

Odinga Gongar (age 26 years):

The civil war in Liberia drove many from the country-side into neighboring countries and others into the capital city of Monrovia. Odinga Gongar's dad was killed in the war but his mother managed to escape into Monrovia, and she survived by plying her petty trading skills there. Odinga attended High School but after finishing school had nothing to do. Unemployment is outrageously high and his mother had nothing to give him for him to start earning a living. Our LEAP microfinance institution (MFI) gave Odinga a chance! They provided Odinga with a series of 12 micro-loans starting at \$25 and the most recent being \$600, each loan of which he has repaid in full along with a market rate of interest. When Odinga first started he was selling plastic bags from his head and earning only about \$5 per week, now he has a small grocery store and earns a profit of about \$125 per week, 25 times his initial amount! During that time he received no financial assistance other than that provided by LEAP. In my view this is a miracle! Odinga now wishes to get another loan to increase his stock and buy a small generator for selling cool water. He thanks LEAP and the people of Canada for making his current life possible.

