Higher Education Strategic Plan for Liberia

National Commission on Higher Education

The Vision, Mission, and Strategic themes and actions for higher education over the next 10 years were developed through consultation and dialogue with the stakeholders in higher education and leaders of higher education institutions. The plan emphasizes the essential contribution of higher education to national development and focuses the collective actions of the higher education institutions on directly serving national needs and priorities.
Table of Contents

Introduction ........................................................................................................................................... 4

Context .................................................................................................................................................. 5
Steps toward a Strategic Plan .............................................................................................................. Error! Bookmark not defined.

Part A. Vision, Mission, Strategic Goals and Actions ................................................................. Error! Bookmark not defined.

Vision ..................................................................................................................................................... 6
Mission .................................................................................................................................................. 7
Values .................................................................................................................................................... 7

People .................................................................................................................................................. 7
Excellence ............................................................................................................................................ 7
Teamwork ............................................................................................................................................ 7
Learning .............................................................................................................................................. 7
Innovation ........................................................................................................................................... 7
Strategy ............................................................................................................................................... 7
Strategic Themes, Goals, and Actions ............................................................................................... 9

Part B. Implementation Timelines and Costs ............................................................................... Error! Bookmark not defined.

Strategic Activities ............................................................................................................................... 10
Log frame of Priority Activities of Strategic Plan ............................................................................. 10
Foreword

Higher education enhances the nation’s intellect and drives the development of national competitiveness and economic progress. The contribution of higher education to national development is particularly critical following the years of conflict and chaos experienced by Liberia. Accordingly, the Secretariat of the National Commission on Higher Education (NCHE) has gathered the higher education institution leaders to set out a collective plan of action to improve the quality and relevance of academic work and propose a path to greater immediate contribution to national needs and a lasting impact on national prosperity. Liberia’s youth determines the future of our country and higher education provides the intellectual basis for their leadership and accomplishment.

After the review of the higher education programs through national censuses, the diagnostic assessment of issues and concerns, as well as strengths and possibilities, the NCHE initiated a series of consultative engagements to involve all the higher education institutions of Liberia and elicit the opinions and ideas of significant stakeholders who depend upon the accomplishments of higher education. This process has resulted in the development of a vision, mission, strategy, and sets of actions aimed at the quality and relevance of higher education for Liberia. With assistance from the World Bank and additional support from USAID projects, the strategic planning process continues in 2013 to specify the details of strategic actions, costs, and implications and begin implementation.

We believe this strategic planning process will enhance our efforts and better utilize our resources for a more effective, relevant, and coordinated higher education system. We also believe that the higher education system will contribute considerably to the current national dialogue, needs, and activities to reduce national poverty and ensure enduring prosperity. This actionable sub-sector strategy will ensure continued improvement and contribution of higher education.

Dr. Michael P. Slawon
Director General
National Commission on Higher Education Secretariat
Higher Education Strategic Plan for Liberia

Introduction

The importance of higher education in development and national prosperity is evident throughout the world. Liberia’s future depends upon a quality higher education system to produce leaders for the nation. Current leaders were shaped by their academic experiences and the future leaders of the country will also be influenced by their higher educational involvements. Higher education extends the possibilities of society and guarantees the intellectual capital for development and sustained wealth and poverty reduction.

The purpose of the strategic plan for higher education is to provide a guide that will shape and enrich the national identity with greater potential for development and serve as a tool for continued human intellectual growth to help in the eradication of poverty in Liberia. Higher education socializes beneficiaries and helps foster national identity development through the transmission of knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes across generations of participants. The plan is based on associated intents that higher education should help in creating healthy attitudes of nationhood to ensure continued security and mutual respect among the many diverse cultural and ethnic groups that comprise Liberia, build a core national capacity to advance Liberia as a society and contribute and compete in the regional and global markets, and be strongly linked with basic and secondary education through a rigorous and focused academic program that ensures a well-educated graduate.

The strategy is not “business as usual” and within the scope of its domain, higher education will fulfill its targeted role in post-conflict development. The intent is to create a comprehensive and cohesive group of higher education institutions that will focus on key sectors of development (e.g., energy, transportation, health, agriculture, fisheries, and forestry), extend the possibilities for second chance opportunities, develop affiliated businesses that use the creative capacity of the higher education community to generate income and economic potential for the country, and enable the intellect of Liberia to apply its potential for national wealth and prosperity.
Context

The country is currently dealing with the aftermath of a civil conflict that resulted in millions of casualties and displaced millions more, some of whom were faculty and leaders of the country’s higher education system. Before the war years, Liberia had an emerging higher education system with functioning and contributing undergraduate programs, fledgling quality graduate programs, and a promising intellectual tradition. Higher education in Liberia faces enormous demand, limited prospects for focused or increased proportion of government expenditures in the domain (because support is already high and now very politicized), low credibility within and outside its institutions, limited perceived relevance to national needs, however defined, low quality faculty, low paid faculty positions compared with other higher education institutions in the higher educational world, considerable use of part-time academic and administrative personnel, rare strategic planning in the higher education sub-sector, poor quality candidates from a deficient general education program, poor choices of academic preparation for the current and future job markets of Liberia, and so on. The neglect of higher education is to fail the future of the nation.

The full revival of quality higher education is underway, as indicated in this strategic exercise, and the contribution of higher education to national development is expected to be significant. Over the last several years of reconstruction there has been continued cooperation between the National Commission on Higher Education (NCHE), the regulatory body, and the Association of Liberian Universities (ALU), the collective of higher education institutions. Their collaborative actions have eliminated many of the poorer programs operating in Liberia; achieved some consolidation and standardization across the first two years of academic preparation; developed a new Act for Higher Education that bodes well for future efforts of improvement; strengthened the regulatory and support functions of the NCHE to provide greater guidance and direction to the domain; increased attention to quality assurance and institutional improvement that means more focus on quality; fostered readiness to work together among the HEIs to build a better domain which means that further improvements are possible with better efficiency; appointed exceptional leadership in the major institutions to lead the way and increase opportunities in the current dialogue; strengthen qualifications of the faculty in basic subject areas that indicate some recovery of the domain; focused on some areas of special improvement (e.g., engineering, health, geology, and agriculture) that provide some hope for the future; and widened the recognition of the importance of higher education for the individual and the society.

The development of a coordinated system of higher education institutions provides the higher level capacity and skill needs of the country. The focus of academic development in line with the needs of the post-conflict context lies at the heart of this national development strategy for higher education. There is a consensus that improving the quality of higher education is central to creating jobs and economic recovery of Liberia. Higher education is one of the pillars of transforming this war-ravaged state and crafting a path to enduring prosperity.
Steps toward a Strategic Plan

Just before the civil turmoil marred Liberia’s progress in developing a quality higher education system, the National Commission on Higher Education (NCHE) was established by an Act in 1989 in order to (1) formulate broad policy guidelines for the establishment of higher education in Liberia and serve as principal liaison between the institutions of higher learning and the government of Liberia; (2) monitor, evaluate and accredit all institutions of higher learning; (3) approve new and existing programs of higher education for funding after having satisfied itself of their needs for national development; and (4) review existing programs at institutions of higher education with the aim of establishing priority programs of study based on national needs.

The Commission was moribund during most of the conflict but the Secretariat of the NCHE was eventually established in 1997. The resurgence of the NCHE in a difficult decade indicated its importance and was a major step forward to guide Liberian institutions into initial compliance with national standards. In the absence of legal and professional guidelines, Liberia experienced the proliferation of ‘less than optimal’ institutions. The NCHE’s development and legal establishment of policies led to a rationalization of higher education institutions. NCHE is still rebuilding its organization in order to carry out its mandate.

With the Commission and Secretariat in place and stability and peace returned to Liberia, the strategic planning process was initiated with a series of higher education institutional censuses; the drafting of a new Act to re-vitalize the NCHE and clarify the roles of those most connected to the development of higher education in Liberia; the assessment of the higher education context and production of a diagnostic review of the current status of higher education in Liberia; and the arrangement of a set of consultative dialogues and reviews of the proposed strategic plan for the development of higher education over the next decade. These steps are managed by the NCHE Secretariat, with cooperation of the private/faith-based and public higher education institutions and the Ministry of Education. The result is a comprehensive strategic plan that encompasses the collective intents and actions in the sub-sector of the higher education community of institutions.

Part A. Vision, Mission, Strategic Goals and Actions

Vision

The vision for Liberia’s higher education system is:

* A higher education system producing intellectual and human resources focusing on national, social, political, and economic development.
This vision progressively (in phases over a 10 year period) builds a high quality public and private higher education system that responds to Liberia’s growth and development needs, improves well-being, fosters security and peace, respects customs and traditions of society, incorporates modern scientific knowledge in programs, and is well-managed and internationally recognized as a credible system.

**Mission**

The collective mission for higher education in Liberia is:

- To develop a sustainable higher education system that provides access, equity, quality, and promotes relevant research and consultancy.
- To facilitate the delivery of quality and relevant higher education programs.
- To aspire for all institutions of higher education to meet national and international standards.

**Values**

The higher education system adheres to the following values:

**People**

Upholding the culture of quality and relevant higher education, effective management and program delivery, being accountable to the government and the people of Liberia.

**Excellence**

Maintaining high standards of performance and professionalism by aiming for excellence in everything undertaken, including fairness, ethical behavior, and trustworthiness.

**Teamwork**

Cooperating with other higher education institutions and with our partners in education in an open and supportive way to achieve shared goals.

**Learning**

Creating a learning organization in which the academic community seeks and shares knowledge and information while committing to professional growth throughout the system.

**Innovation**

Shriving to address the training needs for high quality service and seeking ways of achieving excellence utilizing new and effective approaches and means.

**Strategy**

The primary strategy for higher education is:
The higher education system of Liberia will focus on direct contributions to the agenda for sustained prosperity.

This strategy encompasses the role of higher education in Liberia’s post-conflict era, recognizes the need for sustainable high quality programming, and emphasizes the importance and relevance of higher education to national development. The strategy is undertaken by the National Commission on Higher Education through its Secretariat. Some aspects of the strategy and its referent actions reinforce explicit responsibilities for Liberian higher education institutions to impact national progress.

- Pursue renovation and reconstruction of its physical assets and services;
- Pursue intensive programs for faculty, staff, and student development;
- Provide, as much as possible, expertise that would play pivotal roles in setting the national developmental and rehabilitative agenda for sustainable national recovery and prosperity;
- Transform and reorient the curriculum, and research and service programs toward a more applied approach for immediate relevance to the national developmental agenda;
- Perform research and disseminate information relative to the root causes of the conflict and develop strategies for dealing with the conflict and avoiding future occurrences;
- Provide the consciousness for integrity in national deliberations; and
- Take ownership of adjacent communities, those that supply students to the university, and the curricula of feeding institutions in specific areas.

The purpose of the strategy is to provide direction and scope for the sub-sector activities, recognizing the limits and needs of the post-conflict context pertinent to the Liberian higher education mission, and accordingly, influence the investment of resources and the attention of management to the pursuits and opportunities to serve directly the interests of an evolving and recovering society.

So the challenge is how to respect the traditions and noble ideals of the university community, which has been productive in many developed countries, and mix the immediate needs of the post-conflict context with the inherent freedoms and higher visions of the university in society. The Magna Charta Universitatum states (1988), "the university is an autonomous institution at the heart of societies"... "Research and teaching must be morally and intellectually independent of all political authority and economic power" -- these are the fundamental properties of the university. Recognizing the importance of autonomy and the long-term hopes for higher education, there is an important role for higher education in contributing immediately to the vitality and integrity of national recovery and focusing on priorities for higher education investment and activities in related endeavors. The strategy concentrates action on the paths of contribution, avoids less productive trends and practices while respecting the general aspirations of higher education, and creates a theme for higher education relevance that can be communicated and monitored.
Strategic Themes, Goals, and Actions

I. Enhancing the relevance of higher education to national development

Higher education is an essential driver of national development. It enhances national capacity to deal with the complexities of the post-conflict context of Liberia, enhances security through greater understanding and mutual respect, builds confidence in political processes, contributes to and reflects the national identity, entails the knowledge and skills necessary for leadership and contribution to society and national needs, and is an essential tool for national development and the eradication of poverty.

Goal 1. Deliver quality and relevant higher education programs

i. Transform and reorient the curriculum, and research and service programs, toward a more applied approach for immediate relevance to the national development priorities.

ii. Develop broad based curricular programs and interventions including softer skills (e.g., interpersonal communication skills) that foster readiness for the labor market.

iii. Pursue intensive programs for faculty and staff development, and coordinate these development opportunities through institutional cooperation and collaboration.

iv. Develop a broad range of programs and activities to enable student development (e.g., service learning, leadership development, academic support, personal and career counseling, and psycho-social development).

v. Establish and coordinate partnerships and linkages with other national, regional, and international higher learning institutions.

vi. Collaborate across institutions to facilitate the building and integration of ICT into the higher education system and train faculty, staff, and students to utilize the technology in education.

vii. Utilize the capacity information to guide academic program planning.

viii. Strengthen the community colleges to produce students for career readiness or subsequent matriculation to senior universities. Community colleges should be specialized training centers for job readiness of graduates in technical related areas or provide general liberal arts courses for qualification in senior universities. Community colleges should be specialized training centers for job readiness of graduates in technical related areas or provide general liberal arts courses for qualification in senior universities.

Goal 2. Advance relevant research, innovation, and enterprise development

Very little research is being done in Liberia by its colleges and universities. Research is normally done only by expatriates at greater cost. In association with university associations (e.g., Association of Liberian Universities, ALU) the NCHE will encourage (and perhaps later require) research in the institutes of higher education using the following ideas, in addition to the actions that follow under the strategy:

- Hiring and promotion of faculty in Liberian Universities and Colleges should depend upon engaging in a publishing research;
NCHE/ALU should establish a database of researchers and their expertise available in Liberia;
NCHE/ALU should establish a database of needed projects and ideas to be researched;
Colleges and universities and their departments should be required to engage in research appropriate to their size and areas of focus;
NCHE/ALU should bring research work to the front burner. They should establish sub-committees to organize conferences and workshops to encourage and equip researchers and their research in Liberia;
Research in Liberia should capitalize on the unique situations and resources found in Liberia (e.g., rice farming, citrus growing, plants found in the rain forest needed by international drug companies for medicines, etc.). Special consideration should be given to research that will encourage or produce sustainable development.

Strategic actions are:

i. Consolidate efforts to perform research and disseminate information relative to the root causes of the conflict and develop strategies for dealing with the conflict and avoiding future occurrences.

ii. Facilitate grants and corporate and donor support to provide incentives, support priorities, and utilize corporate responsibility arrangements in concession agreements.

iii. Develop mechanisms to convene scholars to share their research and findings.

II. Providing the essential intellectual, behavioral, and attitudinal requirements for participation in national development initiatives.

The fundamental needs of society are the opportunity to live a productive life and contribute their talents and aspirations to society, with the resources to support Liberia, the university community must provide the knowledge and skills, and work attitudes and ethics, necessary for national development.

Goal 3. Develop a sustainable higher education system;

i. Coordinate efforts to pursue renovation and reconstruction of its physical assets and services. The NCHE Secretariat itself should be well resourced and sustained.

ii. The Government of Liberia should establish an institutional development fund (centralized pooled fund) that should have its own management team to ensure accountability and would make available 2-3 year grants, with a priority on initiatives that are likely to generate revenue for host HEIs.

1. This fund could receive government budget, development partners’ financing, or support from HEIs that want to contribute (such as US institutions)

2. Collaborate with donor agencies to secure additional development and endowment funds.

3. Engage in entrepreneurial activities for sustainability.
iii. Develop and consolidate library and other resource materials in a national network to coordinate availability and reciprocity throughout the country.

iv. Collaborate with the private sector to utilize their specialized skills, engage in teaching assignments, and provide internships, service learning experiences, and fund programs to meet their needs.

v. Coordinate actions about enrollment issues, stresses on effectiveness and efficiency, areas of vulnerability, the aging of faculty, and the creation of professional associations for the retention of high quality personnel.

vi. Support to the private and faith-based HEIs is essential to sustain a comprehensive higher education system and enable continued significant contributions of these institutions to higher education in Liberia.

vii. *Strengthen higher education institutions, including NCHE Secretariat, through continuous capacity building.*

viii. *Produce census reports every two years in order to have institutional level data to ensure the vitality and viability of the system.*

---

**Goal 4. Promote equitable access to quality programs**

i. Develop a national student aid program (i.e. scholarships, financial aid, and loans).

ii. Take responsibility of adjacent communities, those that supply students to the university, and specific curricula of feeder institutions.

iii. Ensure equitable access to higher education for the vulnerable population (e.g., disabled, females, mentally challenged, visually challenged, physically challenged, and economically disadvantaged).

iv. Discuss and establish transfer and articulation agreements between institutions.

v. Collaborate with the general education and TVET programs to provide counseling and academic guidance for students and school personnel.

vi. *Establish standards for monitoring instruction and equity in knowledge acquisition. Equitable access to diverse programs, e.g., engineering and other science related courses.*

vii. *Strengthen linkage between higher education and secondary education to ensure instructional programs provide marketable skills.*

---

**III. Developing the structure and programming that meets national standards and reaches to become internationally competitive**

As the university programs meet higher standards, their potential contribution to the post-conflict era is more likely to provide a broad and sustainable base to development and enable creative and innovative responses to the many needs of Liberia.
Goal 5. **Meet national and international standards**

i. Establish independent accreditation and quality assurance systems to ensure institutional and program quality to meet national, regional, and global standards. *(Possibly create a National Commission on Accreditation, to handle accreditation of programs).*

ii. Undertake periodic review of the national education policy to be responsive to evolving national needs.

iii. Communicate these standards to all higher education institutions and prospective new institutions.

iv. Establish criteria for offering degrees (e.g., faculty profile necessary for major field status).

v. Create a research culture to undertake meaningful and relevant research that contributes to an understanding and solution of the myriad of societal problems.

vi. **Charge the ALU with the responsibility to convene a conference on accreditation, where issues regarding standards, procedures, etc. would be further discussed and developed. The core criteria are:**

   1. **Institutional Vision, Mission and Strategy**
   2. **Philosophy or Core Values**
   3. **Administrative Structure**
   4. **Financial Infrastructure, Policies, and Financial Health**
   5. **Enrollment and Financial Aid Policies and Procedures**
   6. **Curriculum that Supports National Development**
   7. **Faculty, and Staff with appropriate Qualifications and Credentials**
   8. **Physical Plant**
   9. **Student Life**
   10. **Athletics**
   11. **Information Technology**
   12. **Governance**
   13. **Alumni Relations**
   14. **Community Relations**

vii. **Request that the ALU will conduct annual conferences on research.**

viii. **Ensure that female enrollment is a priority for colleges and universities.**

---

**Part B. Implementation Timelines and Costs**

*(2014 to 2018)*
Strategic Activity

Strategy is the creation of a valued position that synthesizes the “fit” among the many activities of the higher education system, and it not only frames what should be done but also excludes other options to focus the investments and utilization of resources and actions. There are 5 (five) goals and 83 (eighty-three) activities associated with the goals in this strategic plan. These activities are purposefully selected from a range of possibilities and are judged to be critical to relevance and quality of the higher education system. They are intended to interact and reinforce each other to achieve the system mission and eventual vision for higher education in Liberia.

Log-frame of prioritized activities of the strategic plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Objective</th>
<th>Interventions (Activities )</th>
<th>Expected Results</th>
<th>Responsible person/organization</th>
<th>Time frame</th>
<th>Estimated cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Transform and reorient the curriculum and research and service programs toward a more applied approach for immediate relevance to the national development priorities;</td>
<td>Identify national priorities and link them to academic courses. Design a series of practical activities that can be incorporated into the curricula of various disciplines. Where possible, incorporate service learning into the academic curriculum.</td>
<td>Curriculum will incorporate practical applications related to national development.</td>
<td>HEIs with NCHE assistance</td>
<td>5 years</td>
<td>US$100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Develop broad based curricular programs and interventions including softer skills (i.e. interpersonal communication skills) that foster readiness for the labor market.</td>
<td>Create an inventory of &quot;soft&quot; skills that would benefit Liberian students in the job market. Design a series of short courses to teach these skills. Require HEIs to offer these courses to their students.</td>
<td>Students leaving school will be better equipped to succeed in the marketplace.</td>
<td>HEIs with NCHE assistance</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>US$150,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Pursue intensive programs for faculty and staff development, and coordinate these development opportunities through</td>
<td>Identify in country and off-shore programs of faculty development. Identify funds to enable instructors at HEIs to</td>
<td>Instructors at HEIs will be better skilled to deliver a quality education to their students.</td>
<td>HEIs with NCHE assistance</td>
<td>5 years</td>
<td>$400,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional cooperation and collaboration.</td>
<td>Develop their skills. Require all HEIs to offer a program of staff development to their instructors. This training could be tied to promotion and tenure.</td>
<td>HEIs, NCHE</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>$300,000.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Develop a broad range of programs and activities to enable student development (i.e. service learning, leadership development, academic support, personal and career counseling, and psycho-social development).</td>
<td>Create an inventory of programs both within Liberia and abroad that will enable staff at HEIs to be trained in (a) personal, academic, career, and psycho-social counseling. Require all HEIs to incorporate service learning programs. Offer regular programs in leadership development.</td>
<td>(1) Students at all HEIs will have access to academic, personal, and career counseling. (2) Programs at all HEIs will be more connected to their surrounding communities.</td>
<td>HEIs, NCHE</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>$300,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Establish and coordinate partnership and linkages with other national, regional, and international higher learning institutions.</td>
<td>Create formal linkages with such continent-based organizations such as the Association of African Universities and encourage Liberian HEIs to seek membership. Prepare a template to assist HEIs in entering into memoranda of understanding (MOUs) with external HEIs.</td>
<td>__ % of HEIs in Liberia will be members of the Association of African Universities. A template will be prepared to assist HEIs in entering into memoranda of understanding (MOUs) with external HEIs.</td>
<td>HEIs, NCHE</td>
<td>2 years</td>
<td>$50,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Collaborate across institutions to facilitate the building and integration of ICT into the higher education system and train faculty, staff, and student to utilize the technology in education.</td>
<td>Create an inventory of ICT equipment and human resource capabilities in HEIs. Create a database of private sector providers of ICT services including training, programming, and equipment repair. Hold training programs in ICT application for instructors and administrative staff of HEIs. Investigate the feasibility and cost of establishing ICT.</td>
<td>ICT will be totally integrated into the educational program at all HEIs.</td>
<td>HEIs with NCHE assistance</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>$600,000.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
centralized ICT centers available to students from all HEIs. Internet access and printing capabilities should be available.

7. Strengthen the community colleges to produce students for career readiness or subsequent matriculation to senior universities. Community colleges should be specialized training centers for job readiness of graduates in technical related areas or provide general liberal arts courses for qualification in senior universities.

Ensure that the programs at all community college are aligned with the requirements of the four-year institutions so that students can move between the two with minimal interruptions to their academic progress.

Create an inventory of programs that can address national needs.

Design curricula that can be used at community colleges to address these national needs.

Community colleges focus on particular programs of national interest and recruit students from the entire country who are interested in these programs.

(1) Liberia will have a set of programs in place to provide individuals with the knowledge and skill required for national development.

(2) Students from community colleges will be able to easily transfer all their course work to four-year institutions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HEIs, NCHE</th>
<th>2 years</th>
<th>$150,000.00</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Sub-total (Goal 1)**

$US$1,750,000.00

---

**Strategy 1:** **Enhancing the relevance of higher education to national development**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Objective</th>
<th>Interventions (Activities)</th>
<th>Expected Results</th>
<th>Responsible person/organization</th>
<th>Time frame</th>
<th>Estimated cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Consolidate efforts to perform research and disseminate information relative to the root causes of the conflict and develop strategies for dealing with conflict and avoiding future occurrences.</td>
<td>Design a curriculum for the teaching of peace building and conflict resolution. Design short training programs that can be given to communities throughout Liberia.</td>
<td>A curriculum for the teaching of peace building and conflict resolution will be formalized a short training programs will be designed and materials printed.</td>
<td>HEIs with NCHE assistance</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>US$100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Facilitate grants and corporate a donor support to provide incentives, support priorities, and utilize corporate responsibility arrangements in concession agreements.</td>
<td>Request all Ministries and agencies to incorporate support for HEIs, especially in the area of research, into all corporate and concession agreements. Seek international funding for higher education.</td>
<td>HEIs will utilize support to increase access to students and to improve the quality of their academic offerings.</td>
<td>NCHE</td>
<td>2 years</td>
<td>$100,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Develop mechanisms to convene scholars to share their research and findings.</td>
<td>Convene regular conferences where Liberian scholars can present their research to other scholars and to the general public. Provide funding to allow Liberian scholars to present their research at international conferences.</td>
<td>At least 5 percent of the instructors at all four-year will have conducted a research project and had their results published in a refereed journal either in Liberia or abroad.</td>
<td>NCHE, HEIs</td>
<td>2 years</td>
<td>$150,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sub – Total (Goal 2)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>$350,000.00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Strategy 2: Providing the essential intellectual, behavioral, and attitudinal requirements for participation in national development initiatives.

Goal 3: Develop sustainable higher education system
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Objective</th>
<th>Interventions (Activities)</th>
<th>Expected Results</th>
<th>Responsible person/organization</th>
<th>Time frame</th>
<th>Estimated cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Coordinate efforts to pursue renovation and reconstruction of its physical assets and services. The Secretariat itself should be well resourced and sustained.</td>
<td>NCHE in cooperation with HEIs, international donors, appropriate ministries and agencies of government, and other higher education stakeholders will create a set of standards for the physical facilities at all HEIs. HEIs with the assistance of NCHE will ensure that their facilities conform to the standards. NCHE will help HEIs find funding to create world class physical facilities.</td>
<td>The physical facilities at all HEIs (classrooms, administration buildings, toilet facilities, laboratories, libraries, and dormitories) will be safe according to standards set by the NCHE. All buildings will conform to standards relating to (1) fire and safety and (2) health and sanitation.</td>
<td>NCHE, GOL, HEIs, international partners</td>
<td>4 mos.</td>
<td>$20,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The Government of Liberia should establish an institutional development fund (centralized pooled fund) that should have its own management team to ensure accountability and would make available 2-3 year grants, with a priority on initiatives that are likely to generate revenue for host HEIs.</td>
<td>NCHE will create a centralized pooled fund that HEIs can access to improve their educational programs and facilities. NCHE will create a set of procedures to manage the fund and to ensure that HEIs repay any loans. NCHE will set up systems to monitor and evaluate how HEIs are using money from the fund. NCHE in cooperation with GOL line ministries and HEIs will explore commercial activities that are appropriate to the educational missions of HEIs and will help HEIs support its educational mission.</td>
<td>HEIs are provided the opportunity to access institutional development fund.</td>
<td>NCHE, HEIs &amp; GOL</td>
<td>4 mos.</td>
<td>$500,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Develop and consolidate library and other resource materials in a national network to coordinate availability and reciprocity throughout the country.</td>
<td>NCHE should require all HEIs to create an electronic inventory of the books and material in their libraries. NCHE should encourage HEIs to create MOUs that would allow students from other HEIs to use their libraries. NCHE should work to ensure that a high quality library is accessible to all students.</td>
<td>NCHE HEIs</td>
<td>5 years</td>
<td>$1,000.00.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Collaborate with the private sector to utilize their specialized skills, engage in teaching assignments, and provide internships, service learning experiences, and fund programs to meet their needs.</td>
<td>Liberia's private sector should be approached and encouraged to provide intern and other job opportunities to tertiary students. NCHE in cooperation with HEIs will create a database of potential private sector employers. These potential employers should be encouraged to interact with HEIs in such activities as job fairs to acquaint students with employment opportunities. (1) Students will have access to material (electronic or printed) that informs them of the employment opportunities that exist in the private sector. (2) Opportunities will be identified that will give students the opportunity, before graduation, to work as interns either in the private or public. (3) At least __% of all graduates will obtain employment in the private sector.</td>
<td>NCHE, HEIs, GOL, private sector</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>$60,000.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Coordinate actions about enrollment issues, stresses on effectiveness and efficiency, areas of vulnerability, the aging of faculty, and the creation of professional associations for the retention of high quality personnel.</td>
<td>NCHE in coordination with HEIs should create a climate that would encourage the retention of qualified instructors. This climate would include such issues as salary, benefits, class sizes, facilities, tenure eligibility, housing, and sabbaticals.</td>
<td>(1) Instructors will receive &quot;living wage&quot; based on official cost of living calculations.</td>
<td>NCHE, HEIs</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>$75,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(2) 50% of the faculty at all HEIs will be permanent, long-term instructors.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Support to the private and faith-based HEIs is essential to sustain a comprehensive higher education system and enable continued significant contributions of these institutions to higher education in Liberia.</td>
<td>NCHE should create a set of standards that would determine the eligibility of private and faith-based HEIs to receive government financial and logistical support. Private and faith-based HEIs should be given access to this support if they conform to NCHE-set quality guidelines.</td>
<td>There will be no difference in the quality of the educational programs between government and privately owned HEIs as measured by standardized tests such as the GRE.</td>
<td>NCHE, HEIs</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>$25,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Strengthen higher education institutions, including NCHE Secretariat, through continuous capacity building.</td>
<td>NCHE staff will have access to relevant training every year. This training should be linked to improved job performance and promotion.</td>
<td>All professional NCHE staff members will have access to formal training to enable them to do their jobs more effectively.</td>
<td>NCHE</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>$250,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Produce census reports every two years in order to have institutional level data to ensure the vitality and viability of the system.</td>
<td>NCHE will require all HEIs to provide information every year or as needed. This information would be similar to that already being produced in the Status of Higher Education: Census Survey of Institutions 2012. NCHE will analyze and publish all information and make it available to all decision makers and higher education stakeholders.</td>
<td>Data from the census will be used to improve the management and operation or all HEIs and to improve their education programs and performance.</td>
<td>NCHE, HEIs</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>$100,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sub-total (Goal 3)</strong></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>US$2,530,000.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Strategy 2: **Providing the essential intellectual, behavioral, and attitudinal requirements for participation in national development initiatives.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal 4: Promote equitable access to quality programs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strategic Objective</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Develop a national student aid program (i.e. scholarships, financial aid, and loans).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Take responsibility for adjacent communities, those that supply students to the universities, and specific curricula of feeder institutions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Ensure equitable access to higher education for the vulnerable population (e.g., disabled females, mentally challenged, visually challenged physically challenged and economically disadvantaged).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Discuss and establish transfer and articulation agreements between institutions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Collaborate with the general education and TVET programs to provide counseling and academic guidance for students and school personnel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Establish standards for monitoring instruction and equity in knowledge acquisition. Equitable access to diverse programs, e.g., engineering and other science related courses.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Strategy 3: Developing the structure and programming that meets national standards and reaches to become internationally competitive.

#### Goal 5: Meet National and International Standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Objective</th>
<th>Interventions (Activities)</th>
<th>Expected Results</th>
<th>Responsible person/organization</th>
<th>Time frame</th>
<th>Estimated cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Establish independent accreditation and quality assurance systems to ensure institutional and program quality to meet national, regional, and global standards. (Possibly create a National Commission on Accreditation, which might function out of the ALU).</td>
<td>Create a set of accreditation standards for Liberia. Formulate the policies for a National Accreditation Council.</td>
<td>The creation of a National Accreditation Council.</td>
<td>NCHE, HEIs</td>
<td>12 mos</td>
<td>$50,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Undertake periodic review of the national education institution policy to be responsive to evolving national needs.</td>
<td>Every five years review the curriculum at all HEIs in the light of the national needs. HEIs will revise their curricula as necessary to reflect review findings.</td>
<td>The curricula at all HEIs will address the social, technological, economic, and cultural needs of the society.</td>
<td>NCHE with the assistance of all HEIs, the ALU, and all higher education stakeholders</td>
<td>5 years</td>
<td>$50,000.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sub-Total (Goal 4) | - | - | $190,000.00 |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal 5: Meet national and international standards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>6.</strong> Charge the ALU with the responsibility to convene a conference on accreditation, where issues regarding standards, procedures, etc. would be further discussed and developed. The core criteria are:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1) Institutional Vision, Mission and Strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) Philosophy or Core Values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) Administrative Structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) Financial Infrastructure, Policies, and Financial Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) Enrollment and Financial Aid Policies and Procedures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) Curriculum that Supports National Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7) Faculty, and Staff with appropriate Qualifications and Credentials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(8) Physical Plant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(9) Student Life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(10) Athletics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ALU will convene a conference on issues related to accreditation.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Guidelines for the creation of a National Commission on Accreditation will be formulated.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NCHE, ALU</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3mos</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>$15,000.00</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**GRAND TOTAL**

US$5,208,000.00
Monitoring and Evaluation of Higher Education Strategic Plan

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of the implementation of the higher education strategic plan is necessary to ensure accountability, efficiency and effectiveness. Evaluation is the systematic collection and assessment of information related to the outcome, operation or process of projects or activities leading to the achievements of goals of the strategic plan. Monitoring is an interim activity of evaluation. It occurs while interventions or activities of the plan are being implemented in order to examine the manners and forms of the mechanisms being utilized to achieve the desired outcomes within the time frame of the implementation. M&E helps prevent unforeseen costs, delays and errors.

The Higher Education Strategic Plan (HESP) considers hiring evaluators both externally and internally to monitor and evaluate projects that are implemented to achieve the goals and aspirations of the plan. The external evaluators will be consultants having the expertise to design and establish evaluation tools that are used to monitor all aspects of the activities outlined for the implementation of the entire strategic plan. The internal evaluators are staffs recruited with the expertise of M&E to act similar to the external evaluators; but keeps information in house allowing one to react and make changes in line with the interventions in a more timely fashion.

The evaluation process will also consider the collaboration between the evaluators and stakeholders to strengthen the capacity of NCHE to ensure credibility and transparency in the implementation of activities of the plan. By doing this, individuals in the evaluation process will continue to be empowered for the logical conclusion of the implementation of the activities.

The milestones or deliverables under each goal of the strategic plan will be placed in charts to track progress that is made on the plan by measuring progress against key benchmarks. Monitoring will be carried out on a quarterly basis and evaluation is done annually.