

## **LIBERIA CHRISTIAN HANDICAPPED ORGANIZATION (LICH0)**

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### **Contact person:**

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National President/Founder

**PROJECT TITLE:** Empowering the Disabled through Agriculture

### **GOAL**

The goal of this project is that it will serve as means whereby disabled persons could be gainfully engaged through agriculture and be employed whiles at the same time creates income generation for self-reliance and sustainable development, thereby reducing extreme poverty and hunger amongst them as it is a major problem at the moment. The project will start the modern way of producing Garie (a product made out of cassava) that is consumed in most of the West African countries, which will be for the local markets, as well as markets across the borders.

### **OBJECTIVES**

The immediate objectives of this project are:

- a. To gainfully engage disabled persons in the rural communities of Liberia.
- b. To transform the disabled from Street Beggars and key Keepers as common in the interior to development partners.
- c. To address the extreme poverty and hunger affecting these targeted disabled persons.
- d. To establish a mini Garie Production Factory that will produce and parcel garie for the local market. This will serve as a sustainability plan for persons with disabilities.

### **SUMMARY**

The Liberia Christian Handicapped Organization (LICH0), which was founded on the 2nd May 1987, is a registered non-governmental and non-political organization with the government of Liberia, through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It is founded and run by a group of disabled persons with the sole aim of advocating for the protection and promotion of the right and development of the disabled, empowering and building their capacity in various vocational skills trainings for self-employment and sustainable development. LICH0's goal is to empower and create economic opportunities for the disabled in our post war country Liberia.

### **WHAT IS THE ISSUE, PROBLEM, OR CHALLENGE?**

Liberia as a country emerging from a fourteen (14) years brutal rebel war, where disabled people were the major victims of the past war, are still finding it difficult to catch up with the lost opportunities. As a result, they live in abject poverty (less than \$0.50 per day), and depends on street begging as the means for their daily survival.

The challenges confronting the disabled people in post war Liberia are enormous. According to the UN Human Development Index, Liberia rank bottom and one of the lowest-income earning countries in the world, with its citizens living on less than \$1/ day.

According to the 1997 assessment conducted by UNICEF, there are about 366000 persons living

with disabilities in the country of about 3.5 million total population. But in reality, these figures has increase due to the impact of the 14 years brutal civil rebel in the country. The assessment reveals that about 99% of the disabled are unemployed and living below poverty line, and 98% have no access to formal education and vocational/skill training.

### **HOW WILL THIS PROJECT SOLVE THIS PROBLEM?**

After a careful researched and consultations with disabled persons from various rural communities in Lofa County, Liberia, majority of them recommended to us, an Agricultural project as they consider it a tool for the reduction of their extreme poverty and hunger thereby creating self-employment and income generation for sustainable development, not only for themselves, but their immediate family members.

The Project will therefore endeavor to solve the above problem through the use of practical approach of personal involvement, by which the disabled people themselves will directly be involved in solving their own problems such as poverty, disease, hunger, lack of economic empowerment which is as a result of neglect, discrimination, segregation and abandonment. They will fully be involved in every aspect of this project implementation, as we believe they will be experts of their own problem. Also, the project will seek to provide them the opportunity to create self-employment in order to build their own capacities. We believe that if they are trained and given necessary incentives, the disabled can become farmers to produce their own food and food for the family members and community.

We think such a project is vital for their development, thereby reducing the act of dependency on others or street begging as means for their survival. Also, if Liberia is to succeed in Millennium Development Goals of poverty alleviation, the capacity building of the disabled population that constitute a high percentage, must be given serious consideration. This requires effort on the part of the government, donor organizations, foundations and goodwill individuals. Such support is needed if this project is to make any impact to the lives of persons with disabilities. With your support, this project will succeed in realizing its goal and will contribute to the development of the disabled people in Liberia.

### **POTENTIAL LONG TERM IMPACT**

LICHO will set up a general cassava farm for the training of the disabled in simple farming method, and to also establish Garie Production Center to produce Garie for the local markets and markets across the borders. This center will serve two major purposes: Serve as the means to sustain the project and the future running of the Organization. The proceeds accrued from the project will be kept in a special account, and will be used to augment donors' funds and to start new projects for the disabled. Secondly, the disabled people who are trained will be empowered to own and run their cassava farms and sell their cassava products to the center. This will serve as economic empowerment for disabled.

### **FUNDING INFORMATION**

Total funding up to date: **\$6,500**

Remaining goal to be funded: **\$30,845**

Total funding goal: **\$37,345**