on learning	Low resources impede but do not stop teaching/ learning	Effective instructional solutions despite low resources	

			1	2	3	Notes
F. Learner Participation and Engagement						
22.		Initial motivation and reason to learn at opening of lesson. Challenge to students. Inspires curiosity and desire to learn.	No initial motivation to learn is presented	Teacher offers minimal motivation or reason	Teacher offers strong motivation or challenge to learn	
23.		Ongoing engagement and interest throughout lesson.	Most students are bored or uninterested	Majority are interested and engaged	High level of engagement and attention to lesson	
24.		Teacher enthusiasm and passion for subject and teaching.	Little or no enthusiasm	Moderate enthusiasm	High enthusiasm	
25.		Encouragement, praise or discouragement of students	Minimal or no encourage-metnt	Moderate encourage-ment	High level of encourage-ment	
26.		Students actively participate vs. passively	Mostly passive learning	Mixture of passive and active learning	Mostly participatory learning	
27.		Students learn in teams or groups vs individually	Mostly individual learning	Mixture of individual and group learning	Mostly team or group learning	
G. Student Assessment and Evaluation						
28.		Methods of assessment within period of the lesson of students' understanding of lesson components	No or ineffective assessment methods used	Adequate assessment methods	Highly effective assessment methods	
29.		Checking for accomplishment of learning <u>during</u> lesson	No checking for student understanding	Infrequent checking on student understanding	Frequent checking fro student understanding	
30.		Checking for accomplishment of learning at <u>end</u> of lesson.	No final check	Weak or rushed final check	Highly effective check at end	
31.		Student's knowledge of own learning accomplishment.	Students have no idea if they have learned	Students moderately aware of own learning	Student s are fully aware of their learning accomplish-ment	
32.		Student confidence in own learning. Self-efficacy, self-image.	No confidence or negative self-image as learner	Neutral self-image as learner	Strong confidence in self as learner	

Checklist of Observed Instructional Methods, Resources and Student Support

		Used in this Lesson?	Available in Classroom? School?	Notes
INSTRUCTIONAL DELIVERY				
	1.	Whole-class lecture or presentation			
	2.	Partial-class or Small Group Lecture or Presentation			
	3.	Writing on Board			
	4.	Demonstration of procedures. Step-by-Step Instructions			
	5.	Textbooks			
	6.	Supplemental print materials			

		Used in this Lesson?	Available in Classroom? School?	Notes
7.	Posters and charts			
8.	Recitation. Memorization			
9.	Practice and examples			
10.	Framework and context			
11.	Story telling by teacher			
12.	Diagrams, pictures graphics			
	Other:			
PARTICIPATORY				
13.	Discussion – Large Group			
14.	Discussion – Small Group			
15.	Brainstorming			
16.	Ice Breaker			
17.	Energizer			
18.	Cooperative learning			
19.	Role play			
20.	Story-telling, poetry by students			
21.	Skit, Drama			
22.	Guided imagery			
23.	Song, music, instruments			
24.	Drawing, Art production			
25.	Fishbowl			
26.	Demonstration			
27.	Field trips			
28.	Simulations			
29.	Resource person			
30.	Guided practice			
31.	Debate			
32.	Game			
33.	Case Study			
34.	Reading			
35.	Students speak to class			
	Other:			
EXPLORATORY				
36.	Questions and Answers			
37.	Problem-solving.			
38.	Inquiry. Investigation			
39.	Games			
40.	Projects with planning, organizing			
41.	Outside exploration, research			
	Other:			
MATERIALS & RESOURCES				
42.	Copybooks.			
43.	Textbooks			
44.	Print materials			

		Used in this Lesson?	Available in Classroom? School?	Notes
45.	Plain paper,			
46.	Pencils, pens			
47.	Setting, room, environment			
48.	Chalk board			
49.	Student-generated materials			
	Other:			
ASSESSMENT TOOLS				
50.	Oral quizzes and recall			
51.	Paper and pencil tests			
52.	Authentic assessment			
53.	Frequent assessment during class			
	Other:			
ALP PLUS CURRICULUM				
54.	Service Learning components			
55.	Life Skills components			
ACCESS & SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS *Access/support for students who are / have:*				
56.	Gender equity. Females vs. males			
57.	Academic difficulties. Slower learners			
58.	Physical disability or health condition			
59.	Seated at back, side or secondary location in classroom			
60.	Uninterested, bored or disruptive			
61.	Emotional difficulties or trauma			
62.	Adults or over-aged. Much older or younger than rest of class			
63.	Different learning styles			
64.	Outside adult responsibilities (e.g., jobs, children)			

Interview Instrument: Community Leaders, Chiefs, Members of PTAs, Parents, Education Officers, LRC Staff, Youth Leaders

Name of School ---

Name of Person ---

Gender (Male or Female)---

Member of Group (one of above) ---

The Accelerated Learning Program (ALP) is designed to increase the learning opportunities of over-aged students aged 8-18 years in a special three year program.

The Accelerated Learning Program for Positive Living and United Service (known as ALPP or ALP – PLUS) is designed to (i) increase the learning opportunities for out-of-school youth aged 15-35 years; and (ii) engage youth within the ALPP Youth component in community service through service learning.

SAY   I am going to ask you some questions about the impact of the ALP and ALPP programs.

---

1. Finding out about the ALP or ALPP programs (Answer YES or NO to Questions 1.1, 1.2, 1.3)

1.1. Do you know a person who is now or has been enrolled in an ALP Program? -------------------------
       (**If NO**, do not ask Questions 1.3, 2 and 5.)
1.2. Do you know a person who is now or has been enrolled in an ALPP Program? -----------------------
       (**If NO**, do not ask Questions 1.3, 3, 4, and 6)
1.3. How did that person learn about the ALP or ALPP program?---

---

2. ALP Program (Answer YES or NO to each question).

What do you think of the impact of the ALP Programs? Do you think it prepares its students for

2.1. Being able to read, write, speak, listen, much better? ---

2.2. Being able to calculate better in adding, subtracting, multiplying, dividing? -----------------------------

2.3. Going on to High School?--

2.4. Doing well at High School? --

2.5. Being better behaved, more helpful, in their community and home life? ------------------------------------

2.6. Finding a job or starting their own business? --

---

3. ALPP Youth Program (Answer YES or NO to each question).

What do you think of the impact of the ALPP Youth Program? Do you think it prepares its students for

3.1. Being able to read, write, speak, listen, much better? ---

3.2. Being able to calculate better in adding, subtracting, multiplying, dividing? -----------------------------

3.3. Going on to High School?--

3.4. Doing well at High School? --

3.5. Being better behaved, more helpful, in their community and home life? ----------------------------------

3.6. Finding a job or starting their own business? ---

---

4. ALPP program (Answer YES or NO to each question).

In your opinion does the Life Skills part of the ALPP program prepare students to better understand how to improve these life skills?

4.1. Choosing a job---

4.2. Finding a job or starting their own business ---

4.3. Becoming a good employee---

4.4. Knowing about and using family planning ---

4.5. Knowing about and protecting against HIV and AIDS --

4.6. Knowing about health and nutrition---

4.7. Knowing about and protecting against the dangers of drugs and smoking ------------------------------

4.8. Protecting against child abuse, home violence, or rape ---

4.9. Understanding conflict avoidance, conflict resolution, and ensuring peace ------------------------------

---

5. Future of ALP in the next five years (Answer YES or NO to each question).

Do you think the ALP program should

5.1. Remain as it is and be managed in parallel to the conventional six years of the primary school cycle---

5.2. Become part of an Adult Literacy Program --

5.3. Become part of a Vocational and Technical Program---

5.4. Become completely managed by the Ministry of Education, and not by NGOs -------------------------

5.5. Do you think it will no longer be needed? ---

---

6. Future of the ALPP program in the next five years (Answer YES or NO to each question).

Do you think the ALPP program should

6.1. Remain as it is and be managed in parallel to the conventional six years of the primary school cycle---

6.2. Become part of an Adult Literacy Program --

6.3. Become part of a Vocational and Technical Program---

6.4. Become completely managed by the Ministry of Education, and not by NGOs -------------------------

6.5. Do you think it will no longer be needed? ---

SAY Thank you for sharing your opinions with us.

Focus Group Questions for Discussion with Community Leaders, Chiefs, Members of PTAs, Parents, Education Officers, Youth Leaders, LRC Staff

Say. *Earlier I asked you questions about your knowledge of the ALP and ALPP programs. Now I want to find out more about your opinions of the programs. I would like to find out more about what your community thinks of the programs in terms of their community involvement, their support within the community, the impact on the community of the various activities.*

A. The ALP Program

SAY. *The goal of the ALP program is to enable school dropouts, over-aged children, and youths, aged 8 – 18 years, to complete their primary education in three years instead of the normal six years.*

1. Basic Learning of Students

1.1. Do you know of any students who are in an ALP program or have been in the program?

Ability to Read, Write, Speak and be understood, Listen and understand,.

1.2. How well do you think the ALP program prepares its students to gain a useful ability to read, write, speak, and listen? --

Ability to Add, Subtract, Multiply, Divide.

1.3. How well do you think the ALP program gives its students the ability to use numbers so they can Add, Subtract, Multiply, and Divide? --

Think of the ALP students you know about.

1.4. What do you think they are gaining or have gained from the program? -----------------------------------

2. Destination of Students: Employment and/or High School and/or Further Education

2.1. Do you know what ALP students do if they do not complete the ALP program?

 ------- --

2.2. Do you know of any students who have completed the ALP program and have then found a job? --

2.3. If so, how many students does the group know of? ---

2.4. What job or jobs did they find?--

2.5. Did they find the job or jobs because of their studies?---

2.6. How did their studies help them find the job or jobs? ---

High School and Further Education

2.7. Do you know of any ALP students who have completed the ALP program and then entered High School?
 ------- --

2.8. If so, how many students does the group know of? ---

2.9. Do you know how well the students are doing in High School? ---

2.10. How many years have they been in High School?---

2.11. Do you know of any students who have graduated from High School?----------------------------------

2.12. If so, how many students? --

2.13. If you know of any such students, what did they do when they graduated? -----------------------------

3. Community and Home Life

3.1. Do ALP students remain in their community after they have completed their studies?------------------

3.2. Do you think the ALP program makes the students better members of their community?-------------

3.3. If so, in what ways?---

3.4. Do you think the ALP program makes the students better members of their family? -------------------

3.5. If so, in what ways?---

4. Future of ALP Program

SAY. *The ALP program is being provided by a number of NGOs and by Creative Associates International Inc (CAII) with the assistance of USAID.*

4.1. Do you think that the Government could or should expand the program to provide for more over-aged or out-of-school youth?

------- ---
4.2. If Government should expand the program, how should it do this?

------- ---

THE ALPP PROGRAM (ALPP)

5. Destination of Students: Employment and/or High School and/or Further Education

SAY. *The ALP-PLUS (ALPP) program is designed to (i) increase the learning opportunities for out-of-school youth aged 15-35 years; and (ii) engage youth within the ALPP Youth component in community service through service learning*.

5.1. Do you know of any students who have completed the ALPP program and have then found a job?

------- ---

5.2. If so, how many students does the group know of? ---

5.3. What job or jobs did they find?--

5.4. Did they find the job or jobs because of their studies?--

5.5. How did their studies help them find the job or jobs? ---

5.6. Do you know of any ALPP students who have completed the ALPP program and then entered High School?
------- ---

5.7. If so, how many students does the group know of? ---

5.8. Do you know how well the students are doing in High School? --

5.9. How many years have they been in High School?--

5.10. Do you know of any students who have graduated from High School? ----------------------------------

5.11. If so, how many students? ---

5.12. If you know of any such students, what did they do when they graduated? -----------------------------

5.13. Think of the ALPP students you know about. What do you think they are gaining or have gained from the program?
 ------- --

5.14. Do you know what ALPP students do if they do not complete the ALPP program?

 ------- --

6   Basic Learning of Students

Ability to Read, Write, Speak and be understood, Listen and understand,.

6.1. How well do you think the ALPP program prepares its students to gain a useful ability to read, write, speak, and listen?
 ------- --

Ability to Add, Subtract, Multiply, Divide.

6.2. How well do you think the ALPP program gives its students the ability to use numbers so they can Add, Subtract, Multiply, and Divide?
 ------- --

7. Community and Home Life

7.1. Do ALPP students remain in their community after they have completed their studies?----------------

7.2. Do you think the ALPP program makes the students better members of their community?------------

7.3. If so, in what ways?--

7.4. Do you think the ALPP program makes the students better members of their family? ------------------

7.5. If so, in what ways?
 ------- --

8. Life Skills and Service Learning program of the ALPP Youth Program

SAY. *The Life Skills program is intended to help students better understand important matters about living well. These matters are (i) deciding what type of job or career they want; (ii) finding a job or starting a business of their own; (iii) knowledge of and using family planning; (iv) knowing about and protecting against HIV and AIDS; (v) knowing about good health and nutrition; (vi) knowing about the dangers of drugs and smoking; (vii) knowing how to avoid conflict, how to work towards peace and harmony, how to be a good citizen in Liberia; (viii) knowing how to protect against child abuse, home violence, rape; and (ix) understanding voting and citizenship rights and responsibilities.*

8.1. Do you know of anyone who is a student in the ALPP Youth Program? -----------------------------------

8.2. If so, what is your opinion of how successful the program is in helping the person to understand these matters?

 ------- --

SAY. *Service Learning Program requires students to perform service to their community each semester. Service Learning activities are centered around improving school environments, including making minor repairs to the school, establishing school gardens, or similar activities.*

8.3. Do you know of ALPP Youth Program students who have performed or are performing such activities?
 ------- --

8.4. If so, what have they been doing? --

 ------- --

SAY. *If resources are needed for improving the school environment (money, tools, equipment), PTAs and Youth Associations can apply for Grants to provide these resources.*

8.5. Do you know if grants have been applied for in your community? --

8.6. If they have applied for grants, what did they apply for? --

8.7. If they applied, was the grant approved? --

8.8. What happened if the grant was approved? --

9. Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs)

Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs). If a person is a member of a PTA, ask

9.1. Have you attended any training program?. --

9.2. What did you learn in the training program? --

9.3. What happened as a result of the training program? --

 ------- --

SAY   Thank you for sharing your opinions with us.

Interview Schedule for Community Coordinators at Learning Resource Centers (LRCs)

Learning Resource Centers are intended to serve as hubs for coordination, management, and supervision of ALP and ALPP Youth Teacher Training, Materials Development, and Community Outreach efforts.

They serve clusters of schools by providing teachers and school administrators with (i) in service workshops; (ii) education messages; (iii) production of resource materials; (iv) reading materials; (v) research opportunities; and (vi) opportunities to develop and practice computer literacy.

Staff of LRC (11)

Staff	Resources	Clients
Community Coordinator	• Teacher manuals • Student textbooks • Reading room • Computers • Internet • Photocopying • Printing	• Teachers • Ministry of Education Staff • NGOs • Students • Out-of-school youth • PTAs • Community members
ALP Training Officer		
Monitoring & Evaluation Officer		
Administrative & Finance Officer		
Office assistants		
Interns		
Driver		
Security Officers		

Discussion Points
Meet the Community Coordinator and staff and discuss the level of success in providing services in these areas.

1. General Purpose of LRC

Provide access to teachers for instructional materials that may include ALP manuals, radios for the RI programs and other pedagogical reference materials from post-conflict countries.

1.1. To what extent is the LRC doing this? --

1.2 Coordinate county level data collection and management. Does this happen? --------------------------

LRCs are intended to Involve Cluster schools around the LRC. Ideally there will be 15-20 schools that can offer a setting for ALP Youth classes.

1.3. Is this happening? ---

1.4. What do cluster schools do? --

1.5. What impact is the program having? --

2. Usage of LRC and its resources: How often and to what extent?

General Usage
2.1. Usage by teachers? ---

2.2. Usage by NGOs? ---

2.3. Usage by community members? --

2.4. Usage by MOE officers? --

2.5. Do you provide *computer training*? ---

2.6. Who provides it? --

2.7. To whom? --

2.8. How many times? --

2.9. For what purposes? --

2.10. What is the Impact of this service? --

2.11. Who uses the *Internet*? --

2.12. How often do they use it? ---

2.13. What do they use it for? --

2.14. Reading Room. Is this used by people other than teachers and students? If so, by whom? Why do they use it? What benefits do they get from using it?

----

3. Training and Support to Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs)

Purpose. Provide support to PTAs in ALP – PLUS programs through Training Guides, PTA training, Monitoring PTA performance, Offering School Development Grants, Evaluating PTA school development projects.

3.1. PTA training? --

3.2. Monitoring PTA performance? ---

3.3. Offering School Development Grants? --

3.4. Evaluating PTA school development projects ---

4. Working with MOE senior officers: CEO, DEOs

What working relationships have you developed with senior offices of MOE? For example, do you

4.1. Provide office space to senior CEO/DEO officers? --

4.2. Train DEO and CEO and Master Trainers? ---

4.3. Assist MOE to decentralize? In what way? --

Do you think MOE will be able to take over the management of this LRC by October 2009 in terms of

4.4. Finding suitable staff --

4.5. Providing full financial support --

4.6. Providing training to PTAs, Master Teachers, MOE officers ---

4.7. Managing and sustaining the resources of your LRC? ---

4.8. If not able to take over completely by late 2009, to what extent could MOE take over by that date?

4.9. What else needs to be done if MOE is to take full responsibility for your LRC? ---------------------------

4.10. When could MOE take over then ? ---

5. Service Learning and Community Development

5.1. *Service Learning: Do you know of examples of Youth improving the schools through Service Learning and Community Involvement?*

List of Principal Informants

INSTITUTION & PERSON	POSITION
USAID	
Margaret Sancho-Morris	Education Team Leader
Gib Brown	Basic Education Advisor
Creative Associates International Inc.	
Dr. Peggy Poling	Chief of Party
Dr. Gail vonHahmann	Acting Chief of Party (from Sept. 20)
Moses Kwalula	Asst. Manager, Training & Development
Trokon Wayne	Asst. Manager, Supervision & Monitoring
Catherine Lumeh	Administration & Operations Manager
Josephine Tengbeh	Community Development & Small Grants Officer
Kenneth Harding	PDO - Youth
Thomas Nimineh	Community Coordinator, Montserrado County
Abraham Beairgai	Training Officer, Montserrado County
William Massabui	Monitoring & Evaluation Officer, Montserrado County
Johanna Freeman	Administrative & Finance Officer, Montserrado County
Edwin Tabolo	Community Coordinator, Lofa County
Robert Early	Community Coordinator, Nimba County
Josephine Greaves	Community Coordinator, Bong County
Anthony Slobert	Acting Community Coordinator, Maryland County
Janet Wallace	Administration & Finance Officer, Maryland County
Flomo V. Golanyon Sr.	Community Coordinator, Grand Gedeh County
Ministry of Education - MOE	
Hester Williams- Catakaw	Deputy Minister for Instruction
James Roberts	Deputy Minister, Planning, Research & Development
Yonton B. Kesselly Sr.	Assistant Minister, Vocational & Technical Education
B. Cherbutue Quayeson	MOE Focal Person, Mid Term Review & Director of Research
Alphonso M. Sheriff	National Focal Person, ALP
Mohamed Sheriff	ALP Coordinating Unit
Patrick Davies	ALP Coordinating Unit
Thomas R Clarke	ALP Coordinating Unit
Benjamin K Sumo	Director, EMIS
Dormu Farwenee	EMIS
MOE Department for Parent Teacher Associations	
Peter G. Roberts	National Coordinator
Teresah Zinnah	Supervisor, Region I
Emma K. Wuor	Supervisor, Region II
Michael Abdul-Kharim	Supervisor, Region III
County Education Officers	
B.Smallwood Davis	Special Assistant to County Education Officer, Lofa County
Edwin K Nama	District Education Officer, Lofa County
George S. Wuo	County Education Officer, Nimba County
Robert J. Kellen	District Education Officer, Nimba County
Philip F. Mullah	District Education Officer, Nimba County
Kwelleegbo G.S. Kapu	County Education Officer, Bong County
Robert S. Kellen	District Education Officer, Bong County
Clifford N. Konah Sr.	District Education Officer, Bong County
James Barty	County Education Officer, Maryland County
Stephen G.Collins	Acting County Education Officer, Grand Gedeh
School Principals	
Anthony Nelson	C.D.B. King Elementary
George Nuway	Bardnersville Public
Moses Seward	Cecelia Dunbar Public
Moses Norlay	Balahun Public
Pastor Barko	Voinjama Public
Sam T. Gleh	Gorlu Public
Alex Z. Nyahlofen	William V.S.Tubman
Thomas Kargai	Flumpa Elementary
Kviei S. Polay	Flumpa Junior High
George J. Foday Sr.	W.V.S. Tubman
Moses Wah	Dorothy Cooper Elementary & Junior High
Varfelay Sirleaf	Kpakolokoyaja Community
William J. Wah	A. Dash Wilson Elementary & Junior High
Patrick Ramble	Pleebo Demonstration
Samuel Jeh Ti	Harper Elementary Demonstration
Harry Karr	ELRZ Community
Shadrick T.Teah	J.C.Barlee Elementary & Junior High

INSTITUTION & PERSON   **POSITION**

Sub-Contractors
Moses G. Paye   Think Inc Center Supervisor
Anthony G. Weah   Think Inc. Project Officer

Ivan Cooper   Project Director, Ta king Drum
Estella Miller   Producer, Talking Drum
Oscar Bloh   Country Director, Talking Drum
Peter Collins   Scriptwriter, Ta king Drum
Lunus Supoe   Scriptwriter, Talking Drum
Amy Taylor   Intern, Monitoring & Evaluation

Liberia Teacher Training Program
Dr. Chris Ashford   Chief of Party
Mark Sweikhart   Senior Education Advisor

Government Agencies
Estelle Peters   West African Examinations Council
Jerry S. Bimba   West African Examinations Council
T.Edward Liberty   Director-General, Liberia Institute of Statistics & GEO Information Services
International Agencies
Evelyn F. Barry   UNICEF Education Officer
John Y Sumo   UNICEF Education Specialist
Mrs. Ballah   UNICEF Operations
Bette A McCrandall   Lutheran Church in L beria, School System Supervisor
Martha Harrison   Save the Children – UK
Matthew Flomo   Save the Children – UK
Stephen Miller   Visions in Action
Batu Hahn   World Bank Institutional Strengthening Specialist

United Nations Development Program
Josephat Raymond Mshighati   Training Coordinator, National Youth Volunteer Service
Aminu Waziri   Project Manager, National Youth Volunteer Service
Isaac Bropleh   Counterpart to Project Manager, National Youth Volunteer Service
John J. Weah   Project Administrative Assistant, National Youth Volunteer Service
Fred Towalid   Research Associate, Strategy & Policy Unit

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*(c)   **ALPP. Curriculum, Reports,** Assessments, **Data Collection Instruments, Manuals and Guidelines, Sub-Contracts***

Curriculum

Curriculum Description: Principles, Component, Outcomes.

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Student Instruments
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       Student Enrollment Form.
       Regular Enrollment Age Distribution Statistics.
       Student Promotion Form.
       Summary Student Promotion Form.
       Youth Student Profile.
Teacher Instruments
       Teacher's Profile.
       Teacher Attendance Form
       Teacher Assessment Form.
School Instruments and Databases
       County Monthly Update Form: Maryland example
       Bi-monthly Numerical Indicators Update: all Counties
       School Profile Part 1: Infrastructure Overview.
       School Profile Part 2. Qualitative Measures.
       School listing: all Counties
       ALPP Sample Database.
Quality Improvement Achievement Tests.
       Explanation of Quality Impact Assessment of Student Performance.
       Social Studies. Levels I and II.
       Science. Levels I and II.
       Mathematics. Levels I and II.
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