Consortium on Law and Values in Health, Environment & the Life Sciences

Student Proposal Cover Page

Applicant Information

Applicant Name: **Alisha Hilde**   Date: **2-1-09**

Project Title: **The Role of Sustainable Development in Rebuilding Post-Conflict Liberia**

Department: **Law School & Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs**   College: **University of Minnesota- Twin Cities**

Home address: **4632 42nd Ave. S.**   City & State: **Minneapolis, MN**   Zip: **55406**

Faculty advisor name: **Not applicable**   Email: _____   ☒ Not applicable

Dept. Head's name: _____   Dept. Head's email: _____

Dean's name: **David Wippman and J. Brian Atwood**   Dean's email: dwippman@umn.edu jbatwood@umn.edu

How did you hear about this funding opportunity? University Web-site and e-mails

Funding

Amount of funding requested: **$5,500**

Funding justification: [a clear statement of what you will use the funds for without going into budget details]

The funding will be used for travel expenses, including airfare to Liberia, meals, and lodging. The funding will also be used as salary for field research in Liberia and preliminary and follow-up research and writing.

Approvals

Check all appropriate approvals required for your proposal. Approvals must be obtained prior to receipt of funding. If you have applied for approval but have not yet received it, indicate that below.

☐ IRB   Date submitted: _____   Number: _____

☐ IACUC   Date submitted: _____   Number: _____

☒ Other   Explain: **I have approval to evaluate a sustainable development program run by Empowerment Society International in Duayee, Nimba County, Liberia as well as use an office in the community center to conduct my research.**

For Use by the Consortium Office

☐ The proposal is 1000 words or less excluding budget, biographies, references and citations.

☐ The proposal includes a work plan with a specific timeline using months or quarters to identify work to be done and completion dates.

☐ The proposal includes a 1-2 paragraph biography of the applicant and all co-investigators.

☐ The budget form is complete including the funds sought for this project, other pending applications for this project, and the amount/source of matching or other funds.

☐ The applicant's faculty advisor is copied on the application email. Professional students w/o advisors check NA.

☐ All necessary approvals are pending or received.

The Role of Sustainable Development
in Rebuilding Post-Conflict Liberia

Background on Sustainable Development

The concept of sustainable development entered the international stage in 1987 with a report by the UN World Commission on Environment and Development. This report defined sustainable development as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."[1] Sustainable development takes a cooperative approach to environmental protection, poverty alleviation, and economic growth.[2]

This multi-faceted approach is difficult for fragmented government agencies to implement. Instead, governments continue to focus on market-growth under the theory that "if the economy grows, eventually all will benefit…the trickle-down theory."[3] This method has not succeeded: the global economy grew substantially over the past twenty years[4] while poverty in Africa remained stagnant.[5] Also, development groups continue to reject sustainable development because it is too "green," and environmental groups reject it because it focuses too much on development.[6] Inadequate information prevents stakeholders from working together to achieve common goals.

Fifty thousand people die each day from poverty-related causes; that is *eighteen million* people each year.[7] Further analysis on sustainable development models could transform development in the world's poorest region and help sub-Saharan Africa reach the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) of cutting extreme poverty in half by 2015. While interdisciplinary cooperation can be challenging, sustainable development may be Africa's best hope. The Consortium's grant will allow me to increase understanding of sustainable development and how it relates to Africa.

Nature of the Project

Liberia suffered through a devastating civil war from 1989- 2003. Most of the population fled to escape violence or were forcibly removed as child soldiers. Liberia still lacks basic infrastructure including roads and buildings. It remains one of the poorest countries in the world.[8] However, these adverse conditions also provide Liberia the relatively unique opportunity to rebuild in a

---

[1] World Commission on Environment and Development, *Our Common Future,* ¶ 2, U.N. Doc. A/RES/42/187 (Dec. 11, 1987) (*prepared by* Gro Harlem Brundtland).

[2] Bill Hopwood, Mary Mellor & Geoff O'Brien, *Sustainable Development: Mapping Different Approaches*, 13 SUSTAINABLE DEV. 39, 38-52 (2005).

[3] *Id.* at 40.

[4] COLIN H. KAHL, STATES, SCARCITY, AND CIVIL STRIFE IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD 5 (2008).

[5] World Bank, Overview: Understanding Poverty, http://go.worldbank.org/RQBDCTUXW0, last visited Mar. 22, 2009.

[6] CHARLES HOLLIDAY, JR., S. SCHMIDHEINY & P. WATTS, WALKING THE TALK: THE BUSINESS CASE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT 14 (2002).

[7] End Poverty 2015, http://www.endpoverty2015.org/goals/end-hunger (last visited Mar. 22, 2009).

[8] U.S. State Dept., http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_950.html (last visited Mar. 22, 2009).

sustainable manner. The need for a clear development plan is best seen in the rising number of land disputes, a critical factor in maintaining peace.[9] Former Secretary-General Annan reported in 1998 that conflict in African countries is fueled when "groups are not receiving a fair share of diminishing resources."[10] Sustainable development recognizes the diminishing nature of resources and can potentially prevent future conflict.

In Liberia, I will be evaluating a sustainable village model supported by Empowerment Society International (ESI). This organization has been working with the village of Duayee in Nimba County. ESI's model is designed to address the MDG challenge of ending extreme poverty through local economic development (LED).[11] Some of elements I will assess include water management, training programs, and GPS mapping for local land registry. I will also travel around Nimba County to record development methods in other areas, particularly in Ganta where the county's only hospital is located.

Research Questions:
1) Do sustainable development models successfully address the development demands of rural sub-Saharan African communities?
2) How do LED policies effect sustainable development in rural sub-Saharan Africa?

Goals:
1) To make policy recommendations for sub-Saharan African countries to increase the possibility of meeting the MDG for halving extreme poverty.
2) To promote sustainable development as a means of reducing conflict.

I will research sustainable development models through literature reviews and through interviews with NGOs while traveling in Liberia. Using established assessment guides, I will chart national reforms supporting sustainable development to evaluate how LED policy is put into practice. I will interview local community members and leaders as well as national policy-makers in Monrovia to gain their perspective on the success of the various development models. I will set up meetings with government officials through my contacts at The Advocates for Human Rights. This research will culminate in a master's thesis on the use of sustainable development models to meet MDGs as well as lay the groundwork for a law and economics journal article on the effects of LED policy on good governance and development.

Interdisciplinary Approach to Development

The cooperation between development, environmental, and economics fields to achieve *sustainable development in rural sub-Saharan Africa* could dramatically improve the chance of extreme poverty alleviation. Between 1990 and 2004, the percentage of Africans living in

---

[9] GOVERNANCE REFORM COMMISSION, CONCEPT PAPER: THE WAY FORWARD: LAND & PROPERTY RIGHTS ISSUES IN THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA, 2 (2007); *see also* REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA, PRIORITY PLAN FOR PEACEBUILDING FUND (PBF): LIBERIA 1 (2008).

[10] The Secretary-General, *Secretary General's Report to the UN Security Council: The Causes of Conflict and the Promotion of Durable Peace and Sustainable Development in Africa*, ¶ 79, *delivered to the Security Council,* (April 16, 1998), http://www.un.org/ecosocdev/geninfo/afrec/sgreport/index.html.

[11] Empowerment Society Intl., http://www.empowermentsociety.com/projects1.php.

extreme poverty fell almost 6%, but 41.1% are still living in extreme poverty.[12] Liberia, as well as other several other African countries, is "off-tract" in reducing extreme poverty and hunger by 2015.[13] This research will provide African countries a greater understanding of how to implement sustainable development models and coordinate efforts to eradicate poverty. An impoverished Africa also means more terrorist recruits,[14] further degradation of natural resources,[15] and an increase in lawlessness.[16] By increasing understanding of an interdisciplinary approach to development, overall global security can improve.

In 2005, at the G8 Summit in Gleneagles Scotland, world leaders agreed to double the amount of foreign aid their countries provide. By 2007, the amount of international aid *fell* by 5%. Prime Minister Gordon Brown has declared a "development emergency" in Africa.[17] With less than 7 years until the MDG deadline, Africa cannot afford to base development strategies on foreign aid. Implementing local sustainable practices, however, offers long-term viable solutions to poverty alleviation, environmental protection and economic growth.

Work Plan

May 18th- May 29th
Preliminary research on sustainable development models, Liberian LED policies and international development guidelines. Create a tracking module to record specific sustainable practices and write interview questions for various stakeholders.

June 1st- June 30th
Travel to Liberia for approximately four weeks to assess a sustainable development community. Meet with other NGOs working in sustainable development. Interview villagers, community leaders, and LED policy-makers to document their views on various programs.

July 6th- 31th
Follow-up research and economic analysis of findings. Outline thesis and journal article.

---

[12] *The Millennium Development Goals Report 2007* pg. 5, http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/mdg2007.pdf.
[13] MGD Monitor, Liberia: Progress by Goal, http://www.mdgmonitor.org/country_progress.cfm?c=LIB&cd (last visited Mar. 22, 2009).
[14] *See* Ann Scott Tyson, *U.S. Pushes Anti-Terrorism in Africa,* WASH. POST, July 26, 2005 at A01. *See also* Kevin Diaz, *FBI Tracks Somali Terror Links in Minneapolis, Elsewhere,* Star Tribune March 12, 2009.
[15] *See* Econ. Comm'n for Africa, *State of the Environment in Africa,* U.N. Doc. ECA/FSSDD/01/06 (2001).
[16] *See Somalia's Pirates Seize 33 Tanks*, BBC NEWS, Sept. 26, 2008, available at http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/7637257.stm.
[17] Steve Schifferes, *Why Can't Africa Tackle Poverty?,* BBC NEWS, Sept. 27, 2007, available at http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/7013764.stm.

Biography

Jeffrey Sachs wrote an article four years ago about the possibility of ending poverty in my lifetime. It was such a radical idea to me at the time, but it changed the course of my life and directed my efforts toward alleviating extreme poverty. I am working on my masters in public policy at the Humphrey Institute, concentrating in international economic development. I am also in my second year at the Law School focusing on law and economics and human rights. For the last year I have interned at The Advocates for Human Rights in Minneapolis. The Advocates coordinated the Diaspora aspect of the Liberian Truth and Reconciliation Commission. As a legal intern, I researched international land reform standards and analyzed how Liberia could adapt the successes of other post-conflict countries in addressing its increasing land disputes.

Additionally, I work for the University of Minnesota's Dr. Maryam Valapour as a research assistant. For her NIH grant, I am analyzing the relationship between organ transplant policy and the incidence of living donor transplants. I have gained valuable experience in legal research and policy analysis which I will apply to this project. Prof. Sachs advocates a clinical approach to poverty alleviation, similar to the approach I am applying at work. I am a board member of the law school chapter of Amnesty International where I started a weekly Human Rights Bulletin to educate graduate students on human rights topics and promote upcoming events. I am also a founding member of Child Protection International, www.childprotectioninternational.org (formerly Save Yar, A Campaign to End Child Abductions). I have been married to my wonderful husband Jason for almost two years.

Consortium on Law and Values in Health, Environment the Life Sciences
Budget for Student Proposals

Project Title: The Role of Sustainable Development in Rebuilding Post-Conflict Liberia

Instructions: add rows for multiple personnel.

Category	Description & justification	Requested funding Amount	Matching/other funding Amount	Source
Personnel *Explain what hourly wage & fringe are based on-- departmental, community or other rate? The hourly wage rate approximates University of Minnesota graduate research assistant pay.*	Salary = 200 hrs x $17.50 hourly wage	$3,500		
	Fringe rate	$0		
	What work will this person do? I will research sustainable economic development methods and evaluate new and existing programs in rural Liberia.			
	Subtotal	$3,500		
Speaker Honoraria	___ speakers x $ _____ honorarium	$0		
Supplies & Services	List items and explain use.	$0		
Equipment *Equipment costs are allowable only if the justification clearly shows that the equipment is necessary for the project. Include explanation of what will happen to equipment at completion of project.*	Identify and explain use.	$0		
Travel *Travel costs must include a description of the purpose of the travel, start and stop dates of travel, transportation costs, housing costs, and allowable per diem (use University rates found at http:// travel/umn.edu).*	Explain. Round-tip airfare from Minneapolis, MN to Monrovia, Liberia on Delta: $2850. Travel from Monrovia to Duayee: $50. Room: $200. Meals: $20/day X 30 days= $600 . The cost of travel will exceed the $2000 maximum.	$2,000		I have applied for the Upper Midwest Human Rights Fellowship for additional funding to cover travel expenses. (approval pending)
	Subtotal	$2,000		
TOTAL BUDGET		5,500		