



Enhancing Road Safety in Montserrado County, Liberia

Enhancing Road Safety in Montserrado County, Liberia

Introduction

Montserrado County is a populous county and a home to a growing population in the capital city of Monrovia in Liberia. Casualties and deaths resulting from road traffic accidents have risen as fast as the population and the number of motorcycles on the streets-especially among the most vulnerable citizens like women, children, elderly, and people living with disabilities. Because of the inadequacy of infrastructure and traffic rules and regulations, they cannot minimize the casualties and deaths; therefore, pedestrians are found prone to accidents. With reckless motorcycle riders taking over the streets and most of the intersections not having any proper signage, comprehensive road safety measures have become quite urgent. This proposal, at the behest of Liberia and Liberian First, seeks to enhance pedestrian safety through the provision of stop signs at major intersections within Montserrado County and deploying trained volunteers wearing safety jackets to guide vulnerable pedestrians across busy streets. This will be a three-year project focused on reducing pedestrian injuries, empowering local volunteers, and improving traffic management to make Monrovia a safer city for all.

Project's Background

With the rapid urbanization and upsurge in population, especially in the capital city of Liberia, Monrovia, and its environs in Montserrado County, there has been increased vehicular

movement, particularly motorbikes. While motorcycles have been made widely acceptable to the common Liberian as a means of transport due to their cheap and easy way of movement, the sudden upsurge in the number of motorcycles on roads has brought about alarming accidents. The crossing facilities for pedestrians are seldom controlled at most busy points, which exposes pedestrians highly, above all, women carrying babies, the elderly, and people with disabilities. The absence of proper traffic lights and unorganized traffic management adds to the problem. For these, Liberia and Liberian First propose improvements in infrastructure, volunteer contributions in the pedestrians' favor, and legal backup to get responsible traffic behavior. The goals of the project will be to install 10,000 stop signs across the county and to train volunteers to wear safety jackets so that they are visible and commanding when assisting pedestrians.

Project Objectives

The main focus of the proposed project is to improve road safety, strengthen local communities, and inculcate a culture of responsible traffic behavior. Specifically, the project shall:

- a. Installing stop signs at strategic intersections to control the flow of traffic will help make it safe for people to cross busy roads. By placing these signs at every major intersection throughout Montserrado County, this project will establish a standardized system that is predictable for drivers and pedestrians alike to follow, thus minimizing accidents.
- b. The project intends to involve at least 3,000 volunteers from the local communities and train them to be safety ambassadors. Each volunteer will be given a bright, lifeguard-style safety jacket so that they can be evident and identifiable to pedestrians and motorists alike. These volunteers will then be stationed at key intersections during peak periods: rush hour, school dismissal, and times when workers are leaving the workplaces.

- c. A significant component is raising drivers' and pedestrians' awareness of road safety. The initiative should support responsible driving and walking practices and active cooperation with the local police in command to ensure respect for traffic rules through the effective participation of the locals in the process.

Proposed Activities

The activities to be undertaken in this proposal are aimed at finding solutions to the road safety problems facing Montserrado County in a structured manner. Activities involve infrastructure improvement, volunteer recruitment and training, and engagement in activities at the community level. Specifically:

- a. The project will install stop signs at 10,000 strategic intersections within the county of Montserrado. The signs shall be placed at each major intersection of roads where pedestrians may cross, most especially in very congested areas within urban centers, such as Monrovia City. Installation will be guided by traffic flow, pedestrians' needs, and the availability of suitable locations.
- b. The project mainly focuses, among other needs, on the recruitment and subsequent training of more than 3000 volunteers. These volunteers for the crossing come from the leading local communities and assist during peak-hour traffic. Other areas of training will impart essential aspects to the volunteers, for instance, fundamental elements of pedestrians' safety features, emergency conditions, and care for first aid. At the same time, this will guarantee that the crossings are safely supporting pedestrians, handling life emergencies, and maintaining civility at rush-hour junction points.

- c. Volunteers will be issued high-visibility, lifeguard-style safety jackets that make them highly visible both to pedestrians and motorists. These jackets are an essential component of the volunteer's role in guiding pedestrians across the streets in safety and can help increase their authority when managing traffic and crossing areas. Furthermore, all equipment, including traffic cones, walkie-talkies, and emergency kits, needs to be provided to make sure all volunteers are prepared for any kind of situation that might arise.
- d. In order to keep the program running smoothly and to give volunteers added motivation, volunteers will be receiving a monthly stipend of \$250. This stipend acts as an incentive for their commitment, especially when it is considered that they should be present during rush-hour times, such as school dismissal and work exit times. The organization will further ensure that the volunteers are diligently undertaking their duties through regular unannounced inspections of the project. During these site visits, volunteers shall be motivated by gifts, like bottled water, to keep them going.
- e. For its success, this project needs some involvement and support by local law enforcement and other government authorities. A formal letter will be forwarded to the Ministry of Justice, along with other similar government agencies in the country, to ensure that the initiative has the legal backing to function correctly. This relationship with local police will also facilitate drivers' obligation to follow all traffic rules, whether stopping for a pedestrian when they are supposed to or not.
- f. Evaluation of the project shall be regularly carried out as a means to monitor whether it is on course as anticipated. This shall entail three deployed vehicles doing unannounced site visits that verify whether the volunteers are on duty and adhere to their training. The

patterns of traffic flow, pedestrian safety outcomes, and the performance of the volunteers will also be under regular assessment to establish whether changes to the program need to be made.

Estimated Budget

A full project budget has been developed that outlines the costs of installation, recruitment, training, equipment, and monitoring. The cost estimates are in the following fashion:

Cost	Cost (USD)
Stop Signs (10,000 x \$50 per sign)	\$500,000
Safety Jackets (3,000 x \$20 per jacket)	\$60,000
Volunteer Stipends (3,000 x \$250 x 12 months x 3 years)	\$27,000,000
Monitoring Vehicle (1 x \$25,000)	\$25,000
Training and Community Engagement	\$150,000
Miscellaneous (water, gifts, etc.)	\$50,000
Total Estimated Cost	\$27,785,000

This budget will fund all the indispensable components of this project to ensure wide-ranging and effective implementation within the period of three years.

Expected Outcomes

The results expected from this project are multifold. By installing stop signs at key intersections, the project will provide a safer pedestrian environment where the injuries and

fatalities will go down among pedestrians. It also recruits and trains 3,000 volunteers in communities to enable their active participation in ensuring pedestrian safety, with the bonus of a financial incentive to be gained from staying committed. The provision of safety jackets ensures that volunteers are highly visible and recognized in their task of guiding pedestrians across busy intersections. This, in addition, will create much more community involvement in the issues of traffic safety and provide increased awareness for both pedestrians and motorists on their role in the maintenance of road safety.

Sustainability Plan

The project should be sustained beyond the initial three-year period if it is to have a lasting impact. In this regard, the project will be working closely with local businesses, NGOs, and government agencies to attract long-term funding and support. Lessons derived from this project are also expected to be integrated into broader national road traffic management policies to create a safer and more organized atmosphere of traffic in Liberia.

Conclusion

This project will seek to enhance road safety in Montserrado County, addressing those particular challenges facing pedestrians in densely populated urban areas. By erecting stop signs, training and deploying volunteers, and involving local communities in the process, Liberia and Liberian First aim to make the environment safer for pedestrians, especially the most vulnerable members of society. This project, with the involvement of local authorities and the active participation of the community, will reduce road accidents and make the infrastructure friendlier to pedestrians. The successful implementation of this project will open a door for many other similar projects to be implemented in other counties toward the broader goal of the Government of Liberia in improving road safety and reducing traffic-related injuries throughout the country.

