

# PROPOSAL



## Liberia Substance Users Care & Support Program

SUBMITTED BY:

**Association of Progressive Youth of Liberia**

In Partnership with

**Consolidated Youth for Peace & Development**



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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The program seeks to provide feeding, medical care and support for young people living on the streets who are substance users in Liberia. The primary goal of the project is to provide free food for at least fifty (50) substance users in each of the seventeen political districts in Montserrado every Sunday during the first phase of the program, identify and recruit at least 100 substance every six months for rehabilitation at the program site set up outside of Montserrado.

The project will also adopt a youth to youth approach by promoting peer counselling, beneficiaries profiling and strategic mobilization. Programs will also be developed that target youth and adolescent involved with harmful substance use. These programs will basically focus on awareness/sensitization creation, motivation and peer counselling so as to discourage and minimize drug abuse among substance users. The project will also encourage and involve families and communities in the development and implementation of community based prevention strategies in the project selected communities to ensure that the project is sustained. A well-structured and organized rehabilitation center will be set up to cater for beneficiaries who will be referred.

An analysis of relevant stakeholders will be carryout to establish strategic partnership with institution such as UNODC-Liberia office, Liberia Drug Enforcement Agency, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Youth & Sports, and CBOs for the successful implementation of the project in the selected communities.

## **BACKGROUND**

The government Liberia has conducted very little drug prevention, rehabilitation or treatment in post-war era, with addicts being referred to the only psychiatric hospital in Liberia or to one of the few NGOs working in the field. Liberia's unemployment rate also plays a role in its drug abuse problem, with only 15 to 20 percent of the workforce employed in the formal sector. The lack of clinical and well-structured rehabilitation program in Liberia has contributed immensely to the increase street youth who are substance users.

Consumption of cannabis is high within Liberia, including cannabis combined with other licit and illicit drugs. Marijuana is commonly mixed with cocaine, heroin, or pharmaceutical products. Psychotropic drugs are not common in Liberia, since the local population lacks the disposable income to buy them. Nevertheless, drugs are still easily accessible; cannabis is very inexpensive and the price of cocaine is decreasing.

UNODC's 2012 Preliminary Drug Use Assessment Report indicated that drug use among youth, particularly ex-combatants from Liberia's 1989-2003 civil conflict, was rising. Drug use is also growing in the emerging middle class and common in the expat and Lebanese communities. Use of other illicit drugs, such as cocaine and heroin, has been on the rise and UNODC also notes that their use is associated with very high levels of criminality and violence.

Reliable and sustainable drug rehabilitation program in Liberia is seem far from been realized, owing to the fact that there is little or no advocacy around policy formulation, lobbying with key stakeholders and members of the National Legislature, technical support and funding to ensuring that drug laws and policies take into account human rights issues, treatment, care and support for substance users in the country. A need for a robust national drug rehabilitation program cannot be overemphasizes. The need to strengthen existing structures and support for organizations is also imperative and critical to addressing the current drug rehabilitation situation in Liberia.

### **GOAL:**

The primary goal of the program is to provide care and support for youths living on the street especially substance users through the provision of food, water, health care and rehabilitation;

### **OBJECTIVES:**

The program overall objective is provide care and support for street youths who are substance users in Liberia, while the project specific objectives are four:

1. To establish a feeding center for street youths in each of the seven (17) electoral district in Montserrado County.
2. To mobilize and profile substance users who are beneficiaries for long term engagement;
3. To provide peer counselling, motivation and make referral where necessary.
4. To establish a rehabilitation center that provide clinical and psychological support, skill training and enhanced reintegration.

### **IMPLEMENTING STRATEGY:**

For a successful implementation of the Street Youth Feeding Program, APYL and COYPED implementers of the program will mapped up Montserrado County and

identify needed communities, set up a strategic partnership with community based organizations, community leadership and local authorities. A database will be developed to profile beneficiaries as well as a food chip will be given to each beneficiary.

The program will also help identified substance users who need urgent attention as it relates to health care and treatment. Peer counsellors will also provide counselling as well as peer education. Individual in need will be recruited and refer to the rehabilitation center for care and treatment.

