



**Defending Dignity
Fighting Poverty**

End of Project Impact Survey

Name of project being evaluated: REFUGEE ASSISTANT INITIATIVE IN LIBERIA (RAIL)

Organizations Involved:

1. CARE
2. People United to Serve Humanity (PUSH).
3. Grass root Village Savings and Loan Association Apex organization.

Project Duration: 12 Months (January 2017-December 2017)

**Project funding source and overall project budget: Latter Day Saints Charities (LDS).
US\$ 300,000.00**

Type of survey/evaluation: Final Survey/Evaluation

Introduction:

The RAIL project designed to help the UNHCR to provide basic assistance to refugees by strengthening their existing capacity, while promoting self-reliance and livelihoods, is a multi-sector project.

The project was looking at water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), livelihood with focus on Village Saving and Loan Associations (VSLA) and support to the education of the refugee children, through Early Childhood Education, meant to help develop and mold the minds of the children in their early years while their brains are still pliable.

This multi-faceted approach enhances the protection of the rights of refugees in order to maintain a favorable environment and sustained local integration for those wanting to stay in Liberia.

CARE International MR Programs in Liberia works with local partners (National Non-governmental Organizations). People United to Serve Humanity (PUSH) works on all CARE WASH program activities and Grass root VSLA APEX organization works on livelihoods especially the Village Savings and Loan Association programs in Liberia. CARE in the implementation of her project activities; collaborates with the UNHCR and the government of Liberia LRRRC.

Project goal.

The overarching goal of the Refugee Assistance Initiative in Liberia (RAIL) project is to provide multi-sector solutions, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), livelihood support and early childhood education for refugees and their children in Bahn camp and surrounding communities with the approach of supporting the protracted refugees' integration into the local communities and become self-reliant.

Project objectives.

1. To increase access and utilization of water, sanitation and hygiene facilities in Bahn camp and surrounding communities.
2. To increase refugees' capacity for self-reliance through livelihood support in Bahn camp and surrounding communities.
3. To increase access and utilization of early childhood education (ECE) methodologies in Bahn camp and surrounding communities.

The anticipated results and respective indicators of this project include:**Outcome 1: Construction/ Rehabilitation of WASH facilities in Bahn camp and its surrounding communities:****Indicators:**

1. Number of new latrines constructed.
2. Number of WASH management committees trained with CARE support.
3. Number of water wells rehabilitated in Bahn camp and its surrounding communities.
4. Number of WASH maintenance kits procured and distributed.

Outcome 2: Refugees and surrounding communities in Bahn camp supported with livelihood means using VSLA (Village Saving and Loan Association) platform

Indicators:

1. Number of VSLAs established in Bahn camp and surrounding communities.
2. Number VSLAs trained on marketable and small business management skills.
3. Number VSLA Apex partner supported on skills trainings.
4. Number VSLAs provided with VSL start-up kits
5. Number of VSLAs supported to execute business initiatives
6. Number of group follow-up activities carried out

Outcome 3: Support children's Early Childhood Education (ECE) in Bahn refugee camp

Indicators:

1. Number of ECE group established and supported.
2. Number of children enrolled in school based ECE
3. Number of ECE tool box distributed

Purpose of the Survey/ Evaluation:

The purpose of this end of project Survey/evaluation:

- Evaluate the effectiveness of the project using participatory methodologies.
- Assess the impact made on direct beneficiaries, their families and communities and the process used to achieve these.
- Verify and validate the monitoring data collected by the implementers.
- Capture learning from the project (i.e. analyze what worked well and what did not work and why) to guide the implementing partners in determining the effectiveness of the project and help guide future project development.
- Assess sustainability of project interventions at group, individual community and institutional levels.

Use of the end of project survey/evaluation findings:

The information generated from this evaluation is used to:

- Help project partners, PUSH and GRVSLA Apex with additional focus on project implementation and fund management.
- To improve their knowledge on what worked or did not work for the RAIL project implementation to beneficiaries becoming self-reliant, resilience and increase access to utilization of WASH and early childhood education processes.
- Report to our beneficiaries, stakeholders and donors on what has been achieved through the project life
- Understand best practice in adaptive project management

Scope, Focus and Evaluation Criteria

The end of project survey/evaluation focused on identifying and assessing the changes brought about through the project, incorporating gender analysis within the overall survey.

Survey/Evaluation Methodology:

A theory based approach using participatory methodologies whereby the work engages direct beneficiaries (young women and men), and stakeholder. The survey used both quantitative and qualitative approaches, focus group discussions and Key informant interviews.

Design of the Assessment

The design of the assessment is a logical framework that allowed the collection of information concerning the variables the RAIL project seeks to gather. It took into consideration the result framework, which gave the information required for data collection, taking into consideration the camp locality and the surrounding communities, which in this case is the Bahn town. The design sets the main domain from which researcher used comparisons with the wider environment or population.

The main purpose of the assessment was to assess the impact of the RAIL project on the lives of the direct and indirect beneficiaries in Bahn camp and surrounding communities. The design of this assessment is descriptive, and uses frequencies; percentages and charts for the report.

Population and sampling procedure

A survey used a random sampling for the impact survey, from an estimated target population of four thousand five hundred direct and indirect beneficiaries in the camp and surrounding community. The sample size for the assessment is 50 (Fifty) respondents considered for this survey on the impact of the RAIL project on the beneficiaries (Direct and indirect).

Instrument and Data Collection

The questionnaires developed for the survey combine all the sectors to seek the necessary information needed for the impact of the RAIL project on the beneficiaries. This took into consideration the three thematic areas of WASH, Livelihood and Early Childhood Education, probing into various areas to determine the benefits received from the implementation of the RAIL project.

The data collected is primary and firsthand. In addition, field notes and personal observations made, added to the information gathered from the questionnaires helped in achieving the needed result from the survey.

Data Analysis

For the purpose of analysis of this data, Microsoft excel and statistical analysis system was been used for the process. The responses from the assessment depict the data in tables, with frequencies/number, percentages, graphs and pie charts.

Presentation of Data collected

The data collected during the assessment is analyzed and the results are presented in tables and chart preferably bar and pie charts. These charts reveal the percentages of the different proportions of every response received during the survey.

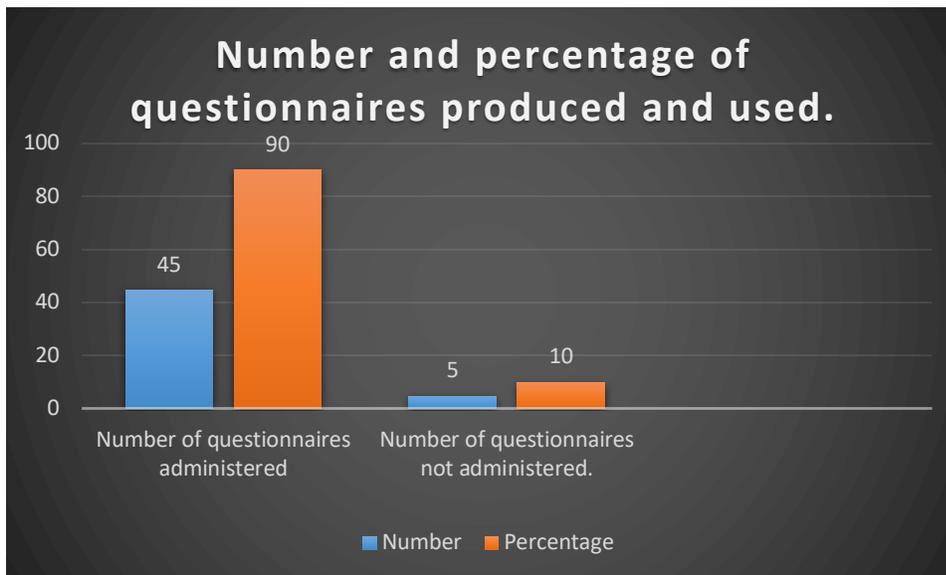
NUMBER OF QUESTIONNAIRES PRODUCED

TABLE 1: Showing the number of questionnaires printed and used for the survey.

Number of Questionnaires printed	Number of questionnaires administered	Number of questionnaires not administered.
50	45	5

Table 1 above depicts the total number of respondents targeted, questionnaires produced number used and the left over during the survey on the impact of the RAIL project on beneficiaries and community at large.

FIGURE 1.



The information in figure one above shows the number of questionnaires produced, used and unused during the impact survey. 50 were produced, 45 used, which is 90 percent and 5 unused, 10 percent.

KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE RAIL PROJECT

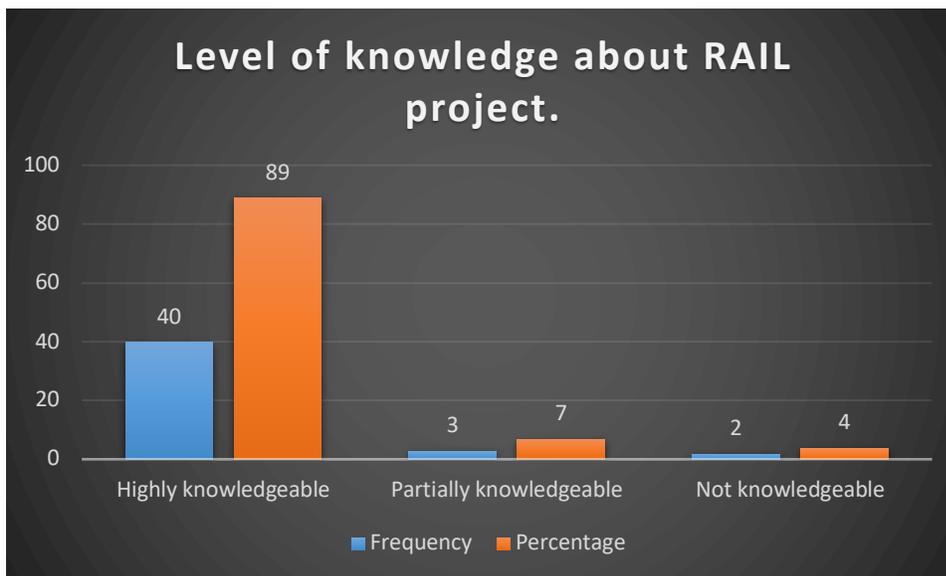
TABLE 2. Showing Level of Knowledge about the RAIL project.

Level of knowledge	Frequency	Percentage
Very knowledgeable	40	89
Partially knowledgeable	3	7

Not knowledgeable	2	4
TOTAL	45	100

The data in table 2 shows that 40 respondents were highly knowledgeable about the RAIL project in the Bahn camp and surrounding communities, 3 partially knowledgeable, while 2 were not knowledgeable about the RAIL project implementation in the Bahn camp and surrounding communities.

FIGURE 2.



The data in figure 2 shows that 40 respondents 89% were highly knowledgeable about the RAIL project in the Bahn camp and surrounding communities, 3 respondents 7% were partially knowledgeable about the project and its implementation, while 2 respondents were not knowledgeable about the RAIL project implementation in the Bahn camp and surrounding communities.

NUMBER AND COMPOSITION OF RESPONDENTS FROM THE DIFFERENT SECTORS

TABLE 3. Respondents among Project Beneficiaries from the different components.

	ECE		VSLA		WASH	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Direct	4	6	2	12	5	1
Indirect	2	3	1	2	2	5
TOTAL	6	9	3	14	7	6

The information in table 3 reveals 30 direct beneficiaries and 15 indirect beneficiaries interviewed during the RAIL impact survey. Of the 30 respondents, 15 were from the ECE, 17 from the VSLA and 13 from the WASH components. The table further reveals that 6 respondent from the ECE were males, 9 females, from the VSLA, 3 were males and 14 females whilst 7males and 6 females were represented from the WASH sector.

FIGURE 3.

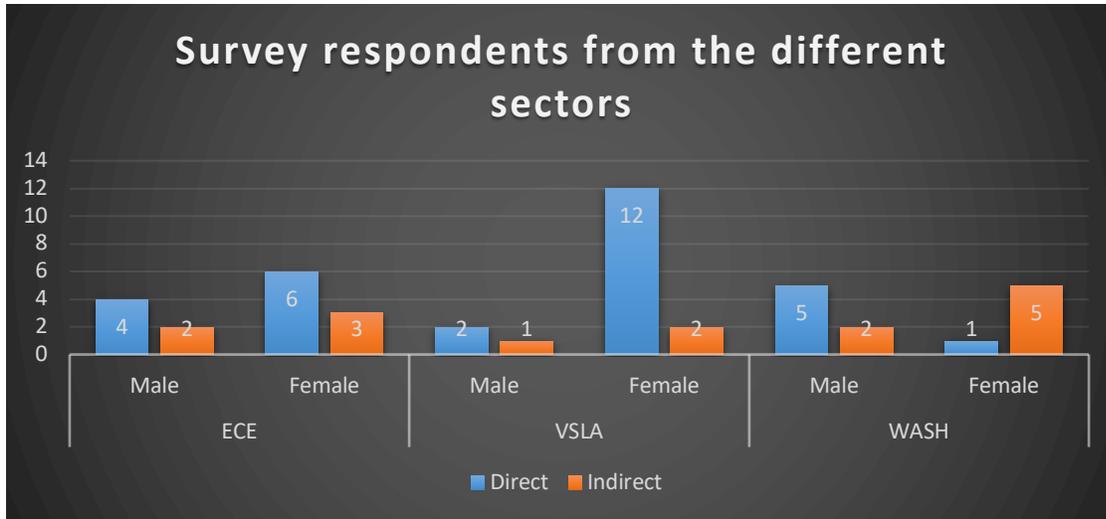


Figure 3 above depicts the percentage composition of the respondents from the three sectors of the RAIL project implemented. The graph reveals that six males responded, four direct and two indirect beneficiaries from the ECE sector. From the VSLA, three males and fourteen females responded, two direct and one indirect male beneficiaries and twelve direct and two indirect beneficiaries. In addition, five direct, two indirect male beneficiaries, one direct, and five indirect female beneficiaries responded from the WASH component.

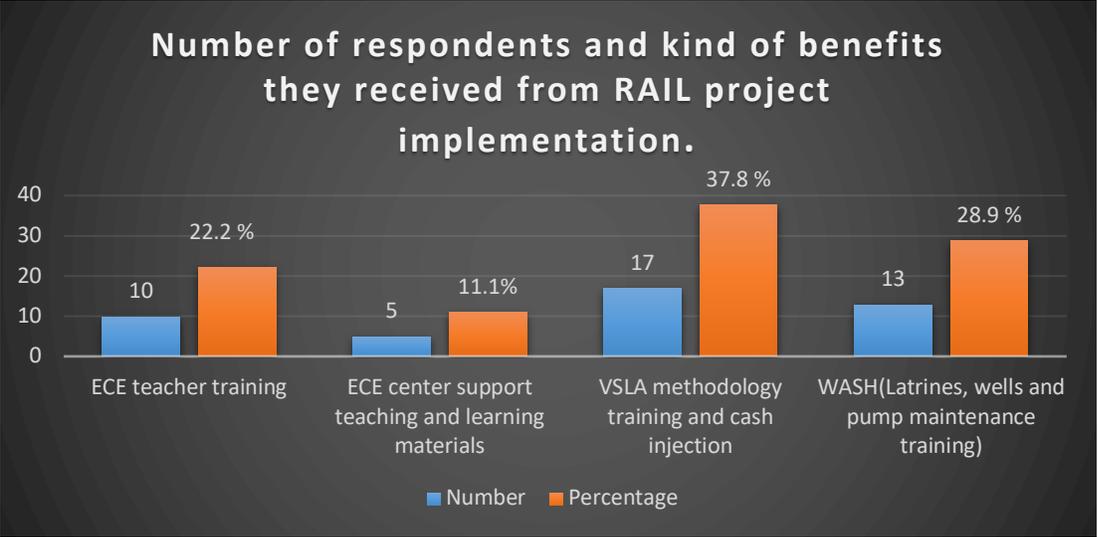
KIND OF BENEFITS RECEIVED BY RESPONDENTS

TABLE 4.

KIND OF BENEFITS	Number of respondents	Percentage
ECE teacher training	10	22.2
ECE center support teaching and learning materials	5	11.1
VSLA methodology and cash injection	17	37.8
WASH (Latrines, wells and pump maintenance training)	13	28.9
TOTAL	45	100

The data in table 4 shows that 15 respondents benefitted from the ECE support provided by the RAIL project. Ten (10) of them benefitted from the Volunteer teacher training in ECE, while 5 benefitted from the teaching and learning materials support that was provided by the project. The table further reveals that 17 respondents benefitted from the VSLA methodologies and cash injection from the project while 13 benefitted from the latrines and wells constructed and rehabilitated by the project.

FIGURE 4



The information presented on the graph depicts the number and percentages of respondents and kind of benefits they received from the RAIL project implementation. It shows that 45 respondents benefitted from different sectors of the project implementation. From figure 4, ten respondents reported benefitting from the ECE Volunteer teachers training that the RAIL project provided through the Ministry of Education in Liberia, and 5 reported benefitting from the teaching and learning materials support provided for the children and the centers established by the project. These two groups of beneficiaries represent 33.3%.

In furtherance, 17 of the respondents about 37.8% reported benefitting from the RAIL project's VSLA methodologies training and cash injection, whilst 13 respondents accounting for 28.9% reported benefitting from the WASH programs, comprising of two constructed latrines and four rehabilitated wells in their communities.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The RAIL project successfully accomplished all the activities enshrined in the project narrative. To buttress the degree of success, the team conducted an end of project impact survey to ascertain the changes brought to the community and beneficiaries during the implementation process.

The project had three result areas or sectors for implementation, WASH, livelihood (VSLA) and education (ECE) for the children.

The implementation commenced different activities in the different sectors and came out with very good results on the beneficiaries.

Those good results or impacts of the RAIL project implementation include:

1. Reduction in open defecation within the communities because of the construction of the gender separate four compartment VIP latrines in the communities.
This brought under control the open defecation as the latrines were well built with free rooms always available for some to use at all times.
2. Reduction of the burden of water supply. Even though this was not enough in the communities because the original source of water to the communities and the quantity of water that was supplied daily reduced, the rehabilitation work on hand dug wells fitted with Afri-dev hand pumps were a blessing to the project communities. The burden of beneficiaries going miles to get water reduced though they have to wait in queues to access good quality water.
3. The good part of the RAIL project is the training of WASH maintenance committee members and providing them with maintenance kits to ease the burden of paying for maintenance, should the hand pumps need some maintenance attention.
4. The use of the VSLA methodology to inspire beneficiaries to learn to save and use their own monies judiciously is a landmark development among the refugee communities preparing for local integration. These people living in appalling conditions depended on handouts from the UNHCR and the World Food Programme. The RAIL project brought to them a situation that has guided to a stage of self-reliance, making them to take ownership of their own livelihood.

The process of training in the VSLA methodologies, equipped the beneficiaries to be able to save money, take leadership role in leading their own groups with little supervision, collect their savings, loan it out to members to do business and bring in additional profit was a welcoming thing in the life of the refugees.

The RAIL project in addition to the training in VSLA methodologies, trained the beneficiaries in small business management and booking skills that is greatly helping them to manage the loans from their group savings.

This was climax by the cash injection made to each group to augment their savings. This increased the loan amount members can receive at a given time, thereby increasing their businesses.

5. Establishing early childhood educational centers, providing teaching and learning materials for the centers and children were also part of the RAIL project implementation. The beneficiaries welcome this landmark aspect of the project. CARE was the first NGO to implement such in the counties as they reported during the implementation. This made every one fighting to be part of the process especially the Volunteer ECE teachers.

The project trained twenty-two teachers as Volunteers to teach the children enrolled at the six centers established. The training, which the Ministry of Education conducted through the Bureau of early childhood education, brought to the doorstep of teachers who never had the special pedagogical skill of teaching children in their early years of development. The setup of the classrooms were magnificent and an attraction for children who learn by play.

SUSTAINABILITY OF PROJECT

The idea of sustainability is pertinent to this project implementation and the project team did not overlook it. During the impact survey, sustainability questions asked brought out what the beneficiaries intend doing to continue benefitting from the knowledge and skills received from the RAIL project.

The following are the measures the beneficiaries intend carrying out to sustain the benefits from the RAI project.

1. Holding regular community meetings to discuss community WASH programs. Here according to the respondent beneficiaries, meetings convened will try to sort out issues on community cleaning. The community heads will spear head the process through COMMUNITY LED TOTAL SANITATION (CLTS). This is weekly, with proper care given to the latrines and hand pumps.
2. The Volunteer ECE teachers will continue using the skills acquired from the trainings the RAIL project provided with promise from center heads to support the process even in the absence of CARE to see the children developing into the kind of persons they want them to be.

3. The VSLA livelihood sector is the most clear-cut area that will continue improving daily. More members are clamoring to establish new groups to learn and practice what the others have learnt from the RAIL project. The partner Apex has already established a network that will link the groups to one another in the four counties they are operating. Village agents have been trained to continue recruiting more people to come together to form groups and receive training from Apex.

CONCLUSION

CARE through the RAIL project has affected the lives of over 4500 people in the Bahn camp and surrounding communities. This project was a pilot and brought very memorable ideas lessons learnt with some challenges, however, the community and its people will use these for years unending to continue improving on themselves, their children and communities.

To be self-reliant means to be self-supported, a notion shared by the RAIL project with the beneficiaries who have vowed to continue improving daily as they no longer have anyone to spoon feed them.

The support from the Latter Day saints Charities (LDS) was timely for aiding these refugees and the host community. This will forever be a landmark.

RECOMMENDATION

The survey ended the whole process of implementation of the RAIL project. This did not come as a surprise to the beneficiaries as projects are short term or temporary endeavors undertaken to create a unique product, service or result, which the implementation process achieved.

The recommend the following to CARE:

1. That through the donors CARE should continue supporting the centers established for two to three years to see the permanence in the changes the RAIL project has brought the beneficiaries.
2. Extend the opportunities to other communities in the county so that they should also benefit from the knowledge and skills they are currently benefitting from.
3. That CARE should replicate this project in the remaining two camps in Southeastern part of Liberia.