

Hybrid Evaluation at the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL)

Evaluation of the Liberia Criminal Justice Program Support Project



Evaluation Components

- Performance Evaluation on one project
- Near End-of-Project Evaluation
- Non-Experimental
- Mixed-Methods Approach
- Conducted April-September, 2019

Evaluation Purpose

- Near end-of-project performance evaluation of the Criminal Justice Program Support (CJPS) project in Liberia
- Analyze CJPS' past performance
- Provide design recommendations for a possible follow-on project of similar scope
- Evaluation Audience: INL/Liberia and INL/AME

Evaluation Methodology

- Mixed-Methods Approach
 - Quantitative
 - Qualitative
- Site Visits
- Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)
- Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)
- Secondary Data
- Followed Department of State rules and regulations (18 FAM 301), governing external evaluations, especially around evaluation rigor and independence

Evaluation Questions

1. To what extent has the CJPS project reached its goals and objectives?
2. How effective is the current CJPS design (model) in reaching the project and country's goals and objectives?
3. How does the CJPS project align with the INL/Liberia Country Program Plan and the Integrated Country Strategy (ICS) for Liberia?
4. How effective have the project's monitoring and evaluation systems been in helping the team manage their programming?
5. How can INL best design future follow-on criminal justice-related programming, given budget considerations, to meet INL, project, and country goals and objectives?
6. To what extent is the current CJPS sustainable?

CJPS BACKGROUND

- Third iteration of a "program support" project
 - Awarded May 5, 2016
 - Contract ends November 2, 2019
- Implemented by Integrated Justice Systems International (IJSI), a Tetra Tech Company
- Provides Law Enforcement, Justice, and Corrections Advisors to mentor and advise a self-sufficient Government of Liberia (GOL) to:
 - Liberia National Police (LNP)
 - Liberia Drug Enforcement Agency (LDEA)
 - Bureau of Corrections (BCR)
 - Liberia Immigration Service (LIS)
 - Other civilian security and justice sector entities



CJPS GOALS

GOAL 1- LAW ENFORCEMENT

- The LNP possesses the administrative structure and capacities to provide equitable police services to all citizens in partnership with the communities served with respect for human rights, demonstrate enhanced capabilities to prevent, detect, and investigate crime, and to maintain public safety and security.

GOAL 2- JUSTICE

- Strengthen the rule of law in Liberia by developing effective justice-sector institutions that provide citizens with trustworthy, reliable and impartial means to settle disputes; ensure due process for the accused and justice without retribution for victims; and provide a safe, secure, and humane corrections system that meets minimum international standards.

WHAT IS A HYBRID EVALUATION?

An evaluation led by the organization/agency, which also includes a team member (the External Evaluator) who is external to the agency (INL) commissioning the evaluation and an internal organizational staff member(s)/Evaluation Specialist(s).

Hybrid Liberia Evaluation Team (LET)



Additional Roles and Responsibilities

Direct Hire

- Conduct key informant interviews with NGO and international donor staff.
- Assist with revising deliverables.

External Evaluator

- Draft and revise deliverables.
- Conduct focus group discussions and key informant interviews with nearly all respondent groups.
- Provide capacity building to INL staff.

Third Party Contractor

- Conduct key informant interviews across most respondent cohorts.
- Draft and finalize evaluation design deliverables.

External or Internal?

Government, non-profit, and academic evaluations are typically classified as either internal or external evaluations

Internal

- Typically perceived to be more objective than internal evaluations
- More credible for external audiences
- More likely to collect frank and open responses from the evaluation's key informants.
- Possibly more cost efficient than external evaluations

External

- Benefit from incorporating team members who have intimate knowledge of program or agency operations
- Are more likely to capture learning internally to ensure that the learning is utilized and institutionalized.
- Could be a costly procurement

Why Not...External or Internal?

Timeline

- Follow-on programming was time-sensitive. Because the lead evaluator works in the same office as project staff, communication regarding preliminary results was quickly available, improving speed and quality of project design.

Project Complexity

- Having internal Bureau staff members on the evaluation team improved the quality of the evaluation's technical components and deliverables, because they provided extensive technical know-how on specific project components of a rather complex project.

Capacity Building

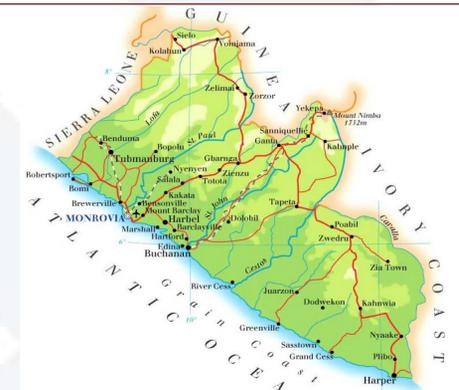
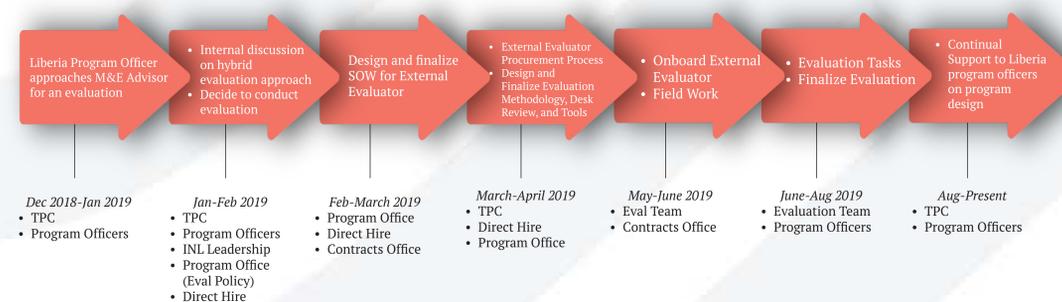
- An experienced evaluator helped build the evaluation capacity of Bureau staff through training and mentoring, which also improves the overall capacity of the Bureau to plan and manage evaluations.

Cost

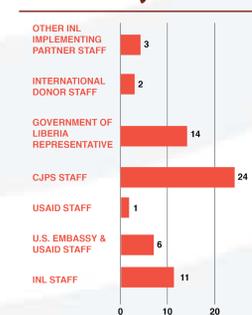
- Evaluating a relatively small project. By contracting out one evaluator for a short-term assignment, rather than a larger evaluation team, costs were minimized.

A Complex Evaluation Timeline

December 2018 - Present



Key Informant Interviews



- Qualitative, in-depth interviews of people selected for their first-hand knowledge about a topic of interest.
- 61 separate KIIs
- 8 respondent groups
- Matched LET member with appropriate respondent

KII - Formal Interview

- Most interviews were formal, using a questionnaire to elicit answers from the respondents
- External Evaluator's interview with the head of the MOJ's Prosecutor's Office



External Evaluator Interviewing Ministry Official

Hybrid Evaluation Challenges

- Procurement Delay – External Evaluator on-boarded days before field work began
- Reduced Staffing – Lost evaluation specialist through realignment
 - TPC spent an unplanned significant amount of time on data cleaning, analysis, and reporting
 - Reduced evaluation capacity
- Highly qualitative
 - Incomplete or difficult-to-understand responses
 - Wrong questionnaires used with some interviews
 - Large amount of qualitative data to synthesize and analyze
 - Difficulty guiding respondents through interviews

Expectations Exceeded

- **Retired Law Enforcement and Corrections Officer:** The external evaluator's extensive subject matter background improved the overall technical approach and data analysis of the evaluation.
- **Developmental Evaluation Approach:** The hands-on M&E support provided to the program officers during the evaluation has continued long after the evaluation has ended.

Optimized Future Approach

- Tap into the Bureau's subject matter experts
- Bring inter-department evaluation experts onto the team
- Push for an earlier procurement process
- Contract an external data analyst