



RL/LACC/AKZ-EC/110/2024

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June 30th, 2024

H.E. Joseph Nyumah Boakai
President of the Republic of Liberia
Ministry of State
Executive Mansion
Monrovia, Liberia

Your Excellency:

In Re: **Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission Second Quarter Report for the Year 2024.**

I respectfully present compliments on behalf of the Board of Commissioners, Management and Staff of the Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission (LACC) and under the cover of this letter, submit to you a copy of the Commission's Second Quarter Report for the year 2024.

The report summarizes the highlights from the second quarter 2024, including a comprehensive overview of the commission's activities, achievements, challenges, future goals, and consolidated financials in our relentless pursuit of combating corruption and promoting integrity in Liberia.

The second quarter was challenging for LACC due to setbacks in our activities growing out of late receipt of our first quarter budget allotment. Notwithstanding, the Commission received funding from the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP) for the prosecution of the Margibi County Health Team case which is currently ongoing at the ninth(9th) Judicial Circuit, Gbarnga, Bong County, Liberia.

During the period under review, we also made significant strides in concluding the investigation into four corruption cases, strengthening the rule of law, safeguarding public resources, and educating the general public about corruption.

Looking ahead, we are fully committed to building on our achievements and overcoming emerging challenges as we continue to advance Liberia's anti-corruption agenda.

In closing, I would like to express my gratitude for your continued leadership and support in our shared mission to combat corruption and uphold the principles of good governance supreme in Liberia.

Respectfully Submitted,

Cllr. Alexandra K. Zoe
Executive Chairperson



Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission (LACC)

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QUARTERLY REPORT OF THE LIBERIA ANTI-CORRUPTION COMMISSION

April 1-June 30, 2024, REPORTING PERIOD

SUBMITTED TO:

HIS EXCELLENCY JOSEPH NYUMAH BOAKAI
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC

July 2024

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INTRODUCTION

The Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission (LACC) is pleased to present its Second Quarter Report, June 30, 2024. This report provides a comprehensive overview of the Commission's activities, achievements, and challenges encountered from April 1, 2024, to June 30, 2024.

The Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission is under obligation as provided for in section 14.2 of its Act of 2022 to report quarterly to the President and National Legislature on progress made pursuant to its mandate. In the spirit of transparency and accountability, this report highlights the significant strides made in our ongoing fight against corruption in Liberia. Our efforts this quarter have focused on several key areas: investigations, education and prevention, policy advocacy, and partnerships with national and international stakeholders.

The second quarter saw intensified investigative actions, resulting in a number of high-profile cases being brought to light. Our public education campaigns have continued to raise awareness about the detrimental effects of corruption and the importance of ethical behavior. We have also made considerable progress in advocating for the establishment of the Anti-Corruption Court of Liberia and amendments to existing anti-corruption laws, working closely with the Legislature and other Government bodies.

Moreover, the Commission has strengthened its collaborations with civil society organizations, development partners, and international bodies. These partnerships have been instrumental in supporting our mission and enhancing our capacity to address corruption more effectively.

During this reporting period, the focus is on the country's asset declaration process. Following the completion of exit declarations in the first quarter of 2024, this second quarterly report emphasizes the declaration of assets by newly appointed public officials in the Executive, Legislative and Judiciary branches of the Government.

Despite the progress, we recognize that significant challenges remain. The Commission is committed to overcoming these obstacles through strategic initiatives, capacity building, and sustained efforts to foster a culture of integrity and accountability across all sectors of society.

As we present this report, we reaffirm our dedication to the principles of transparency, justice, and good governance. We extend our gratitude to all stakeholders for their unwavering support and collaboration. Together, we are making meaningful strides towards a corruption-free Liberia.

SUMMARY

BACKGROUND-LIBERIA ANTI- CORRUPTION COMMISSION (LACC)

An Act of the National Legislature in July 2022 established the Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission (LACC) as an independent Commission of government. The Commission has a broad mandate and functions to implement appropriate measures and undertake programs geared towards investigating, prosecuting, and preventing acts of corruption, including educating the public about the ills of corruption and the benefits of its eradication. The preamble of the Act establishing the Commission presents a background to the establishment of the Commission as based on the severe nature of corruption both in the public and on private sectors of the Liberian society that has undermined the institutional framework of good governance in Liberia.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

This report provides commentary and analysis of the cash receipts and payments (as well as the financial performance) of the Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission for the Second Quarter ended June 30th, 2024, and its financial position as of that date. This Financial Statement covers the second quarter (April 1 to June 30, 2024) of the budget year FY 2024, and its contents are consistent with the provisions of section I.9 captioned "Quarterly Government Agency or fund accounts" of the 2009 Public Financial Management Regulations. The Commission has adopted a system of sound accounting and financial management policies in conformity with financial regulations of the Government of Liberia and International Public Sector Accounting Standards (Cash Basis IPSAS) to ensure prudent and efficient management of funds. The Commission specifically keeps proper books and records of accounts for funds and resources received and expenditures incurred during the quarter. The Government of Liberia through budgetary appropriations primarily funds the Commission's programs and activities. The Commission from time to time receives external support from donor partners.

FY 2024 APPROVED BUDGET

At the onset of the budget year FY-2024, the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning communicated a draft budget of Two Million Sixty-Six Thousand Eight Hundred Eleven United States Dollars (US\$ 2,066,811.00) for the Commission's operations for the fiscal year 2024. However, additional allocation was made to the Commission in the tune of Nine Hundred Thousand United States Dollars (US\$ 900,000.00) which derived from legislative adjustments needed to support the Commission strategies to combat corruption in the public space.

SUMMARY OF BUDGET

For FY 2024, the Legislature approved a total of Two Million Nine Hundred Sixty-Six Thousand Eight Hundred Eleven United States Dollar (2,966,811.00) to enable the Commission to discharge its legislative mandates of investigating, educating and prosecuting acts of corruption while managing public finance. Of the total appropriation, One Million Two Hundred Seventy-five United states Dollars (US\$ 1, 200,075.00), representing 40% that was approved for expenditure on personnel compensation whilst One Million Seven Hundred Sixty-six Thousand Seven Hundred Thirty-six United states Dollars (US\$ 1,766,736.00) representing 60% that was approved for spending on goods and services for FY 2024. Despite management’s requests to procure capital items such as vehicles and land, no allocation was approved for capital spending for the fiscal year 2024.

The total amount allotted for the Second Quarter from the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning stood at Four Hundred Twenty-Two Thousand Fourteen United States Dollars (US\$ 422,014.00). The allotment is categorized in Table 1.0 as shown below:

TABLE 1.0 Quarter 2 Allotment

Allotment Category	Amount
Salary	304,661.94
Goods and services	117,353.00
Total	422,014.00

The Commission plans to roll-out several programs in FY 2024, which include: (1) strengthening the assets declaration regime by setting up an “E-Asset Declaration System”; (2) increasing investigative caseloads by 50% from 20 to 30 cases; (3) increasing prosecutors’ throughput from an average of six (6) to ten (10) cases per annum; (4) rolling out a brand ambassador program to focus on public awareness and education, and (5) training of investigators and education and prevention officers, among others.

To support these programs and initiatives, the Commission developed and proposed a budgetary appropriation of Four Million Five Hundred Thousand United States Dollars (USD\$4,500,000.00); however, Government of Liberia’s appropriations is at Two Million Nine Hundred Thousand United States Dollars (USD \$2,900,000.00). This reduced appropriation will challenge the Commission’s ability to execute its initiatives and activities as planned. The corresponding budgetary/appropriation shortfall is at One Million Six Hundred Thousand United states Dollars (USD \$ 1,600,000.00) as depicted in Table 1.1 below.

TABLE 1.1 Budgetary Shortfall

Object of Expenditure	FY 2024 Approved Appropriation	LACC FY 2024 Proposed Budget	Budget short fall FY 2024	Percent (%)
Compensation	1,200,075.00	2,058,324.00	(858,249.00)	0.715
Goods and Services	1,766,736.00	1,774,000.00	(7,264.00)	0.004
Non-Final Assets	-	752,000.00	(752,000.00)	100.00
Total	2,966,811.00	4,584,324.00	(1,617,513.00)	

SEE APPENDIX D FOR FULL REPORT

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE CHAIRPERSON

During the period under review the Executive Chairperson Alexandra Kormah Zoe, actively engaged in a series of local and international initiatives. These efforts are focused on combating corruption, investigating, and prosecuting acts of corruption, promoting transparency and accountability, raising public awareness, building the institutional capacity, training and development, advocacy and reform as well as fostering partnerships and collaborations.

LACC CONCLUDES MOU WITH MAURITIUS ANTI- CORRUPTION

During the period under review, recognizing the critical importance of collaboration and partnerships in combating corruption, the Office of the Executive Chairperson finalized a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Mauritius Anti-Corruption Commission. The MoU aims to facilitate the sharing of information, conduct joint investigations as needed and coordinate efforts in identifying, tracking, and addressing individuals suspected of financial crimes. Additionally, the MoU includes provisions for sharing knowledge on effective investigative techniques and providing mutual technical assistance and support.

LACC EXECUTIVE CHAIRPERSON PRESENTS AT BUDGET MEETING

The Executive Chairperson of the Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission, Cllr. Alexandra Kormah Zoe delivered a presentation during a budget meeting hosted by the Ministry of Finance & Development Planning. This three-day workshop was designed to familiarize Ministries, Agencies, and Commissions (MACs) of the Government of Liberia with the complete budget cycle, from formulation to execution. The Commission's participation in this workshop was at the invitation of the Ministry of Finance & Development Planning, specifically to present on the first day of the workshop.

LACC CHAIRPERSON APPEARS BEFORE THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

The House of Representatives summoned the Executive Chairperson of the Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission to address concerns regarding the leaked asset declaration form of former President George Manneh Weah. Accompanied by oversight Commissioner for the Monitoring & Investigation Department, Commissioner Samuel F. Dakana, she appeared before lawmakers and informed the body that she had no knowledge of former President Weah's asset declaration form being leaked. She further explained that the asset declaration forms of former President George Weah and four other officials from his administration had been handed over to former LACC Executive Chairperson, Cllr. James Nyepan Verdier, Jr. by the Asset Declaration Unit before her tenure began.

LACC EXECUTIVE CHAIRPERSON ATTENDS INAUGURAL IMC MEETING

On May 7, 2024, the inaugural session of the Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) was held at the Financial Intelligence Agency (FIA) Office on Congo Town Back Road, chaired by Cllr. Massah Jallabah, Acting Minister of Justice.

The purpose of the meeting was to update stakeholders on the current status of the Financial Intelligence Agency and to address administrative and operational challenges facing the Agency.

During the meeting, actionable points were identified, and standing committees were established to address these points and provide reports to the IMC Secretariat.

Representatives from eighteen Ministries, Agencies, and Commissions of the Government of Liberia were in attendance.

LACC COLLABORATES WITH UN OHCHR IN FREETOWN, SIERRA LEONE

The Executive Chairperson of LACC, Cllr. Alexandra Kormah Zoe, and Cllr. Oretha S. Davis, Oversight Commissioner for Prosecution, participated in a five-day exchange of experiences focusing on the interplay between human rights protection and anti-corruption efforts in Freetown, Sierra Leone, held from May 27-31, 2024.

During the visit, Cllr. Zoe and Cllr. Davis engaged in working sessions with counterparts from Sierra Leone, including Cllr. T. Dumpster Brown of the Independent National Commission on Human Rights (INCHR). They also conducted courtesy visits to various entities such as the human rights working group, the UN Resident Coordinator, the UNDP Resident Representative, the Ambassador of Ireland, and the Deputy Minister of Justice of Sierra Leone.

The event concluded with plans for a follow-up exchange visit and a dialogue between Liberia and Sierra Leone on the intersection of corruption and human rights, scheduled to occur in Monrovia in September 2024.

LACC PRESENTS AT CABINET RETREAT

The Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission made a presentation at the Cabinet Retreat convened at the Ellen Johnson Sirleaf Ministerial Complex in Congo Town from May 23-25, 2024. The presentation focused on Asset Declaration with emphasis on the processes and procedures, public officials required by law to declare, legal frameworks for asset declaration, sanctions for non-compliance and false declaration, amongst others.

The presentation raised awareness about Asset Declaration among public officials. Subsequently, leading to increased asset declaration compliance following the Cabinet Retreat.

EXECUTIVE CHAIRPERSON ATTENDS WORLD BANK GROUP MEETING

The Executive Chairperson of the Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission (LACC) participated in a high-level forum of the World Bank, on the Rule of Law and Good Governance held in the United States of America from June 25 -26, 2024.

Cllr. Alexandra Kormah Zoe honored an invitation from the World Bank Group (WBG) in Washington, D.C., to attend the forum which was held under the theme: ***"Justice and the Rule of Law Global Forum: Fostering Inclusive and Sustainable Development."***

The forum was organized to foster dialogue and collaboration within a broad ecosystem of stakeholders to reaffirm the role of justice and the rule of law as essential elements of

development. Cllr. Zoe served as a panelist alongside other anti-corruption experts and criminal justice specialists on the topic: **“Fighting Corruption through Effective Justice Systems.”**

The forum brought together over 200 participants from across the world, including senior government and judicial officials, WBG leadership, international and civil society organizations, private sector representatives and academia.

DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION

The administrative arm of the Commission under the direct supervision of the Executive Chairperson is charged with the responsibility under Section 8.2 of the Amended LACC Act of 2022 to run the day-to-day affairs of the Commission, including the supervision of personnel and the logistical duties of the Commission.

Key Achievements / Efforts Under Administration

ADMINISTRATION MANAGER PARTICIPATES IN NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN MEETING AS FOCAL POINT

During the period under review, the Executive Chairperson designated the Program Manager for Administration as Technical Focal Point to the National Development Plan Technical Committee. The committee which comprises Assistant Ministers and National Development Planning point persons from MACs, is aimed at orientating and working with members on upcoming activities for the formulation of the New National Development Plan (NDP), County Development Plans, and a Public Sector Investment Plan for the next five years. The plans will outline the country's development priorities and strategies.

Recruitment of New Procurement Officer

The Human Resource Unit of the Department of Administration recently conducted job interviews for five candidates vying for the Procurement Officer position. These candidates had successfully passed an aptitude test and were deemed eligible for an interview. A four-member panel conducted the interviews, comprising representatives from the Liberia Institute of Public Administration, the Public Procurement & Concessions Commission, an Oversight Commissioner of the LACC with a procurement background, and the Program Manager for Education and Prevention. The Human Resource Officer of the LACC served as the panel's secretary.

Following the interviews, scores were compiled, and a report is pending submission to the Board of Commissioners. Recommendations for employment consideration will be made for the top three performing candidates after character and professional background checks.

The vacancy for the Procurement Officer arose in the third quarter of 2023 due to the passing of Mr. Benjamin J. Teh, the incumbent at the time.

PUBLIC RELATIONS UNIT PREPARES MEDIA ENGAGEMENT WORK PLAN

The Public Relations Unit of the Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission has prepared a work plan for media engagement. The work plan is intended to ensure a structured and sustained public education and awareness on issues of corruption, as well as bring the public to speed on development at the Commission. This initiative will increase public participation in the fight against corruption and enhance public confidence in the work of the Commission.

The media engagement program is an undertaking of the Office of the Executive Chairperson as the official spokesperson of the Commission. The Public Relations Unit was designed to enable the Chairperson to fulfill her role as spokesperson specifically, and to generally expedite the communication and public relations functions of the Commission.

ASSET MANAGEMENT UNIT COLLABORATE WITH EXECUTIVE CHAIRPERSON ON RELOCATION

Pursuant to the Board of Commissioners' approval, the Asset Management Unit under the supervision of Program Manager for the Administration Department worked with the Office of the Executive Chairperson to relocate the Commission to its new location on the Old Road. Under the supervision of the Administration Manager, the team identified office spaces for Commissioners, Program Managers, and both General and Support staff of the Commission.

INTERNAL AUDITOR

Regulation J.3 1, 2, 3 4 (a,b,c) of the PFM Act of 2009 Amended and Restated 2019, with the caption 'Establishment of Internal Audit Unit' authorizes public institutions to set up internal audit units within their operations.

In keeping with the above mentioned provision, the Commission internally operates a robust Internal Audit Unit that has been empowered by the new Board of Commissioners to implement the Internal Audit Agency (IAA) recommendations, conduct internal reviews and cross check all of our internal procedures and processing to ensure that they are in compliance with relevant laws, regulations and policies before disbursement are made.

The Internal Audit Unit also conducts a monthly review of all financial transactions to ensure that the Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission (LACC) financial records accurately reflect its actual bank balances and advise management where applicable.

SUMMARY OF THE INTERNAL AUDIT AGENCY(IAA) AUDIT REPORT

The Board of Commissioners on assuming office, commissioned an audit of the LACC to ensure the fiscal probity of the institution. In this regard, the Commission officially invited the Internal Audit Agency (IAA) to conduct an audit of the LACC for the period January 1, 2022, to September 30, 2023.

Below are significant findings of said audit:

The Internal Audit Agency completed examinations of financial activities, processes, and

systems of the Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission for the period January 1, 2022, to September 30, 2023, for purposes of providing independent, objective assurance on the effectiveness of internal controls.

Significant issues arising from the examination:

1. **US\$212,570** and **L\$18,753,870** disbursed for Intelligence & Special Operations but could not be accounted for or traced to any Intelligence or Special Operations services performed.
2. **US\$39,320.00** disbursed for Special Operations with no evidence of requisition, authorization, and approval.
3. **L\$120,465.68** closing balance in LACC account held at UBA with no evidence of transfer to new account at CBL.
4. **US\$27,700.00** and **L\$9,691,370.00** disbursed to the Chief Prosecutor for legal fees & special court operations without evidence of expenditures made.
5. **US\$11,097.5** **LD\$2,537,024.79** were expended for fuel for vehicles and generators without evidence of utilization reports.
6. **US\$65,386.51** and **L\$7,574,669.10** paid to Elsean Enterprise Inc. Security Service for services rendered without evidence of time and attendance log, monthly or quarterly reports and shifting schedule.
7. Testing of quarterly financial report and actual expenditure made showed that there were significant variances between figures reported and the source documents.
8. The Comptroller certified payment vouchers without the approval of both the Executive Director and the Program Manager and signed checks along with the former Executive Chairperson without communication from other relevant parties to do so for payments.
9. It was observed in many instances checks were paid before payment vouchers were raised.
10. It was observed that the payment voucher was approved by the Executive Director (ED) without the approval of the Program Manager for Administration (PMA) who shall be the first line of approval before payment is made as per the financial handbook.
11. The audit revealed that LACC Bank reconciliation statements are erroneously prepared by the accountant and reviewed by the comptroller without any rectification for the period under review.
12. The audit revealed lack of adequate controls in the technical department of the LACC to account for Special Operations and Intelligence funds:
13. The audit team observed that not all LACC's fixed assets are not coded to be safeguarded and tracked.
14. The procurement of goods and services didn't adhere to provision of the PPC Act. The LACC Org-chart, SOPs, Policies, TORs, etc. need to be updated according to the New Act and approved by the BOC.
15. LACC lacks sufficient staff to conduct its activities. For instance, most of the units

contain only one staff member.

16. Trend analysis of the monthly gross payroll revealed an unexplained increase in gross salary for the period under review.

17. The audit revealed inadequate controls over the LACC payroll

ASSET DECLARATION

The primary focus of this Second Quarterly report centers on Liberia's asset declaration and verification framework. Asset declaration plays a pivotal role in combating corruption, serving as a crucial mechanism for governments and public officials to enhance transparency, accountability, and integrity in public service. This practice mandates individuals holding positions of public trust to disclose their assets, such as financial holdings, real estate, investments, and other valuable possessions, upon assuming office and at regular intervals thereafter.

As contained in Part IV, Section 4.1 (g) of the Amended and Restated Act of the LACC, the commission has the power "To compile, verify, maintain, and update a comprehensive assets declaration register for all employees of the Liberian Government pursuant to the Code of Conduct Act of 2014. This provision makes the Commission the sole repository of the Asset Declaration Regime. To bolster this mandate, the LACC through its Asset Declaration and Verification unit has been keen to ensure compliance from public officials.

In keeping with the above mandate, the Commission on May 2, 2024, published the Asset Declaration Regulation for the year 2024. The regulation placed July 31, 2024, as the deadline for Asset Declaration for all public officials. In addition, during the period under review, in support of the President, His Excellency Joseph Nyumah Boikai's One Hundred Days deliverables, the Commission also began rolling out the Integrity Pledge for all public officials. All Public Officials in the declaration of their assets are required to sign the National Integrity Pledge. The Commission has served the heads of several ministries, agencies and commissions with copies of the Asset Declaration Regulations along with the Integrity Pledge and implored them to encourage public officials and other civil servants in their respective Ministries, Agencies and Commissions to comply with the asset declaration regime of the Government of Liberia.

As of the reporting period June 30, 2024, the LACC is in possession of Two Hundred Twenty (220) completed and notarized asset declarations of public officials while Eighty (80) MACs out of One Hundred Seven (107) MACs were served copies of the Assets Declaration Regulations and Integrity Pledge. More Public Officials are expected to declare their assets in keeping with relevant laws.

Of the number mentioned above, the LACC has received Two Hundred Thirteen (213) copies of the assets Declaration papers from public officials from the Executive, and Five (5) from the Legislature and Two (2) from the Judiciary.

Once more, the LACC acknowledges and values the strong commitment shown by the President and Vice President in leading the Assets Declaration process. The LACC also underscores the President's consistent public statements, urging officials to abstain from corruption and declare their assets with the LACC. These actions reflect a robust political resolve in the battle against corruption.

The Commission also acknowledges critical steps by Senate President Pro-Tempore, Nyonblee Karnga-Lawrence, and her counterpart, Cllr. Jonathan Fornati Koffa, Speaker of the House of Representatives for their demonstrated willingness in convincing fellow colleagues in the National Legislature to declare their assets. The national conversation about asset declaration is keen in promoting a culture of integrity on the psyche of the nation.

Meanwhile, the LACC has been waiting to see judicial compliance with these regulations.

(See Appendix C Asset Declaration Table)

CHALLENGES OF THE ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT

The Administration Department faces its own set of challenges as it provides administrative and logistical support to other program departments. Since its establishment, the Commission has consistently received low budgetary allocations, making it challenging the LACC to fully fulfill its mandates. These limited funds often prioritize covering commissioners' and staff salaries, leaving insufficient resources for program activities. Additionally, many vehicles in the LACC fleet have exceeded their operational lifespan, exacerbated by inadequate funding for repairs and maintenance.

Furthermore, over the past five (5) years, the LACC has been unable to procure laptops, desktops, and printers for its employees. A significant number of operational staff members within the Commission lack access to computers, severely limiting their ability to work effectively from both the office and field locations. Because of these significant deficiencies, the Administration Department has been unable to provide adequate technical support to other departments in carrying out the Commission's core functions.

EDUCATION AND PREVENTION DEPARTMENT

The Education & Prevention Department of the Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission plays a crucial role in fulfilling the Commission's mandate of Education and Prevention. The Department consists of four specialized anti-corruption units: the Prevention Unit, Community Relations Unit, Research Unit, and the Monitoring & Evaluation Unit.

A CALL FOR PROPOSAL FROM THE AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK (AfDB)

During the reporting period, the Commission applied for funding from the African Development Bank amounting to One Million Euros (approximately 1.3 million US Dollars). The project aims to enhance the human and institutional capacities of the Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission for more effective mandate execution. It includes initiatives to upgrade the LACC's Information and Communication Technology (ICT) infrastructure for

secured collaboration, and to strengthen anti-corruption legislative and policy frameworks aligned with the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC). Additionally, the project will identify corruption vulnerabilities in key public institutions and private sectors and facilitate stakeholder engagement and collaboration at both national and international levels. Public education and awareness campaigns will also be implemented to combat corruption effectively.

The Education and Prevention Department of the Commission prepared the project narrative and budget in close consultation with the Executive Chairperson, Vice Executive Chairperson and team in Paris, France.

The Commission is expected to receive One Million Euro or the equivalent of United States Dollars One Million Three Hundred Thousand Dollars (1.3m). The project has been approved and adjustments were made to certain budget components to better align them with the project's development objectives.

STRENGTHENING RULE OF LAW PROJECT

Collaboration in anti-corruption initiatives accrues value addition and enhances shared expertise among Transparency and Accountability Sector actors. During the period under review, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) collaborated with the LACC on the implementation of the UN Joint Rule of Law "Strengthening Rule of Law in Liberia: Justice and Security for the Liberian People II Project" in Montserrado, Bomi, Nimba and Grand Gedeh counties, respectively.

The objective of the project was to undertake a public education and awareness campaign among citizens in the four counties and train selected LACC staff on anti-corruption legislations and other policy instruments of the Government of Liberia.

More than three thousand (3,000) copies of the amended and restated LACC Act were distributed along with more than eight thousand (8,000) other Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials, including Whistleblower and Witness Protection Acts and Anti-Corruption flyers. The project also printed and erected four anti-corruption banners in Bensonville, Tubmanburg, Saniquellie and Zwedru cities to increase the visibility of the intervention.

Additionally, the project trained forty (40) LACC staff and deepened their understanding of the Amended Anti-Corruption Act of 2022, the Public Procurement & Concessions Commission Act, Public Financial Management Act, and Code of Conduct, among others.

USAID/ INTERNEWS- LACC MEDIA PARTNERSHIP PROJECT

During the period under review, the Commission through its Community Relations Unit submitted a project proposal for the Media Partnership Project of the United States Agency for International Development USAID / INTERNEWS for funding support. The aim of the project was to solicit the media buy-in and support of citizens in the fight against corruption.

The Media Partnership Project consists of three components: *Training, Radio Talk Show*

and Community Media Forum. The Radio Talk Show is a live, phone-in dialogue that facilitates discussions between discussants and the public on issues of corruption. Discussants for the talk shows are drawn from different professional backgrounds and sectors of Liberian society.

The project conducted a two-day workshop for fifteen (15) investigative journalists at the D' Calabash on Congo Town Back Road. The trainees acquired new skills in understanding the Concept of Corruption, Documentary Evidence Examination, Understanding Legal Frameworks, Cross Border Investigation and Identifying Red Flags. The training was organized by Center for Media Studies e Building (CEMESP) with facilitators from LACC. The Radio Talk Show / Media Engagement started on May 14, 2024 and will continue up to July 2024.

The Community Media Forum covered three counties: Montserrado, Bong and Grand Bassa counties. The town hall-style fora at the county level provided a platform for citizens to understand and discuss corrupt practices in their counties and communities. The Montserrado County Media forum convened at the Covenant High School in Cooper Farm Community with more than Seventy-Five (75) students from the University of Liberia in attendance.

CHALLENGES OF THE EDUCATION AND PREVENTION DEPARTMENT

While we commend these achievements, the department continues to grapple with significant challenges and constraints. Chief complaints among these are unreliable internet connectivity, inadequate logistics, frequent power outages, and an unsuitable work environment.

Unreliable Internet

The Commission's unreliable internet service is a well-recognized issue that hampers workflow efficiency and effectiveness. This limitation complicates the sharing of work among staff, supervisors, and oversight Commissioners for review, feedback, and collaboration. Consequently, the responsibility for ensuring internet access has shifted from management to staff, who must personally purchase and use data to adhere to work schedules and meet deadlines.

Lack of Operational Fuel

The Department is facing challenges in fulfilling its mandate due to a lack of operational fuel. Staff frequently find themselves needing to cover the costs of transportation on behalf of the LACC to ensure timely program and project implementation.

Logistics

The lobby of the department lacks suitable furnishings to accommodate Public Officials and other guests conducting business with the Commission. There is a scarcity of comfortable chairs for visitors waiting to have their asset declarations reviewed and obtain acknowledgment slips. Additionally, the Asset Declaration & Verification Office lacks air conditioning, creating an uncomfortable work environment that undermines productivity. Staff members have reported hearing disparaging remarks from some public officials who

visit to declare their assets.

MONITORING AND INVESTIGATION DEPARTMENT

The Monitoring and Investigation Department is a pivotal component of the Commission, tasked with overseeing its investigative functions. While the Commission prioritizes prevention efforts, it also recognizes that punishment serves as a crucial deterrent.

Key Achievements/Efforts During the Period under Review

Mr. President, we are pleased to inform you that during the period under review, the department vigorously pursued corruption cases within society and across various governmental sectors. Specifically, Forty-Five (45) cases were brought forward from the First Quarter to this quarter; additional Nine (9) cases were reported to the Department for the Second Quarter, making it Fifty-Four (54) cases handled by the Department for the period under review. The combined monetary value of the nine (9) cases reported this quarter is United States One Million Three Hundred Two Thousand Seventy-Five United States Dollars (US\$1,302,075)

Additionally, the Department investigated and concluded seven (7) cases for appropriate action to be taken by the Board of Commissioners (BOC); while Forty-Seven (47) cases were carried forward for investigation consideration for the Third Quarter.

(See Appendix A Investigation Cases)

MONITORING AND INTELLIGENCE TEAM

Mr. President, on May 20th, 2024 the Monitoring and Intelligence Team was formally established within the Monitoring and Investigation Department with the responsibility to (1) monitor all suspicious acts of corruption and for investigating acts of corruption to determine whether there is probable cause that any person or organization or entity is engaged in acts of corruption; and, (2) file reports of its monitoring activities and investigations to the Executive Chairperson and the Department of Prosecution.

During the period under review, the Monitoring and Intelligence Team collaborated with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Integrity Watch Liberia regarding the TALKAY APP, a digital platform for reporting acts of corruption. A formal meeting was held to review the application's status, the reported corruption cases across the fifteen counties, and necessary enhancements to improve user experience. Recommendations were made to streamline navigation and facilitate citizen reporting of corruption incidents.

Additionally, the team produced a series of instructional videos in three parts to educate Liberians on effectively utilizing the app. These videos aim to educate Liberians on the app usage, how to provide crucial information to the Commission, and empower citizens to submit details that facilitate thorough review and case escalation to the Board of Commissioners.

The Monitoring and Intelligence Team conducted a thorough analysis of the TALKAY APP,

reviewing all reported allegations of corruption. In the analysis, a total of 252 cases were reported from the year 2023 to the current period. Of these, only **52** cases contained sufficient data, while **200** lacked essential information. We also analyzed the cases containing sufficient data in the 2nd Quarter (April – June 2024) and discovered that only **17** of the **20** incidents reported in the TALKAY APP contained sufficient data, while 3 lacked essential information. **Please note, this report only captures cases reported during the period under review. (See Appendix B Talkay App Monitoring Report)**

The team divided cases into financially related cases and non-financially related cases. Financially related cases primarily involved *money laundering, embezzlement, misuse of public funds, bribery, and extortion*. Non-financial cases included issues such as *molestation, cronyism, patronage, misuse of government office, and other non-financial matters*.

For cases unrelated to corruption, the Commission intends to collaborate with the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection, along with other pertinent ministries. This collaboration will ensure the prompt escalation of these reports and offer essential support within the Commission's mandate. Such joint endeavors are pivotal in fostering transparency and accountability across diverse institutions.

Citizens' feedback from the TALKAY APP and community engagement has highlighted the necessity for the Commission to set up a Corruption Reporting Hotline in collaboration with both Orange and Lonestar telecommunications companies.

CAPACITY BUILDING REQUIREMENT

Capacity building is essential for enhancing work performance. Therefore, based on the training needs identified for Investigators within the Monitoring and Investigation Department (MID), a concept note was developed last quarter to outline the department's training requirements.

Quotations detailing the costs of training were submitted to the Oversight Commissioners for further submission to LACC donor partners such as the World Bank and the AfDB. These funds would support training in areas such as Basic Police Science, Financial Crimes Investigation (both beginner and advanced levels), Digital Evidence Recovery, Procurement Fraud, Money Laundering, Tax Fraud Investigation, and more.

CHALLENGES FACING THE MONITORING AND INVESTIGATION DEPARTMENT

The department acknowledges management's support during the review period; however, it continues to face significant challenges in logistical supplies and operational funding. There has been a shortage of essential supplies such as sheets, ink, box folders, and fuel

for operational vehicles. Currently, most of the department's computers are infected with viruses and are not functioning properly.

The absence of operational vehicles is severely hindering movements within Montserrado County and other parts of Liberia. Therefore, the Department urgently requires at least four (4) operational vehicles to effectively carry out its investigative mandate across the country.

New Investigators, including Senior Investigators are yet to undergo the Basic Police Skills training and Senior Police Management training (supervision, command, control and firearm) at the National Police Training Academy (NPTA).

Moreover, the department faces logistical deficiencies. With a total staff of 23, including Investigators and Intelligence Officers, many lack functional laptops necessary for monitoring and investigating corruption incidents. The department collects valuable intelligence on corrupt activities through agents stationed at various Ministries, Agencies, Commissions, and Public Corporations. It is imperative that each staff member is equipped with a dedicated laptop to effectively monitor, investigate, and prevent corruption in both the public and private sectors of Liberia.

OPERATIONS

During the review period, the Department conducted routine field investigative operations, including communication dispatches, follow-ups with individuals and institutions of interest, surveillance activities, and gathering evidentiary materials from informants and stakeholders.

Moreover, the Department carried out an arrest operation involving officials of the National Oil Company of Liberia (NOCAL) to advance investigations into allegations of procurement fraud and corruption.

Throughout this period, the Department also continued its Special intelligence operations. This included investigating money-laundering allegations involving officials of the FIA, and a corruption case within the Ministry of Finance (MFDP). Furthermore, the department focused on mainstreaming and identifying acts of corruption in other public and private institutions, and documenting acts of corruption as reported by various media outlets (print, electronic, and social media).

DEPARTMENT OF PROSECUTION

Moreover, the Department carried out an arrest operation involving officials of the National Oil Company of Liberia (NOCAL) to advance investigations into allegations of procurement fraud and corruption

The Prosecution Department of the Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission plays a pivotal role within the Commission, tasked with prosecuting corruption cases following investigations.

Throughout the reporting period, the LACC collaborated with the First Judicial Circuit, Criminal Court 'C', Montserrado County, 13th and 9th Judicial Circuit Courts of Margibi and Bong Counties, respectively during the May Term of Court A. D/. 2024) to secure indictments in several significant cases. Among these, notable cases include Government of Liberia vs. Officials of the Margibi County Health Team, Government of Liberia vs. Planned Parenthood Association of Liberia (PPAL), and Government of Liberia vs. Global Bank Liberia Ltd. These prosecution efforts amounted to a combined monetary value of United States dollars Two million Five Hundred Ninety-Three Thousand One Hundred Sixty-Six Dollars Fifty Cents (US\$2,593,166.50); Nineteen Thousand Six Hundred United States (US\$19,600.00) was restituted during the period review.

REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA BY AND THROUGH THE LIBERIA ANTI-CORRUPTION COMMISSION VS. FORMER OFFICIALS AND VENDORS OF MARGIBI COUNTY HEALTH TEAM, ET AL.:

In this instance, the Commission filed a motion for a change of venue for trial. Defense counsels opposed the motion, but the Judge ruled in favor of the LACC and transferred the case to the 9th Judicial Circuit in Bong County. Two separate motions were filed: one for a Separate Trial and another to dismiss the indictment, both in favor of Barkollie Kollie of MJK Business Center and Odoshall Oldpa Karnue of God's Willing Incorporated.

Additionally, a Bill of Information was filed with the 9th Judicial Circuit on behalf of Vamayen Traore, General Manager of Biomedical Link, for the resupply of medical materials and equipment valued at USD \$19,100.00. The court granted the Bill of Information, allowing co-defendant Vamayen Traore to proceed with the resupply the materials and equipment to the Margibi County Health Team. The monetary value of the case is United States One Hundred Forty-Two Thousand Two Hundred One Dollars and Fifty-Cents (US\$142, 201.50).

Regarding the other two motions for Separate Trial and Dismissal of the Indictment, the prosecution requested that the court consolidate them for a hearing. Arguments for and against the motions were heard, and the Judge reserved ruling for Wednesday, June 19, 2024, at 12 noon. However, the Judge reassigned the case for Friday, June 21, 2024 to deliver his ruling. The Judge ruled and denied the two motions and ordered the court proceeds with the case. The value of this case is United States One Hundred Forty-Two Thousand Two Hundred One Dollars Fifty-Cents (US\$ 142, 201.50).

As regards the PPAL case, all defendants have appeared before the court's jurisdiction. They collectively filed a motion to dismiss the indictment, while separately; Co-defendant Enree Bee Neeplo filed a motion for a separate trial. These motions were opposed, heard, and argued in court. The judge ultimately denied the motions. Following this decision, the defendants sought relief by petitioning the Chambers Justice for a writ of certiorari, thereby escalating the matter to the Chambers Justice's office. A conference was convened where both parties presented their arguments. The Chambers Justice decided to grant Separate Trial in favor of Enree Bee Neeplo and declined to dismiss the indictment against the defendants. Based on his decision the parties entered a stipulation for the matter to be tried on the merit by Criminal Court "C". A jury trial is

currently ongoing at Criminal Court "C" The value of the case is United States One Hundred Fifty-One Thousand Four Hundred Fifteen Dollars (US\$151,415).

REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA BY AND THROUGH THE LIBERIA ANTI-CORRUPTION COMMISSION VS GLOBAL BANK LTD:

This case was appealed based on a verdict obtained in Criminal Court "C" in favor of the state. This case was argued before the Supreme Court during the October Term of Court, A. D. 2023. On Friday, June 14, 2024, the Supreme Court confirmed the guilty verdict and amended the amount to be restituted to Kailondo Petroleum Company Incorporated from United States Three million Dollars (US\$ 3,000,000) plus to United States Two Million Three Hundred Thousand (US\$ 2,300,000) plus.

CHALLENGES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE PROSECUTION DEPARTMENT

The Prosecution Department faces numerous challenges in fulfilling its mandate. These include insufficient resources, financial and logistical constraints, and a shortage of human resources with limited staff. Addressing these issues is crucial to ensuring the department's effective operations. We appreciate the efforts made by the Board of Commissioners to tackle these challenges and recognize the progress achieved so far.

The department is currently understaffed, particularly in terms of legal expertise needed to prepare indictments and prosecute corruption cases in a timely manner.

CONCLUSIONS

To conclude Mr. President, I can report to you that the Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission is on a steady course to implementing its mandate as enshrined in the Amended LACC Act of 2022. The rebranding process is well on course and the Commission has again garnered the respect among its peers in the sub- region. We acknowledged the need to cover more ground on the local front in respect of the conduct of more investigations and prosecution of corruption cases. The LACC leadership sees these objectives as achievable given the strong political will demonstrated by your leadership.

The Commission has seen the direct commitment of several Civil Society Organizations to re-engage the LACC on our overall mandate to fight fraud, waste, and abuse in the society.

Your Excellency, despite a series of operational challenges facing the Commission, we have taken substantial steps to intensify the prosecution of cases around the country and increase corruption prevention efforts in different government ministries and Parastatals.

In succeeding reports, we will build on the gains made thus far and keep a keen eye on the implementation of the Amended LACC Act of 2022 establishing the Commission.

While we continue the fight against corruption, we thank you, Mr. President for the opportunity provided to us to serve our nation, Liberia.