



RESTORE HOPE: LIBERIA

Strategic Plan

2021-2023



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I. Executive Summary

The following strategic plan was developed as part of an external consultancy commissioned by the Executive Leadership team of **Restore Hope: Liberia (RHL)** from May-August 2020. The objective of the consultancy was to assess RHL's current leadership, managerial, technical and adaptive capacities in order to develop a strategic roadmap and workplan for FY2021-2023 to ensure the organization's long-term sustainability and growth.

Launched in 2015, RHL was established in response to the need identified by the Founders for a new, integrative model for post-conflict, post-disaster development which is lacking in many low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) once humanitarian aid ends. During its initial phase of operations, RHL has focused its efforts on providing critical support services to the Kolahun District of Lofa County – one of the most remote regions of Liberia devastated by the 2014 Ebola outbreak still suffering the effects of the country's decades-long civil war.

RHL's aim is to establish the necessary conditions for a healthy and peaceful future in Kolahun and other impoverished communities by creating and executing sustainable programs that include local stakeholders in decision-making and implementation. Its program model focuses on holistic community development by supporting essential "building blocks" to help lift community members out of absolute poverty through:

- **Health:** improving health and wellbeing of target beneficiaries through household wellness checks, monthly cash grants, distribution of hygiene products, essential medicines, disease prevention materials and support of the local hospital;
- **Education:** support to the existing school system, after-school tutoring for children, adult-literacy classes to community members, payment of school fees for most-vulnerable and special needs children, scholarships for academically promising students to attend vocational schools/college; and,
- **Economic Development:** providing skills training and income-generating activities for vulnerable women.

In the last two years, RHL's implementation strategy has evolved from an exclusive focus on a small group of vulnerable children and women to include a larger portion of community members and households. An additional program component will be added in FY2020 focused on improving access to mental health support services for vulnerable women. The organization has grown to include a part-time Executive Director, an interim Country Director and 4 staff based in Monrovia and Kolahun. RHL will soon finalize its 501(c)(3) status in the US and is an officially registered Liberian NGO. RHL's funding streams have also increased to include two foundation-based grants and cultivation of approximately 200+ donors at varying levels of contribution.

As the only community-based organization actually implementing projects on the ground in Kolahun, the organization is committed to supporting community development in the long-term. Its program model has allowed it to develop activities with the potential of having sustained, positive impact on alleviating absolute poverty in the district. RHL aspires to extend its work to other parts of Liberia and other LMICs in the future. But most importantly, RHL is committed to ensuring that program beneficiaries form an integral part of the design and implementation of future programming.

RHL has a bold vision, high expectations and is poised to enter into a new phase of organizational growth. It has many assets including a highly competent director, motivated staff and support of its vast network of formal and informal advisors. However, there are a number of organizational challenges that must be addressed in order for RHL to evolve into a more mature, community-based service organization with a replicable and impactful program model.

In response, the following plan was developed to provide a roadmap for RHL's organizational, programmatic and financial development for FY2021-2023 in order to successfully transition the organization to a sustainable, non-governmental organization that is adaptive and flexible to potential opportunities.

Although the strategic plan provides a vision for a 3-year horizon of operations, given RHL's current trajectory and capacity, emphasis is placed on key priority areas within the first year period that are deemed crucial to ensuring its long-term sustainability and relevance. These priority areas are:

- *securing a full-time Country Director;*
- *aggressive fundraising;*
- *expanding the role of the Executive Director; and,*
- *increasing support to field staff.*

As part of the strategic planning process, the consultant reviewed all pertinent project background documents and implemented a landscaping review of other NGOs in Liberia and in other LMICs most closely aligned with RHL's mission, vision and programmatic focus. Six strategic planning sessions were held with the RHL Executive Leadership team along with one-to-one conversations to better understand the rationale, context, staffing and development of core program components. In parallel, 29 informant interviews were conducted with staff, advisors and other external stakeholders to provide feedback on how RHL is perceived and to identify potential challenges and opportunities for growth. The process of research, review, analysis and feedback culminated in the drafting of a comprehensive 7S analysis of RHL which provided a detailed assessment of the organization's current state of operations and identified critical areas for improvement and future action.

The strategic plan document begins with an overview of the current operational context in Liberia and needs justification for RHL's continued presence in the country, followed by a review of key guiding principles that informed the development of the strategic plan. A Theory of Change is presented which was drafted by the Executive Leadership team illustrating the pathways and activities necessary to help achieve their desired development outcomes. A SWOT analysis was also developed to better understand the external and internal factors that impact upon its current operations and future development.

Four strategic crafting sessions were then implemented to help develop the strategic roadmap. Based on this work, RHL has defined **3 focus areas** and **14 priority actions** in order to support its strategic objectives for the 3-year period. These will serve as the basis for developing a detailed workplan with actionable and achievable deliverables to support its implementation.

II. Liberia's Continued Need for Support

Liberia is classified as a low developed country (LDC) and currently ranked one of the ten poorest countries in the world¹. Its per capita income is less than \$700 per year and average life expectancy is 64 years. Like other LDCs, Liberia is challenged by government instability, extreme poverty, lack of access to basic health services and high illiteracy rates².

Liberia's socio-economic development has been severely hampered due the long-standing impact of the 1989-2003 civil war compounded by the devastation it suffered as the result of the 2014-2016 West Africa Ebola outbreak. Liberia experienced the largest and most deadly Ebola outbreak in history, causing near total collapse its health and economic system. Liberia lost 10% of all of its health care providers during the epidemic and more than 8,000 children lost at least one parent from Ebola. Maternal mortality increased by 111% during the period. **Lofa County, including Kolahun District, was the epicenter of the Ebola outbreak in Liberia.**

While assistance by the humanitarian aid community was swift, most international organizations ceased operations in Kolahun once the outbreak was contained. In response, RHL was founded immediately after the Ebola outbreak by three former International Rescue Committee Medical Directors of Kolahun Hospital with extensive experience and long-standing connections in the district.

Since the Ebola outbreak, there have been some positive trends signaling slow improvements in the health, education and economic development sectors in Liberia. Significant funding to support macro-level systems strengthening has been provided by international development agencies which has resulted in a substantial decrease in maternal-child mortality. There are over 100 national and international NGOs currently operating across the country providing a range of support to the population. Nevertheless, these improvements and initiatives have mostly been concentrated in the larger metropolitan centers.

Recently published data from the 2019 Liberian Demographic Health Survey serves to reinforce the need for sustained and long-term support³:

- More than half the country's population live below the absolute poverty line (less than \$2 per day).
- Liberia has one of the highest fertility rates in world, with 4.2 live births per woman resulting in more than 60% of the population being under 25.
- Its maternal mortality rate still remains one of the highest in the world - 661

¹ UNDP. 2019. Human Development Report 2019. Beyond income, beyond averages, beyond today: Inequalities in human development in the 21st century. New York. <http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/human-development-report-2019>

² The World Factbook 2020. Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, 2020.

³ Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services (LISGIS), Ministry of Health and Social Welfare [Liberia], and ICF. 2020. Liberia Demographic and Health Survey 2019-20: Key Indicators. Monrovia, Liberia and Rockville, Maryland, USA: Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services (LISGIS), Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, and ICF.

deaths per 100,000 births.

- Likewise, its child mortality rate is also exceedingly high - 1 of every 9 Liberian children die before the age of 5.
- 30% of children under-five are undernourished or exhibit stunted growth.
- Female genital cutting is commonly practiced by 10 of the 14 tribal groups.
- The majority of the population are considered illiterate or functionally illiterate, with only 40% of the population having attended some schooling.
- Only 17% of the population have access to basic sanitation services.

The situation is even more extreme in rural areas such as Lofa County, where access to health, education and basic sanitation is severely limited or virtually non-existent.

Given the current context, RHL's mission and vision are well aligned with the development needs of its beneficiary population and with the overall development needs in Liberia. RHL's program areas are directly aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals and fill an important gap in service provision, complementing initiatives implemented by the donor and NGO communities in other parts of the country.

Since launch, RHL has been able to show positive initial impact among its target beneficiaries.

- The number of under and malnourished women and children among their target beneficiary group has significantly decreased since program launch.
- Literacy and retention rates among their student beneficiaries are well above the national average.
- Scholarships for post-secondary education have been provided for four nursing and technical college students as well as payment for tuition fees for specialized education programs for students with special needs.
- The program has provided emergency support and medical supplies to the Kolahun Hospital, ensuring access to critical care for the larger community as well as its beneficiaries (and particularly those with special needs, such as children with seizure disorders).
- Monthly wellness checks and tracking of vulnerable households has allowed the program to improve prevention of vector-borne diseases, sexual and reproductive health, hygiene and child welfare among its target beneficiaries.
- Its micro-lending program supporting the Women's Weaving Cooperative has an 80%+ repayment rate.
- The program has improved basic sanitation in the district through funding of several water and sanitation projects.

While RHL is in the process of defining better metrics for all core program areas, its impact is further reinforced by feedback from beneficiaries and local stakeholders affirming their appreciation for its long-term support and commitment of its field staff.

III. Developing the Strategy Blueprint - RHL's Guiding Principles and Theory of Change

In preparation for the strategic planning exercise, RHL Executive Leadership first reviewed and updated its current vision, mission and value statements in order to ensure that its strategic objectives remain consistent with the organization's guiding principles and ethos.

Vision

Communities living in absolute poverty, who have survived complex emergencies, are able to thrive, rebuild their communities and lead healthy, productive and peaceful lives.

Mission

To improve the health and wellbeing of vulnerable and disadvantaged communities in post-emergency settings by providing basic health, education and income generating activities in order to alleviate extreme poverty and empower communities to become their own agents of change.

Values

As a humanitarian development organization, we aspire to work at the highest level possible of personal, professional and organizational values; we are inspired and guided by the shared principles, commitments and vision for global development as expressed in the 2015 UN plan of action, [Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) ([PDF](#)).

- We believe that every human being should have the opportunity to thrive and maximize their social and economic potential.
- We believe in the empowerment of all people, equity for the most vulnerable, and opportunity that is not limited by any class or status.
- We believe that it is possible to alleviate suffering in communities that have been devastated by complex emergencies and extreme poverty by providing tools to empower the most vulnerable and marginalized.
- We believe in community development that is transformative, holistic, fosters agency, strengthens collaborative capacity and is sustainable.
- We believe in an organization that fosters interpersonal respect, exhibits integrity, and is relationship-centered.⁴

A draft *Theory of Change* was then developed by the Executive Leadership team, illustrating the pathways and activities necessary to help achieve RHL's desired development outcomes, including the addition of an intermediate outcome focused on advocacy and stakeholder engagement.

⁴ Relationship-centered Care and programming affirms the centrality of the organization's relationships with the program's beneficiaries, beneficiary communities and other stakeholders. Relationships ("Right Relationship") are central to the provision of services and are the vehicle for putting into action a paradigm of holistic development that integrates caring, healing, and community. These relationships form the context within which people gain agency, are helped to improve their lives, optimize well-being and to grow in the face of changes within themselves and in their environments.

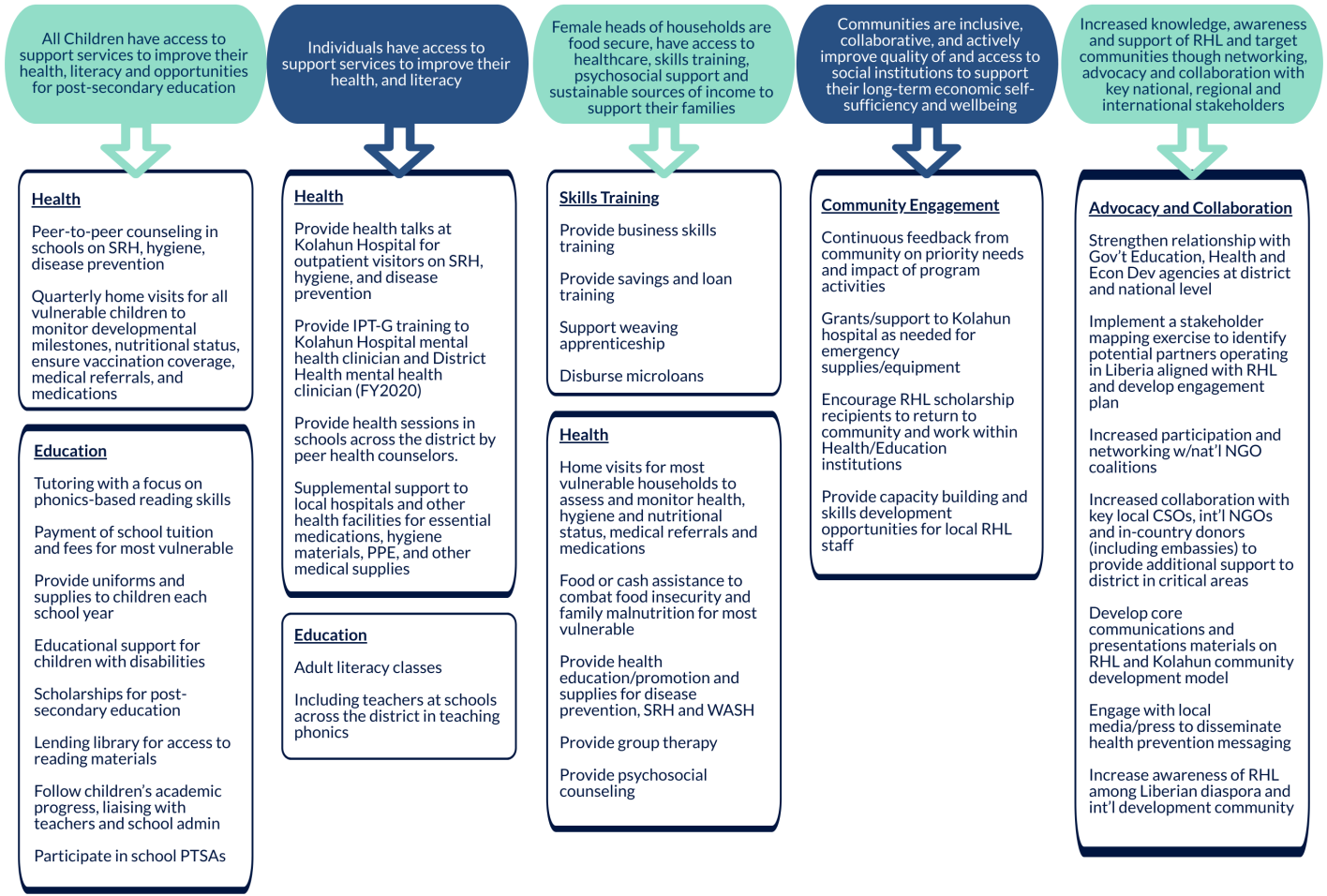
RHL Theory of Change

GOAL

Thriving, healthy, inclusive communities free from the cycle of poverty

Intermediate Outcomes:

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Contributing Factors Supporting RHL's Theory of Change

Assumptions:

- Continued absence of conflict in the country and region
- Government of Liberia continues to allow RHL to work in Kolahun District in collaboration with the Ministries of Health and Education
- Banks remain functioning
- Staff will be adequately trained, supervised and supported
- Funding is sufficient to implement program activities for the next three years
- Continued positive relationships with local/district level authorities and community
- Good reputation of RHL US/Liberia for its commitment and implementation of key program activities
- Community values, contributes, participates in activities and engages with project staff

Internal Enablers:

- RHL Executive Leadership's commitment to supporting Kolahun project
- Solid organization structure with defined roles/responsibilities of key management and local staff
- Clearly defined and executed administrative and finance policy and procedures
- Continued capacity building of local staff and opportunities to grow within the organization
- Convening and engagement of the US and Liberian Boards of Directors with defined roles and responsibilities
- Clearly defined strategic plan to support financial sustainability, organizational and programmatic development for the next three years
- Clearly defined transition plan to replace current leadership due to attrition

External Enablers:

- Local Authorities
- Regional/country Authorities
- National Authorities
- Collaborating CSO institutions
- RHL donors and funders

Evidence:

- Monitoring and Evaluation monthly reports on progress for all intermediate outcomes
- Qualitative surveys and assessments by beneficiaries and local stakeholders

Metrics: TBD

IV. RHL's Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities and Threats (SWOT)

A SWOT analysis exercise was performed by the Executive Leadership Team to identify critical internal and external factors that impact on organization growth and achievement of intermediate outcomes identified in the Theory of Change. Based on this analysis, RHL has identified the following issues as key factors contributing to its success during the strategic planning period. *(Please note that the full SWOT analysis is found in Appendix D.)*

SWOT Analysis RESTORE HOPE: LIBERIA

Strengths

- Shared mission/vision of RHL leadership
- Good reputation among advisors and external stakeholders
- Good reputation of field staff among local stakeholders and beneficiaries
- Basic communications materials and website developed

Weaknesses

- Difficult to accurately gauge program impact with current metrics – especially health and education components
- Internal communications between field-staff, HQ and US inefficient
- Limited support of field staff
- ICD unable to provide full oversight due to other commitments
- Limited financial resources
- Part-time ED role hampers ability to properly oversee, fundraise & grow organization
- No defined exit and/or sustainability strategy for program

Opportunities

- Defined geographic focus will allow RHL to refine program model working with target populations already working with the program
- Only NGO operating in Kolahun district gives RHL advantage as primary point of contact with Nat'l and County Authorities
- Current pool of potential advisors can be tapped to assist in program refinement and to serve on board
- Current pool specifically of Liberian expat advisors also has potential to expand networks and visibility of program and increase understanding of Liberian crisis
- Current NGO contacts in Liberia with expertise and track records could assist in improving HR, local finance and program management processes

Threats

- Ongoing risk of socio-political and economic crisis in Liberia would impact ability to implement project
- Potential Impact of COVID-19 on the health & safety of staff, beneficiaries

V. Moving from Vision to Action: RHL Strategic Plan 2021-2023

Based on the analysis detailed above, RHL has established the following strategic goal for the three-year period.

Within three years, RHL will develop into a professional, international community-based development NGO that is fit-for-purpose, has impact, is sustainable and is based on a well-defined, replicable program model.

In order to achieve this strategic goal, RHL will first strengthen its internal operations, governance and financial management, followed by refining the program model and improving all levels of communication and external engagement. RHL will concentrate efforts across **3 strategic focus areas** using a stepwise approach to accomplish **14 priorities** described below.

Strategic Focus Areas	Priorities
1. RHL will become better organized	1A. Secure full-time Liberia Country Director
	1B. Implement an aggressive fundraising strategy
	1C. Strengthen and expand Executive Director role
	1D. Increase support to field staff
	1E. Improve fiscal management and governance structure
	1F. Begin to review program model
	1G. Improve external communications
2. RHL will increase sustainability, program impact and stakeholder engagement	2A. Increase organizational and program sustainability
	2B. Define and measure program impact
	2C. Expand Influence and issue advocacy
3. RHL will increase capacity in Liberia, empower beneficiaries and adapt model	3A. Continue to strengthen Liberia operations and local oversight
	3B. Design and implement phase 2 “hand-over” plan for Kolahun
	3C. Design and implement “hub-and spoke” training model
	3D. Continue to strengthen RHL US operations to support next phase of organizational development

Strategic Focus #1 – RHL will become better organized

Year one is considered mission-critical for RHL and is focused on improving its current operational and financial management model. Priorities noted in **red** signify that sufficient progress must be made in these areas in order to roll-out Years 2-3 of the Strategic Plan.

Key Actions:

Priority 1A. Secure full-time Liberia Country Director

In FY2021, RHL's most pressing need is to ensure it has dedicated management in Liberia with sufficient technical capacity to oversee program staff, provide fiscal management of in-country funds and increase external networking and local fundraising. Currently, the RHL Co-Founder serving as Interim Country Director is unable to fully dedicate to the project given his on-going commitments outside of the organization. RHL will hire a full-time country director based in Monrovia with previous NGO management experience in a development context to oversee all operations. A transition period of three months has been established to allow sufficient training and hand-over time between the new and interim country directors. Given the current Interim Country Director's longstanding commitment to the project and his extensive experience working in the public health field in Liberia, RHL will transition his role to a senior advisory post to provide guidance and assistance with external relationship-building and future development of the RHL Liberia Board of Directors (BoD).

Priority 1B. Implement an aggressive fundraising strategy

Since its launch, RHL has been successful in increasing funding each year, including securing individual donor contributions through social media platforms, discreet income-generating activities and grant-based funding. Nonetheless, RHL continues to rely heavily on contributions from two of its Founders as its primary source of funding. In order to improve RHL's long-term financial stability, a development consultant will be hired in FY2021 to implement an ambitious, but achievable multi-year fundraising strategy to ensure adequate funding for all program and administrative costs, including establishing cash reserves for the organization. For FY2021, a target has been established to increase current funding by more than 50% by focusing on securing unrestricted funding from HNWI's, small family foundations, on-line fundraising platforms and grassroots community development foundations.

Priority 1C. Strengthen and expand Executive Director role

RHL currently operates under a "shared" leadership model with the Founders serving as the Executive Management Team providing direct oversight of finance, fundraising, external relations and programmatic development. The Executive Director is currently serving on a part-time basis which does not allow sufficient time to manage and develop key aspects of the organization. Given current funding restrictions, RHL will slowly transition from a shared decision-making structure to one which strengthens and expands the Executive Director role, allowing her to incrementally assume full decision-making authority on all aspects of organizational management by the end of FY2022. Founders supporting RHL on a volunteer basis will transition to advisory positions

through the Board of Directors in order to dedicate more time to improving program metrics, cultivating stakeholders and big-picture strategy.

Priority 1D. Increase support to field staff

During the transition phase from Interim to full-time country director, RHL will place emphasis on providing increased support to field staff currently implementing projects in Kolahun. Given Kolahun's remote location and distance from Monrovia, field staff have been instrumental in ensuring that all aspects of program implementation are accomplished with limited oversight. Field staff have been recognized for their self-initiative and support of the project and will benefit from increased interaction with the Executive Director and administrative staff based in Monrovia. RHL will design and implement an internal communications plan with the goal of providing consistent and continual feedback by implementing weekly calls and monthly virtual meetings to provide timely response and follow-up.

Additional support will be provided by the administrative officer in Monrovia in drafting and submitting monthly field reports. HR policies will be updated and expanded to include a risk management framework for emergency situations, including the COVID-19 pandemic. Performance appraisal procedures will also be modified to include opportunities for self-appraisal. Once the Country Director assumes full responsibility of Liberia operations, annual workplans will be developed to increase monitoring and tracking of key benchmarks.

Priority 1E. Improve fiscal management and governance structure

RHL has made strides in developing basic financial management procedures, but recognizes the need to improve its fiscal oversight capacity as the organization continues to grow in size and scope. RHL is currently transitioning to QuickBooks and has terminated its fiscal sponsorship arrangement with the Tides Foundation. This will allow RHL to improve oversight and increase efficiency in managing cash flow and expenditures both in the US and Liberia. The organization will explore the option of contracting an accountant in FY2021 with specific expertise in NGO finance management. RHL will also begin to review and update financial management procedures for field and country-level operations and assess how best to develop its current NGO-affiliate structure in Liberia.

In parallel, RHL will strengthen its current Board of Directors structure in order to improve its governance and oversight of the organization. Currently, RHL has assembled an informal group of country and topic experts that are consulted on an ad hoc basis for guidance on program development. The strategic planning process has identified potential board candidates from this informal advisory group. RHL will finalize board structure, composition and statutes and convene the first BoD by the end of FY2021. Its current informal advisory group will be restructured into smaller advisory working committees with clear guidelines on roles, responsibilities and level of commitment required.

Priority 1F. Begin to review program model

At the end of FY2021, RHL BoD and senior leadership will begin reviewing the strategic plan and other framing documents in order to provide more in-depth analysis, guidance and oversight on how best to refine the current program model, improve program metrics, support staff development and long-term organizational growth. Board committees will be convened to review and assess impact of current program areas, including a review of cost-benefit of current expenditures per beneficiary.

Priority 1G. Improve external communications

RHL recognizes the importance of external communications to increase awareness, fundraising and relationship-building at the local, national and international level. Since launch, RHL has developed a range of communication activities, including the organization's brand and website, social media accounts, monthly newsletter and donor cultivation through on-line platforms. RHL will continue to build on these strengths by developing professional communications materials including branded letterhead, fact sheets, power-point presentations, business cards and other essential collaterals. RHL will improve, update and expand its social media presence including its website, Facebook page, and presence on global fundraising platforms to increase visibility outside of direct-contact networks.

RHL will also begin to incrementally increase its engagement with priority stakeholders in key sectors including donors, NGOs networks, embassies, government agencies and the private sector. A stakeholder mapping exercise will be implemented that will identify priority stakeholders both internationally and in Liberia and an engagement plan developed.

Strategic Focus #2 - RHL will increase sustainability, program impact and stakeholder engagement

Once sufficient progress has been made on critical priorities identified in FY2021, Year 2 of RHL's strategic plan will focus on improving and refining its core program, placing special emphasis on defining key impact indicators, identifying potential collaborative partners in Liberia and opportunities to enhance community empowerment and contribution of beneficiaries to the program. RHL will also increase training and staff capacity for US and Liberia-based staff and begin to develop a framework to increase capacity and oversight of the Liberian BoD.

Key Actions:

Priority 2A. Increase organizational and program sustainability

Organizational Sustainability

RHL will continue to strengthen its financial position through continued implementation of its fundraising strategy with the additional goals of securing multi-year project-based funding from international and Liberian-based funders; increasing revenue generating activities (country cloth); and, cultivating private sector sponsorships. Based on the level of funding secured in FY2021, RHL will transition the Executive Director to full-time and

determine staffing requirements in Liberia based on the assessment of the Country Director. Management training opportunities will be secured for Senior Management as well as capacity building and training for Kolahun field staff.

RHL will also begin to assess how to restructure and strengthen the Liberian BoD in order to take a more direct role in country-level strategy, fundraising and program development in the future. RHL will also explore how its current International BOD can assist in strengthening the Liberian BoD through mentorship and organizing board development opportunities in-country. In parallel, RHL will continue to strengthen its International BoD, through training, strategic review retreats and outreach to additional BoD candidates.

Program Sustainability

While RHL is committed to providing long-term support to Kolahun, it recognizes that its holistic program model must evolve in order to best serve the community. RHL will develop a sustainability strategy for Kolahun aimed at gradually decreasing work in the district while preparing to launch activities in other areas of Lofa county. The sustainability strategy will be informed by a community assessment to determine short-to-medium term priority needs for Kolahun along with a scenario-planning exercise to identify needed changes to the current program/management model.

An important expected outcome of the sustainability strategy is to increase collaboration with other local NGOs with specific expertise in the education and health sectors while continuing to strengthen RHL's economic development component. A few key local NGOs operating in other districts of Lofa county were identified during the strategic planning review process that are closely aligned with RHL with high collaborative potential.

In parallel, RHL will identify opportunities to enhance community empowerment and contribution of beneficiaries to the program, including leadership skills training. RHL will identify key champions among its current beneficiaries in Kolahun able to take a more active role in program development, sustainability and advocacy at the local and county level. The organization will also explore the potential of adding community leaders from Kolahun as members of the Liberian BoD to ensure community engagement in all levels of program implementation.

Priority 2B. Define and measure program impact

While ensuring that the program is continuing to function well and serving beneficiaries, RHL will place emphasis in FY2022 on improving program impact by reviewing and refining the draft Theory of Change and its monitoring and evaluation framework to better define expected outcomes and impact for each program area. Program impact analysis will be done at all levels of the organization - Executive Leadership, Board, country staff and beneficiaries.

RHL will secure an external consultant with expertise in rural development and micro-financing to help build-out the economic development component and will identify additional staff and/or external consultants needed to assist in assessing and adapting program activities in the health and education sectors. RHL will explore the possibility of

other NGOs taking the lead on key aspects of current program model (e.g., education), in order for RHL to increase focus on other program areas.

Priority 2C. Expand influence and issue advocacy

RHL will continue to expand its influence and footprint nationally and internationally by placing emphasis on external relations and advocacy in order to:

- increase visibility and establish relationships with priority stakeholders;
- gain access to a potential new pool of donors;
- establish relationships with regional projects, agencies and NGOs in sub-Saharan Africa aligned with the RHL model;
- identify opportunities for collaboration with key Global Health and Development stakeholders (e.g., Dartmouth Center for Global Health Equity; Carter Center) to improve the program model and secure additional project-based funding;
- identify and attract qualified volunteers both internationally and within Liberia to support program implementation; and,
- identify opportunities to secure internships with academic graduate programs in public graduate programs in public health, education, medicine and economic development.

A part-time communications manager will be hired to oversee RHL's external relations and support the development of an additional program component focused on advocacy. This will allow RHL to increase awareness of the organization's activities, understanding of the needs of the rural poor and awareness of the long-term development needs for Liberia.

Strategic Focus #3 – RHL will increase capacity in Liberia, empower beneficiaries and adapt model

During Year 3 of the Strategic Plan, RHL will work towards developing a more decentralized management model, allowing for increased direct oversight and management of the project administered directly by the Liberian BoD with RHL US operations serving as external advisors and fundraisers for the project. During this phase, RHL also aims to develop a program model that is adaptable and potentially replicable in Liberia and beyond. While extension of the full program model is not foreseen until the organization is more well-established and has gained increased its capacity to better define and measure impact, RHL will begin implementing a limited number of activities outside of the Kolahun District by FY2023.

Key Actions:

Priority 3A. Continue to strengthen Liberia operations and local oversight

RHL will begin working towards transferring direct program oversight to the local Country office and BoD by strengthening program, fiscal and HR management processes and procedures using local NGO best practice and informed by Year 2 outcomes. RHL will support the Liberian BoD in refining its structure, composition, statutes and identification

of additional board members with key areas of expertise. A capacity building strategy for the Liberian BoD will be developed jointly by RHL senior management, international and local boards with the long-term goal of transferring full oversight of all in-country management to the local board within 5-6 years.

Priority 3B. Design and implement Phase 2 “hand-over” plan for Kolahun

Based on its review of the current program model’s outcomes and impact, RHL will begin a new phase of activities in Kolahun, with the goal of partial “hand-over” of key project activities to local stakeholders. RHL will continue to support Kolahun, but will look towards decreasing cash distributions, expand its economic development component, provide additional vocational training and community-focused leadership opportunities. The Phase 2 plan will also provide more clarity and direction on how best to continue its health-focused activities and at what level.

RHL will secure MoUs and collaborative agreements with program implementation partners and government entities as needed for Phase 2 in Kolahun.

Priority 3C. Design and implement “hub-and spoke” training model

RHL will slowly extend its area of operations outside of Kolahun by developing a “Hub and Spoke” training model for communities in close proximity to Kolahun. This strategy will focus on identifying aspects of the program that can be easily replicated with RHL field staff and Kolahun “champion” beneficiaries serving as trainers to community members in other locales.

RHL envisions the Hub and Spoke training model will require additional training for current staff, leadership training for beneficiaries, development of training methodologies and an outreach plan to other sites and funding for seed grants. During the design phase, MoUs and collaborative agreements will be established with local partners for program adaptation in order to launch training activities in a small number of external sites.

Priority 3D. Continue to strengthen RHL US operations to support next phase of program model development and organizational structure

In order to support Phase 2 Kolahun and launch of the Hub and Spoke model, RHL’s fundraising strategy will ensure sufficient funding for Board development missions to Liberia and for all Hub and Spoke activities described above. RHL will also assess the need to increase support of US operations during Phase 2 implementation, including increasing hours for communications and development managers, engaging technical consultants to expand advocacy activities and developing long-term planning aimed at continued expansion of the model in Liberia and potentially other sites in west Africa.

APPENDIX A

RESTORE HOPE: LIBERIA STRATEGIC PLANNING TIMELINE

May 2020

May 15: Strategy Session # 1 – Origin Story and Governance

May 18-22:

- Session #1 summary doc with key highlights/findings from the discussion
- Individual Interviews with RHL Leadership
- Review of program docs
- Q & A with ED
- Begin compiling list of stakeholders for interviews

May 22: Strategy Session #2 – Program and Context

May 25-29:

- Session #2 summary doc with key highlights/findings from the discussion
- Landscaping of similar NGOs to compare/contrast
- Background research on Liberian context
- Review/Analysis of HR Docs and Local Org Structure
- Q & A with ED
- Finalize list of stakeholder interviewers

May 29: Strategy Session #3 – TOC Con't; People and Staffing -

June 2020

June 1-5:

- Session #3 summary doc with key highlights/findings from the discussion
- Agree on engagement format for stakeholder groups
- Develop questionnaire format for Advisory group and Local staff
- ** Outreach and begin interviews with Advisors **
- Review/Analysis of Financials
- Q & A with ED

June 5: Strategy Session #4 – Financials /Fundraising/Sustainability

June 8-12:

- Session #4 summary doc with key highlights/findings from the discussion
- Finalize outreach interviews with Advisors

- Landscape/research on external partners
- “Light” donor mapping exercise on US & International Donors
- Q & A with ED

June 11: Strategy Session #5 – Financials Con’t and External Partners & Mapping

June 15-19:

- Session #5 summary doc with key highlights/findings from the discussion
- ** Begin Interviews & engagement with local staff **
- Determine best way to get feedback from local beneficiaries
- Review/Analysis of mar/com and outreach strategies
- Q & A with ED

19 June: Strategy Session #6 – Communications/Outreach -

19-30 June:

- Continue Stakeholder Interviews and Feedback
- Finalize interviews with Local Staff
- Outreach to local beneficiaries
- Outreach to external partners
- Outreach to Donors, TBD

July-August 2020

1-10 July:

- Collate and synthesize findings from stakeholder engagement process
- Develop 7s assessment with initial findings

July 13: Strategy crafting #1: Initial findings; develop swot analysis, strategic objectives year 1 (3 hrs)

July 17: Strategy crafting #1b: Continues discussion, finalization – year one objectives (3 hrs)

July 20: Strategy crafting #2: Consensus on direction and key activities to support Year 2 – (3hrs)

July 23: Strategy Crafting #3: Consensus on direction and key activities to support Year 3 – (3 hrs)

July 24 - August 10:

- Write and submit Draft Strategic Plan Roadmap and B-Plan Outline

August 17:

- Receive final feedback from RHL Senior Leadership

August 24:

- Submit all final documents to RHL

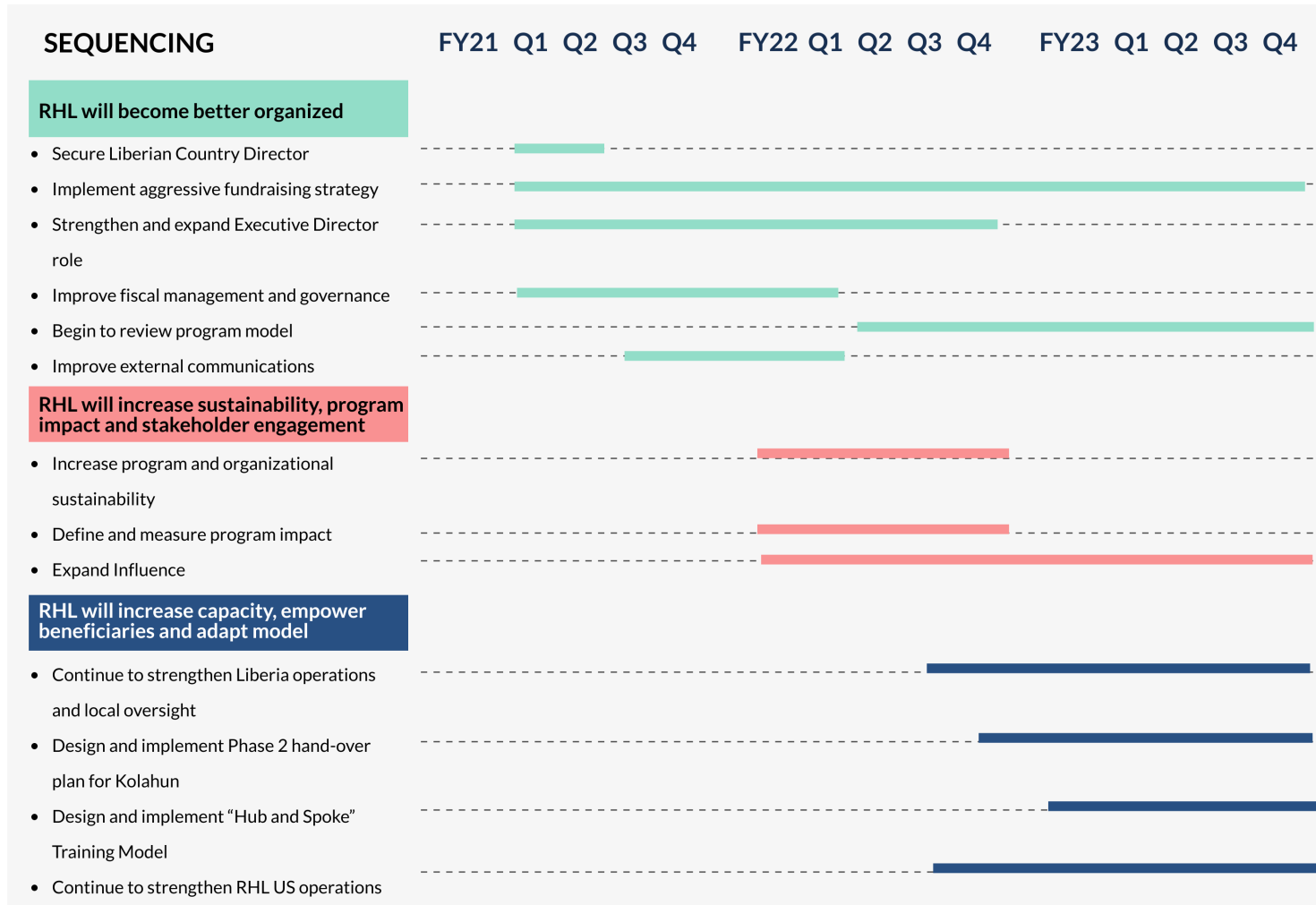
APPENDIX B

LIST OF STAKEHOLDERS INTERVIEWED

1. Corey Bills, RHL Advisor
2. Joni Burrell, RHL Advisor
3. Barbara Burke, RHL Founder
4. Marcia Davidson, RHL Advisor
5. Bakhtavar Dessai, RHL Advisor
6. Francis Duoko, RHL Administrative Assistant (Kolahun)
7. Lynn Gray, Executive Director, Liberia Reads!
8. Stacey Jellison, RHL Bookkeeper
9. James Kpangbai, RHL Field Coordinator
10. Dianah Bedell Majekodunmi, IRC Chief of Party
11. Darlington Martor, RHL Advisor, Founder, Anything is Everything
12. Bill Massaquoi – Founder and President, Rebuild Africa
13. John Morris, RHL Donor
14. Betty Newman, RHL Advisor
15. David Okiror, RHL Co-Founder, Interim Country Director
16. Judy Reed, Liberian Assistance Program
17. Sister Ann – Social Empowerment through Learning, Liberia
18. Soldanela Rivera, Communications Consultant
19. Robert Rufsvold, RHL Founder, Senior Advisor
20. Dean Seibert, Founder, ACTS Honduras
21. Ombeni Shamavu, Medical Director, Kolahun Hospital
22. Jane Sherer, Liberian Assistance Program
23. Vamba Sherif, RHL Advisor
24. Carson Stacey, RPCV, Kolahun, Liberia
25. James Strickler, RHL Advisor
26. Gloria Tuslime, RHL Administrative Officer (Monrovia)
27. Bill Weaver, Founder, Elmo Foundation
28. Sandra Williams, RHL Co-Founder and Executive Director
29. Gladys Zarbay – RHL Health Coordinator

APPENDIX C

TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS



APPENDIX D

FULL SWOT ANALYSIS - RESTORE HOPE: LIBERIA

Strengths

- Commitment of RHL leadership (both financial and programmatic) to continue to support Kolahun
- Shared mission/vision of RHL leadership
- Founder expertise in emergency and post-conflict public health
- Deep knowledge of particular context in Liberia/Kolahun
- Strong network of informal advisors with country and topic expertise
- Establishing initial positive track record increasing individual and foundation support
- Basic program model defined and implemented, including basic HR and admin policies
- Anecdotal information of RHL's positive impact in the community
- Good reputation among advisors and external stakeholders
- Field staff continue implementing program activities despite limited support
- Strong relationships of RHL Founders in Liberia
- Good reputation of field staff among local stakeholders and beneficiaries
- Basic communications materials and website developed
- Holistic program model

Weaknesses

- Multi-area program focus difficult to fully scale up given organization's size, maturity and budget
- Difficult to accurately gauge program impact with current metrics – especially health and education components
- No advisor/staff expertise in economic development/income generation projects
- Cumbersome and inefficient financial management process and procedures
- Internal communications between field-staff, HQ and US inefficient
- Limited support of field staff
- ICD unable to provide full oversight due to other commitments
- Lack of capacity building opportunities for field staff
- Some redundancy among local staff (head of tutors, admin asst in Monrovia)
- Limited external relations & networking among key national stakeholders
- Limited financial resources
- Limited input from beneficiaries or field staff on program model
- Tripartite decision-making structure at ED level
- Part-time ED role hampers ability to properly oversee, fundraise & grow organization
- No defined exit and/or sustainability strategy for program

Opportunities

- Long-term need for development programs in Liberia
- Defined geographic focus will allow RHL to refine program model working with target populations already working with the program
- Only NGO operating in Kolahun district gives RHL advantage as primary point of contact with Nat'l and County Authorities
- RHL's solid reputation in the field can be leveraged to grow county/local networks
- Current pool of potential advisors can be tapped to assist in program refinement and to serve on board
- Current pool specifically of Liberian expat advisors also has potential to expand networks and visibility of program and increase understanding of Liberian crisis
- Current NGO contacts in Liberia with expertise and track records could assist in improving HR, local finance and program management processes
- Potential to develop and strengthen Liberian NGO
- Additional funding and support to INGOs in Liberia for health and education projects could potentially serve as a way to increased collaboration and sub-recipient funding

Threats

- Ongoing risk of socio-political and economic crisis in Liberia would impact ability to implement project
- Potential Impact of COVID-19 on the health & safety of staff, beneficiaries
- Field staff turnover would halt project activities
- Donor fatigue among HNWIs
- Potential difficulty in fundraising with individual donors due to impact of COVID-19
- ICD's loan repayment hampers ability of RHL to quickly address Liberia management issues and impacts operating budget
- Other local or international NGOs begin working in area and eclipse project
- Lack of transfer/continuity plan if primary funders no longer support project
- Limited budget to increase ED hours impacts ability to improve core organizational components