



March 2007

Matthew 28:16-20

Matthew 22:36-40

Matthew 28:16-20

Hebrews 12:1-3

I commit to present myself with integrity to my clients and to the professional community around me.

I commit to give of my time and talent to see the Gospel taken to the ends of the earth.

I commit to present myself with integrity to my clients and to the professional community around me.

Giving people a place to GROW



Liberia, West Africa - A Devastated Land

Liberia is a nation that has suffered over 15 years of brutal and destructive civil war. Physically, the nation's infrastructure has been destroyed. There is no electrical power throughout the country - all the wiring has been stripped from the power poles and sold, and no potable water system exists in the capital of Monrovia, a city with a population of over 1.5 million people. Small, portable generators abound and water is sold in 5 gallon containers and trucked into the city from outside sources. Major buildings have suffered severe damage - the national university has a library with no books and science labs with no equipment! Students are taught but have only their notes to study from as there are no other resources available. In addition, the social fabric of the country is reeling from the emotional and physical abuse suffered because of the conflict.



The infrastructure of downtown Monrovia has been devastated.

An Enterprise of Reconciliation

Where does a devastated country like Liberia start to rebuild? The motto of the ministry our eMi team went to serve, **CenterPoint International**, is "Giving People a Place to Grow." They have a vision to create a "Center of Reconciliation" that will be a place to renew the physical and spiritual well-being of all Liberians. To accomplish this, they plan to develop a retreat center that will offer counseling and educational training, as well as a variety of other programs. Their goal is to help empower local leaders, former combatants, children of war, battered women, and bewildered students by uniting with the local church to bring about true reconciliation.



Much healing is needed in Liberia, as attested to by this billboard in Monrovia.

A Home for CenterPoint

The chosen site for the retreat center is a 100-acre piece of land on the outskirts of Monrovia. During our first visit to the site, a big surprise awaited us. We discovered that the site was still being carved out of the jungle-like overgrowth, making it impossible to do the surveying we had prepared for. Only the property line locations were partially cut, leaving us to wander through the heavy bush to determine the best location for the 6-8 acre central "campus".



Steve Ulrich and the eMi team exploring the jungle-like site.

We did find a local survey team marking the property lines and our team surveyors were able to meet with them and discuss what was being done. The resident land owner was actually "carving" these 100 acres out of his larger piece of land and there was a sketch in place of what the property was to look like. As our team was analyzing the proposed site drawing, we discovered an error in the size of the property - the site being surveyed was only 83 acres, not the 100 that were being purchased! Without this separate calculation by our team, our client would not have been aware of the discrepancy, and would have received less land than he had actually purchased. This revelation prompted an adjustment in the location of the property boundary, and then we were able to move forward with the design.

Though 100 acres seems like a lot of land, it is a great size for this proposed project because it allows room for a central "campus" space for the retreat center and also fulfills the ministry's secondary vision of designating a large portion of the site for agricultural development. The program for the campus portion of the center includes several small retreat buildings (combining dorm and classroom space), a kitchen/dining facility, and a library.

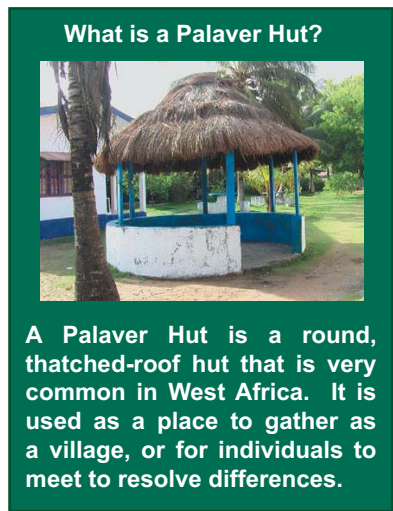
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Sketch of the central campus.

A Culturally Appropriate Village Concept

Our design team searched for the appropriate, culturally relevant design theme to use. We found this in the "Palaver Hut". We decided to recommend that the site be developed in small "village" modules. Each village would include four small dorm/classroom buildings, one library building, and one kitchen/dining facility shared between two "villages". A Palaver Hut would then be located in the center of each "village" to serve as a gathering place.



What is a Palaver Hut?
A Palaver Hut is a round, thatched-roof hut that is very common in West Africa. It is used as a place to gather as a village, or for individuals to meet to resolve differences.



Sketch showing the village concept layout.



Typical building module design.

Each building in the village is based on a **prototype building unit**. This typical module can be doubled, flipped, or mirrored in order to create dorms and classrooms of various sizes, as well as a preliminary library building. The base price for this typical unit is approximately \$35,000 USD and will allow CenterPoint to get started on a small scale and build out the Master Plan in manageable stages.

We also designed the larger Master Plan for the site, which includes several of these small "villages", a large assembly area, an administration building, and a much larger library. The Master Plan also calls for a large central plaza - the grander version of the "Palaver Hut" concept used in each village. All of these facilities in the central campus area would be used for retreats, counseling, and education.

Conservation Farm and Research Center

As mentioned earlier, a secondary component of CenterPoint's vision for the site is agricultural development. A major factor in rebuilding the country is the need to restore the food production chain. To help with this agricultural component, a Conservation Farm and Research Center was designed by two agricultural engineers on our team. They developed a typical **4-acre farm unit**, which could provide the complete nutritional needs of one family. The idea is that these 4-acre units could be replicated around the rest of the site and given to individual families to manage and use. CenterPoint would also eventually like to have an agricultural Research Station to help the country improve its agricultural management techniques.

Designing a World of Hope

CenterPoint's motto, "Giving People a Place to Grow", speaks to the possibility of a hopeful future for the country of Liberia. I was struck by how perfect it was for eMi to come alongside this ministry, since our mission is to "design a world of hope!" It is places like this, that on the surface seem to have no hope, where our services are needed the most. By helping to design the physical environment for a ministry center like CenterPoint's, we are helping to create the spiritual environment that can transform a nation.

"...but those who hope in the Lord, will renew their strength." Isaiah 40:31

Steve Ulrich

Steve Ulrich
eMi Canada Director

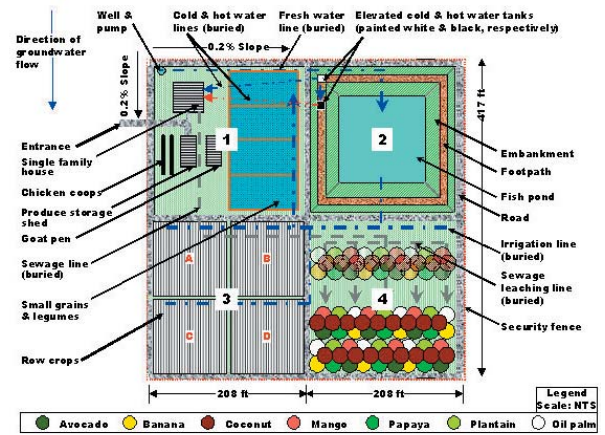


Figure 2. CenterPoint Conservation Farm

The typical 4-acre farm unit designed by the team's agricultural engineers.

Upcoming Projects

Click on "current project needs" at www.emiworld.org for more info.

Where

South Asia
INDIA

Sub-Saharan Africa

KENYA
LIBERIA
SIERRA LEONE
UGANDA

Middle East

LEBANON
JORDAN

Central America and Caribbean

HAITI
HAITI

China

CHINA

What

Children's Home and School

International Prayer Center
School and Medical Clinic
Outreach Center
Orphanage and School

Youth Camp
Habitat for Humanity CM Planning

Orphanage
Orphanage, School, and Medical Clinic

Greenhouse Agro-development, Phase II

When

June 2007

June 2007
June 2007
June 2007
May 2007

June 2007
late May 2007

late May 2007
June 2007

late May 2007

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celebrate
HOPE

eMi Conference

July 5th – 8th, 2007 Jackson Hole, Wyoming