

LIBERIA ANNUAL REPORT 2021



ACCELERATING CLEAN, INCLUSIVE RECOVERY
AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT





DISCLAIMER

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

UNDP Liberia acknowledges the strong partnership with the Government of Liberia, development partners, civil society, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector over the course of the year. The support and partnership received contributed significantly to the delivery of our programme interventions and the results captured in this report. ■

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FOREWORD



Stephen Rodriques

2021 began with signs of recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, but this changed mid-year with a spike in cases between May and October occasioning tighter public health measures. While a full lock-down was not instituted in 2021, the pandemic continued to undermine Liberia's economic recovery and implementation of the Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (PAPD) 2018-2023. The burden of the pandemic was felt most by the more than 70% of Liberians working in the fragile informal sector. These groups saw a further shrinkage of economic opportunities, and a

concomitant increase in hardship. During the year, the Government of Liberia recalibrated the PAPD in response to the pandemic and developed an Economic Recovery Plan. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) provided a rapid credit facility to finance the government's emergency assistance programme. At the same time, the UN Country Team developed a Socio-Economic Response Plan, which guided UNDP's COVID support to the government. UNDP focused on providing grants to the poor together with critical equipment and supplies to the national COVID testing, prevention and vaccine programmes.

To support the country's economic recovery, UNDP inaugurated both a business start-up and business "Growth Accelerator" programme targeting Liberia's entrepreneurs and micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs). The Country Office also provided agricultural grants and donations of agricultural equipment to spur farming. In addition, to encourage green recovery, UNDP supported the Environmental Protection Agency to create a youth eco-brigade and provided them grants to start "green businesses" such as waste collection and disposal, production of tree seedlings, ecotourism, etc.

With respect to climate change and natural disasters, UNDP supported the Government of Liberia in revising the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), which was submitted to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and an NDC Financing Strategy. UNDP also supported the launch of the abridged version of Liberia's National Adaptation Plan (NAP), a culmination of years of technical and advisory support.

To further strengthen the country's adaptation to the effects of climate change, UNDP helped the Government of Liberia secure USD 25.6m from the Green Climate Fund (GCF) for the Monrovia Metropolitan Coastal Resilience Project (MMCRP).

For Liberia to achieve sustainable recovery, growth and development, it requires continued investments in peace, social cohesion, reconciliation, and the rule of law. Through the Liberia Electoral Support Programme (LESP), UNDP facilitated the National Elections Commission (NEC) to conduct peaceful, inclusive Special Senatorial Elections and by-elections in 2020-2021. The programme further secured additional funding from Sweden and Ireland to continue strengthening the NEC's capacity to hold free, fair, accountable and transparent elections in the future.

Working closely with national and civil society partners, the UNDP-led Joint UN Rule of Law programme delivered interventions that recorded substantive improvements in the capacity of the Judiciary, Ministry of Justice, the Liberia National Police, the Liberia Immigration Services, the Bureau of Corrections and Rehabilitation, and Civil Society Organisations. The programme also facilitated more efficient and effective delivery of justice by, among other things, introducing digital technologies within the sector.

The Rule of Law programme, together with the EU-UN Spotlight Initiative, continued to expand access to justice for survivors of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) by providing legal aid, psychosocial counselling, mediation and other services.

To counter pervasive corruption, UNDP with funding from the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) supported the Liberia Anti-Corruption Agency to develop a digital platform to catalyze safe, citizen-led whistleblowing. The Country Office also undertook several joint advocacy efforts with other UN agencies and development partners to strengthen the fight against corruption and hosted public discussions to enhance citizen and civil society engagement in demanding accountability and transparency.

This annual report provides a snapshot of our achievements together with the Government of Liberia, other UN agencies and development partners to deliver meaningful development results to the people of Liberia. I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude and thanks to our partners. The 2030 Agenda is our Common Agenda. We can build a more resilient and inclusive world, leaving no-one behind, only if we work in partnership. ■

Stephen Rodriques
Resident Representative
UNDP Country Office in Liberia



COUNTRY OVERVIEW

POPULATION

Liberia is home to a population of 5,180,208

LOCATION

Liberia is located on the west African coast, bordered by Sierra Leone on the west, Guinea on the north, Ivory Coast on the east, and the Atlantic Ocean on the south. The country covers a land area of 111,369 square kilometres, with up to 580 kilometres of coastline. It is geographically divided into five regions and 15 counties.

The country is home to a lush rainforest containing a rich diversity of flora and fauna.

LANGUAGE

English is the official language. 20 ethnic languages are also spoken.

ECONOMIC OVERVIEW

Liberia is a low-income country with GDP per capita estimated at US\$673 in 2021.

The annual percentage growth rate of GDP for 2021 was 4%, recovering from a decline of 3.0% in 2020, according to the World Bank.

Growth is driven mainly by the mining sector and external demand. Structural reforms are expected to increase activity in mining, agriculture, and construction.

In 2019, Liberia ranked 175 out of 189 on the Human Development Index, putting it in the low human development category. A large part of the country lacks basic infrastructure such as electricity and water supply.

POLITICAL OVERVIEW

Liberia is a constitutional republic with a bicameral national assembly and a democratically elected government.

The next Presidential and Legislative Elections will be held in October 2023. ■

STRENGTHENING AND PROMOTING INCLUSIVE GOVERNANCE AND PEACE



For a fragile, post conflict State such as Liberia, strengthening the rule of law, expanding access to justice, promoting peace and reconciliation and social cohesion remain central for national progress.

UNDP works with national partners including CSOs, as well as donors, other UN agencies and communities to consolidate and sustain peace, enhance social cohesion, and strengthen formal and informal institutions. The aim is to improve the capacity of institutions to provide access to inclusive, effective, equitable justice and security services, and to promote and protect human rights for all.

UNDP Liberia supports key governance initiatives in areas such as accountability and transparency, access to justice, rule of law, decentralization, peacebuilding, constitutional review, land reform, and advocacy for women's participation and representation in decision-making positions.

RULE OF LAW

The UN Joint Rule of Law Project made significant progress towards the achievement of its objectives and desired results during 2021. Working closely with various national and CSO partners, the project delivered cogent interventions that recorded substantive changes in the capacity of the Judiciary, Ministry of Justice, the Liberia National Police, the Liberia Immigration Services, the Bureau of Corrections and Rehabilitation, and a range of civil society organization partners. It has expanded access to justice for GBV survivors and inmates, particularly pretrial detainees in Bong, Gbarpolu, Grand Bassa, Margibi, Nimba and Sinoe counties by providing legal aid, psychosocial, mediation and other services.

The project supported trainings and strengthened partnership with local women led civil society organizations to provide legal and psychosocial services, mentorship and other support to survivors through the referral pathways. Additionally, the project facilitated monitoring of the performance of the courts as well as created awareness on the existence of the newly established Court E in Bong and Nimba Counties. It also made outstanding progress by putting in place mechanisms to prevent and respond to gender-based violence (GBV) and pre-trial detention through partnership with CSOs.

These efforts are enabling institutions in the justice and security sector to function effectively and efficiently, delivering quality services to the public; enhancing access to justice for women, GBV survivors, inmates, children in conflict with the law and the community in general; promoting respect for human rights for all; strengthening the rule of law; and creating demand for justice.

The use of mediation as part of the alternative dispute resolution mechanism, by extension, contributed to the reduction of cases on the courts' dockets, pre-trial detention and prison overcrowding. The Project's support helped restore the dignity, self-esteem and physical health of survivors with the provision of psychosocial services, logistical and moral support and access to health services.

It also promoted respect for the human rights of all persons by supporting survivors to access justice for violence committed against them and sought to obtain the release of inmates languishing behind bars beyond the statutory period in violation of their rights.

As part of measures to promote the respect for human rights and the rule of law in communities, UNDP supported the development of a training manual to standardize and harmonize training for traditional leaders. Justice actors will use the manual to coordinate, standardize and harmonize training on human rights, gender equity and the rule of law for traditional leaders. It is expected to help ensure that the rights and dignity of indigents seeking redress through the traditional justice system are respected. ■

LEGAL AID BILL

In 2021, **UNDP** joint **Rule of Law** programme supported the drafting of a new national **Legal Aid Bill** submitted to the Legislature for enactment in order to address weaknesses in the provision of legal aid services and access to justice. Once enacted, the Law will, inter alia, establish a Legal Aid Board to harmonize and standardize legal aid services. It will also increase access to justice through the provision of quality and regular legal aid services to indigents. ■

FAST FACTS

- Trained 693 justice and response chain actors including women groups and other community members (369 men and 324 women) to report GBV and other cases for redress.
- ToT conducted for 15 LNP officers (14 men and 1 woman) as trainers who subsequently trained 34 other officers (32 men and 2 women) in Bomi, Bong, Lofa and Margibi Counties to roll out the CSIS.
- Trained 32 women led CSOs to provide legal and psychosocial services to SGBV survivors.
- Developed an offline mobile application and provided 25 tablets and one-year internet subscription to the LNP to optimize the functionality and use of the CSIS system.
- Reached 110,299 people with key messages on SGBV prevention and response, information on accessing the specialized SGBV Court E, human rights, the rule of law and available legal aid services in six targeted counties. Community engagement reached 35, 869 people (18,310 men and 17,559 women), while mass campaigns via radio and other media reached approximately 74,430 people.
- Trained 64 corrections officers (47 men and 17 women) from the Bureau of Corrections and Rehabilitation to provide appropriate protection, care, and support to inmates in line with internationally acceptable standards and best practices.
- Constructed a modern magisterial Court for residents of Yarkpa Town in Rivercess County to access justice. The town has been without a court since 1984.
- Conducted series of BCR workshops to raise awareness on the use of probation and parole as a means of decongesting prisons.

Cumulative Case Statistics for February, May, August and November 2021
Terms of Court for Court E in Bong and Nimba Counties

COURT E	CASES ON DOCKET	CASES DISPOSED OF	DISPOSAL RATE
Bong ^[1]	57	8	14%
Nimba ^[2]	62	31	50%

LIBERIA ELECTORAL SUPPORT PROJECT

Following the 2020 Special Senatorial Elections (SSE) and Referendum held on 8 December, the Liberia Electoral Support Project (LESP) assisted the National Elections Commission (NEC) in organizing nationwide lessons learned consultations. This comprehensive exercise, which saw impressive participation in four regions of Liberia, concluded with an internal lesson learned conference for the NEC at the end of April. Information gleaned from these meetings resulted in a robust action plan, which the NEC Board of Commissioners endorsed in October 2021. Some recommendations related to civic and voter education (CVE), or polling and counting have already been implemented in the 2021 by-elections held in Bong, Grand Cape Mount, Grand Gedeh, and Nimba Counties.

Following the 2020 elections, an analysis of invalid ballots was also undertaken. In addition, part of the 2021 by-elections polling staff training was on how to make determinations on invalid ballots, resulting in a noticeable improvement in the counting process as witnessed by diplomatic and UN teams.

However, efforts to increase women's participation in 2020 polls and subsequent 2021 by-elections were less successful. The absence of final registration rolls in the ballot boxes after the 2020 elections and incomplete gender tally sheets from the 2021 by-elections did not allow NEC to establish data on women's political participation in those elections. To consolidate and coordinate efforts to increase women's political participation, a joint UN Women-UNDP programme "Promoting Inclusive Political Participation and Elimination of Violence Against Women in Politics", funded by the UN Peacebuilding Fund, was approved and signed. The Project will complement LESP efforts in promoting women's political participation by strengthening the coordination of peacebuilding, governance and elections processes, and stakeholders.

Two regional workshops were held to strengthen the memorandum of understanding with political parties on increased participation of women and three regional Inter-party Consultative Committee meetings were convened on the elimination of violence against women in elections and politics. A proposed amendment to Article 4.5 of the new Election Law would improve women's political

participation by enacting temporary special measures that would create a 30 per cent gender quota for political party candidate lists, as well as for party executive committees.

The Project helped strengthen the coordination of efforts advocating for the passage of the Article and helped develop an action plan for key stakeholders. With input from LESP, the UN Resident Coordinator's Office coordinated a Joint Statement on Gender Quota in the Legislature in Liberia by the United Nations in Liberia, Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the European Union, France, Germany, Ireland, Norway, Spain, and Sweden, Canada, United Kingdom of Britain, and Northern Ireland.

The international partners also met the Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives to raise awareness about the importance of the 30 per cent obligatory gender quota and its inclusion in the Election law reform. In addition, LESP engaged closely with UN Women to follow up on higher-level advocacy. This initial advocacy proved successful in preventing a planned legislative rejection of the Amendment, and led to heightened awareness of the proposed quota by a wide range of stakeholders including the international community and civil society actors. The momentum has shifted on the issue.

In addition to its work with UN Women, LESP focused on expanding its collaboration and coordination with other partners to maximize impact and cost-effective and efficient support to NEC and other electoral stakeholders. ■



FAST FACTS

01



The Project has worked closely with the Liberia Peacebuilding Office, Internews, and Democracy International, among others, providing information to the international community continuously and supporting the RCO in conducting lessons learned exercises with like-minded partners. The group of Ambassadors, deputies, the ECOWAS technical team, the EU, Germany, Ireland, Japan, Norway, Sweden, UK, UN Women, and US Embassy/USAID participated in the meeting and agreed on the submission of joint recommendations to the Government of Liberia.

02



LESP continued to advise NEC in electoral dispute resolution (EDR). Dispute Resolution processes have been lengthy and cumbersome, with the last complaint arising from the December 2020 SSE and Referendum finally resolved in July 2021. Only half of the cases were resolved on time, falling 25 per cent short of the Project target. LESP engaged a consultant to develop a comprehensive EDR plan to address some of the issues encountered in the 2021 by-elections. The NEC agreed upon a comprehensive programme to support robust and sustainable resolution of electoral disputes.

03



LESP provided advice on developing a roadmap and timeline for implementing Biometric Voter Registration (BVR) in time for the 2023 elections. The Project arranged a feasibility study using BVR and supported NEC in organizing initial consultations with stakeholders. An overwhelming majority of stakeholders believe BVR will improve the voter registration process. Still, there remain concerns about Liberia's financial and logistical readiness as well as the timeline for the 2023 elections. The feasibility study report was presented to the public in November, and NEC began engagement with the National Identification Registry on the way forward.

04



An EC-UNDP Joint Task Force scoping mission took place to assess the current status of the early warning and response mechanism (EWRM) to mitigate violence in elections and to evaluate efforts to combat disinformation and hate speech. Two assessment reports on EWRM and mitigation of misinformation, disinformation, and hate speech were validated at a stakeholders' meeting in November.

05



Twelve refurbished and newly constructed warehouses, security fences, generator rooms, and seven hand pumps were officially turned over to the NEC. The facilities were renovated or built with financial support from the European Union, Irish Aid, Sweden, Canada, and UNDP. The warehouses enable the NEC Magistrates to store sensitive and non-sensitive materials needed for elections in a secure environment, close to the locations where they will be used.

06



The Project provided refresher training for political parties and journalists on conflict-sensitive reporting in collaboration with Internews. The Project also organized a media and law enforcement conference to help journalists and security personnel understand each other's roles and responsibilities, leading to the preparation of standard operating procedures to guide interaction between journalists and law enforcement personnel during electoral activities.

PROMOTING INCLUSIVE DECENTRALIZED SERVICES

While steady progress has been made on decentralization and enhancing service delivery to citizens since 2015, greater efforts are needed. To implement the Local Government Act (LGA) of 2018, several statutes need to be enacted and implemented. In 2021, UNDP supported the development of the Revenue Sharing Bill, which was submitted to the Legislature.

The passage of the Bill is essential to actualize the LGA's 10-year implementation roadmap. As part of efforts to create awareness on the LGA UNDP supported town hall meetings, consultations and sensitizations. These efforts reached over 1,500 people through 24 town hall meetings. Hundreds more were educated on the passage of the Local Government Act through community radio stations, and social media. The awareness campaigns covered eight counties- Bong, Nimba, Lofa, Grand Gedeh, Montserrado, Bomi, Margibi and Grand Bassa. The intervention helped citizens understand the benefits of the LGA while empowering them to drive the decentralization process by taking ownership.

The Revenue Sharing Bill, when enacted into law, will allow local administrative structures to retain and spend agreed percentages of locally generated revenues on county development initiatives. Similarly, an amendment to the Public Financial Management Law was submitted to the Legislature for enactment. The amended law will enable fiscal decentralization-allowing counties to collect and manage revenues for local socio-economic development initiatives.



These measures, once in force, will boost service delivery to the rural poor and accelerate progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The work on decentralizing extractives revenue and using these resources to benefit affected counties has not started. There are a few hurdles to overcome and systems to put in place beforehand. The passage of the Revenue Sharing Bill and the Revised PFM Law will spur advocacy for decentralizing extractives revenue.

Using innovative and data-driven solutions in development plans, budgets, and to analyze progress towards the SDGs, UNDP Liberia availed the Citizen's Feedback Mechanism (CFM) Platform to the Government of Liberia for receiving citizens' feedback on pertinent issues, including the lack of social services in the communities. The digital platform is essential because it brings the government closer to the people. Despite the investment made by UNDP in the CFM to bring citizens closer to the government, the government's response to the feedback received from citizens has been slow, although the level of citizens feedback increased by 63%. ■



FAST FACTS

01



In actualizing Liberia's Decentralization Plan, UNDP equipped the County Service Centers (CSC) with solar energy to enhance their operational capacities. The solar power will reduce running costs of the CSCs, allow more people to receive services during the stated eight working hours daily and increase the generation of revenue. The CSCs are instrumental in bringing basic services to the people, reducing the cost and time of travelling to the capital city for government services.

02



UNDP also provided specialized Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) equipment for five CSCs to resume the issuance of documentation services, including driver's license, traditional and western marriage certificates, birth certificates, and tax payment services. Staff from the relevant Ministries, Agencies, and Commissions (MACs) were trained on the use of the equipment for optimum productivity. Women and men equally benefit from services provided at the County Service Centers (CSCs). More women go to the CSCs to apply for birth and marriage certificates and to pay their small business taxes. More men are interested in getting their driver's licenses for commercial vehicles and motorbikes.

03



Support to the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning to take the lead in organizing and coordinating government development agenda has worked very well. UNDP supported the government's alignment of its national development plan, the Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (PAPD), to meet the current needs especially in the wake of COVID-19. The revised and recalibrated PADP sets targets that are more realistic and identifies quick wins that respond to the SDGs. With UNDP support, the MFDP was able to revise the PAPD to reflect emerging priorities with particular emphasis on achieving the SDGs. The revised PAPD also sets realistic targets that are likely to be achieved within the period of the PAPD.

04



Still being piloted in five counties, the CFM platform has allowed people to interact with healthcare workers. Receiving and sharing information and networking has facilitated timely medical interventions, and responses to the Covid-19 pandemic. In preparation for a national rollout of the CFM, in piloted counties, UNDP commissioned a perception survey to ascertain the extent to which citizens are using the CFM platform. The findings of the perception survey to be released in the first quarter of 2022 will enable the government to make any necessary adjustments before the nationwide rollout of the CFM platform. The Public Perception Survey on the CFM also made concerted efforts to ensure equal representation of women.

LAND GOVERNANCE

Land Governance and Dispute Resolution Mechanisms support the implementation of the Land Rights Act (LRA) and Local Government Act (LGA). The joint implementation of the two Acts provides opportunities for empowering rural communities, including women and youth, by allowing them to manage their land and land-based resources to advance economic growth and development, and contribute to a reduction of land-related disputes in conflict prone counties (Grand Cape Mount, Sinoe, Maryland and Nimba). It also aims at tackling the major problems identified by the Government, development partners and CSOs and respond to the issues identified in the conflict analysis and land related assessments. As well as strengthen effectiveness, transparency, and inclusiveness of land administrative structures at national and county levels and concession awarding processes.

UNDP in collaboration with the Liberia Land Authority helped resolve long existing boundary disputes in 18 communities in Cape Mount, Maryland, Nimba and Sinoe Counties which also led to the signing and notarizing of eight disputes resolutions by all aggrieved parties.

As part of UNDP's support, the boundary harmonization and confirmatory survey have been completed in Nimba, Maryland and Cape Mount counties. This intervention led to the establishment of a community land dispute Management Committee to mediate land related conflict in the project catchment communities.

CONSOLIDATING PEACE AND RECONCILIATION

UNDP Liberia supported the Independent National Commission on Human Rights (INCHR), under the Palava Hut Program, to conduct a round of Palava Hut Hearing in Central "C" District, Rivercess County in 2021. The hearing, which was done in five sessions in Saryah Town, Garpue Town, and Neezuin amicably resolved 48 out of 49 cases that were heard by a 7-member District Palava Hut Hearing Committee. A total of 45 victims (19 females and 26 males) and 34 perpetrators (2 females and 32 males) participated in the hearing. The Palava Hut Committee (PHC) is headed by a female Clan Chief, and comprised of 3 males and 4 females. The ascendancy of a female to the leadership of the Committee marked a paradigm



shift in the implementation of the programme which kicked off in 2016. It was previously agreed during an Ethnographic Study Forum that males should head the Palava Hut Committees with females as co-chairs.

UNDP is also supporting the INCHR with the construction of memorials in honor of those who died during the Liberian civil war. The construction of four memorials is ongoing and is expected to be completed in 2022. Once erected, the memorials will serve as a reminder that "never again" should Liberians resolve differences with arms. Women are represented on the four Memorial Committees. There is one woman among 6 members in Gbarpolu, 4 women among 10 committee members in Lofa, 5 women among 10 committee members in Grand Bassa, and 4 women among 10 committee members in Rivercess County.



STRENGTHENING INSTITUTIONS AND SYSTEMS TO REDUCE CORRUPTION

Corruption is still one of the major challenges impeding national development in Liberia. To date, there has been slow progress made in tackling corruption and strengthening accountability. Reducing corruption is key to achieving inclusive governance. In 2021, and with a view to accelerate multi-partner efforts in this area, UNDP Liberia secured 350K to enhance the fight against corruption.

To strengthen the capacity of the Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission (LACC) to address the corruption menace and enhance integrity systems within government circles and the public sphere, UNDP launched the national anti-corruption project and co-hosted policy dialogues with key stakeholders, including the heads of all of Liberia’s Integrity Institutions and major development partners.

The project also aims to prompt response to incidents of corruption by developing a secured national digital e-platform that will enable members of the public to report suspected acts of corruption nationally to deepen citizens’ engagement in the fight against corruption.

EXPLORING VIABLE RESPONSES TO CORRUPTION IN LIBERIA
Organized by the UNDP Liberia Country Office with the Community of Practice on Governance

MODERATOR
W. Lesterson Yeboah
Chair, Accountability Lab

PANELISTS
 Cdr. Kambo Bai Gbeata
Vice Chairperson
Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission (LACC)
 Cdr. Francis Johnson Allison
Legal Practitioner and former Head of Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission (LACC)
 Harold Manvri Aidoo
Executive Director
Integrity Watch Liberia
 Francis Ben Kafala
Commissioner
Anti-Corruption Commission of Sierra Leone
 Nadinu Rugue
Team Leader, Transformational Governance, UNDP Rwanda

Wednesday, August 18 2021 | 12:00 - 1:30 pm Liberia / 8:00 - 9:30 am New York • JOIN: bit.ly/2GqZ77w

The project will also help improve the effectiveness of the LACC whose work is undermined by several factors. Currently, the Commission lacks prosecutorial powers, and operates within a weak legal framework in relation to financial disclosure and wealth declaration. Moreover, there is little protection for whistle blowers, which deters citizens from reporting corruption. The Anti-Corruption Agency has to contend with a deeply entrenched culture of unethical conduct in both the public and private sectors, especially in procurement, and the lack of capacity within state agencies to address impunity and promote integrity.

The Anti-corruption project places special emphasis on building the capacity of the LACC to track, report, and investigate acts of corruption consistent with its legal mandate and will encourage citizens to play a stronger, more active role in demanding transparency, integrity and accountability in governance at all levels. Strong implementation of the new anti-corruption project will begin in 2022.

UNDP hosted an anti-corruption dialogue that brought together key players in the national and regional anti-corruption landscape. The dialogue provided the platform for diverse opinions, shared knowledge, and experiences on obstacles to anti-corruption responses and how other countries have made progress in the fight against corruption. The aim of the dialogue was to be thought provoking and it provided concrete strategies that could translate into future interventions to combatting corruption especially in the areas of prevention, enforcement and awareness. ■

LIBERIA'S ANTI-CORRUPTION RESPONSE: TRANSLATING COMMITMENTS INTO REALITY

8 DECEMBER 2021
12:00 - 13:30 (LIBERIA)
15:00 - 16:30 (ADDIS)
07:00 - 08:30 (NYC)

REGISTER HERE:
<https://tinyurl.com/2p8xwfd5>

MODERATOR
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Anti-Corruption Policy Advisor
UNDP ACPSB Global Programme

Organized by UNDP Liberia Country Office as part of the virtual Development Dialogue series 2021, in partnership with the Embassy of Sweden in Liberia and the Embassy of Ireland in Liberia.

The move is part of efforts to strengthen commitment to the fight against corruption and foster joint and coordinated efforts among partners. The Project, with funding from the SIDA, will build partnership between the Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission (LACC) and CSOs with specialized and long-term experiences in corruption prevention. The CSOs include CENTAL, Accountability Lab Liberia and Integrity Watch Liberia.

The partnership will promote the use of ICT and innovation to create public demand, transparency

RESPONDING TO COVID-19



UNDP played an instrumental role in the COVID-19 recovery efforts providing short-term social protection for groups of persons whose livelihoods were negatively affected by the pandemic while advocating for systemic and longer-term solutions. The social protection measures provided economic reprieve and reduced vulnerability within families and communities. UNDP also contributed to economic recovery by supporting young entrepreneurs and micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) with grants to grow their businesses.

COVID RECOVERY LIVELIHOOD SUPPORT

Responding to the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19, UNDP Liberia implemented a cash-for-work programme in 12 communities in Grand Cape Mount County. More than 400 Liberians, including women, youth and persons with disabilities, benefited from temporary income generating job while developing community infrastructure to support rural economic activities.

Participants of the programme each received US\$125.00 for 25 days of work which included undertaking communal farming, repairing damaged bridges, patching road potholes, side brushing, cleaning, and improving local infrastructure and access to farms and markets.

The cash transfer programs helped to improve the welfare of vulnerable populations during a period of economic hardship, and was undertaken with full community ownership and participation.

Through this intervention, UNDP supported the Government of Liberia to achieve Objective 5 of the National COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan, which is to minimize the socio-economic impact of the pandemic, including through multi-sectoral partnerships.

YOUTH ECO-BRIGADE PROGRAMME

Recognizing that Liberia's youth constitute more than 60% of the population and are key in driving the sustainable development agenda, UNDP launched the Youth Eco-Brigade programme with the aim to both mentor and train over one thousand young people, including persons living with disabilities, in environmental conservation and small business management.

Initial batch, labelled the Piso Eco-Brigade Programme, was launched in Robertsport, Grand Cape Mount County, with 60 youth most of whom have started various community-based enterprises with the US\$400 business start-up grants provide to each.

The programme is now expanding to other counties in Liberia. Over the next five years, it is expected that the initiative will enlist thousands of youth in environmental conservation initiatives while supporting income generation opportunities in communities with high levels of poverty and environmental degradation.



BO WATERSIDE BORDER POST SOLAR INSTALLATION

The Bo Waterside Border in Grand Cape Mount County is a heavily trafficked border crossing between Liberia and Sierra Leone. As part of UNDP’s efforts to support the Government of Liberia to curtail the spread of the virus in Liberia, work was done to further improve the functioning of the border post. Specifically, a new solar system was installed at the Post to enhance its operational effectiveness.

The solar power installation supplies offices of the Liberia Immigration Service, the Liberia National Police, all line ministries and agencies, as well as the immediate surrounding areas of the border post with adequate, clean, and reliable energy. In addition to facilitating border operations, the system increases the security for both staff and residents and has improved revenue collection.

The system comprises 96 solar panels, which can generate up to 20KW of power, enabling the border post to use all standard office equipment – computers, printers, and copiers- and air

conditioning 24 hours a day. The panels can generate power for up to 40 years if properly maintained.

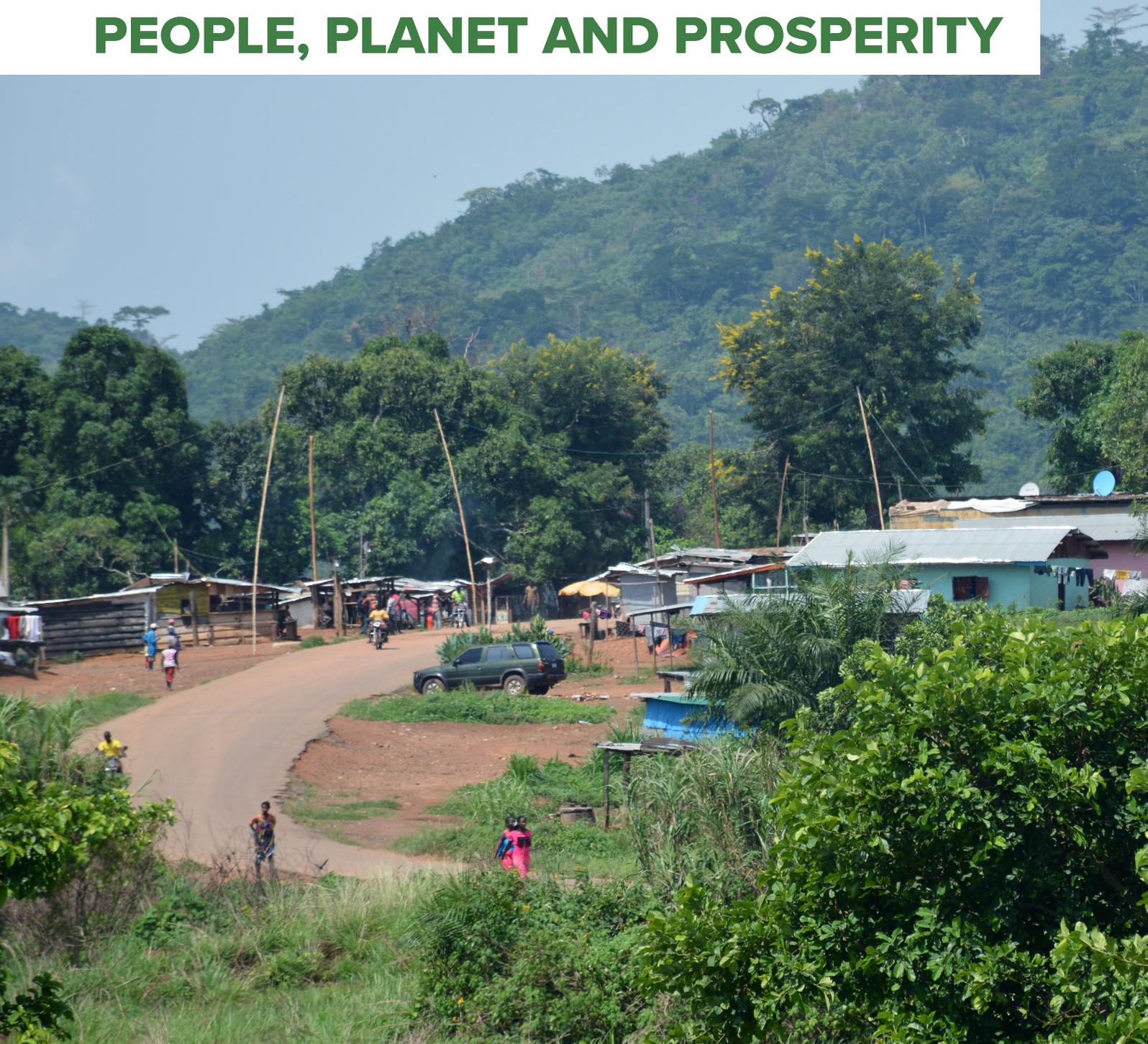
PRISON DECONGESTION

During the pandemic, prison overcrowding which was already a significant issue in the country, worsened. To help reduce both the overcrowding and the risk of COVID-19 outbreaks within the prison system, UNDP worked with the Justice and Correctional institutions to provide legal aid services to those held in remand.

UNDP’s intervention resulted in the release of 147 inmates/detainees (132 men and 15 women), 83 of whom were reunited with their families or reintegrated into their communities. UNDP also supported the Bureau of Corrections and Rehabilitation (BCR) in conducting a series of workshops to raise awareness on the use of probation and parole as a means of decongesting prisons, and work commenced on an Alternative Dispute Resolution policy for the country to further address problems of overcrowding in the prisons. ■



THE CLIMATE AGENDA: PEOPLE, PLANET AND PROSPERITY



In 2021, UNDP provided substantive support to the Government on climate action, including on Liberia's revised Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), the Monrovia Metropolitan Coastal Resilience Project, the National Adaptation Plan for Liberia and initiatives to tackle waste management.

Climate finance and biodiversity protection/conservation were other areas where the Country Office initiated work with the Government and other stakeholders. ■



PROTECTING PEOPLE AND LIVELIHOODS

NATIONALLY DETERMINED CONTRIBUTIONS

In 2021, Liberia took an important step forward in raising its ambition on climate action when it submitted its revised NDCs for reducing the emission of greenhouse gases (GHG). In the revised NDCs, Liberia committed to reducing economy-wide GHG emissions by 64 percent below the projected Business-As-Usual (BAU) level by 2030. This is a positive shift from Liberia's first NDC submission, which aimed for a 15 percent reduction below the projected BAU levels by 2030. In addition, Liberia submitted a roadmap for reducing the emission of greenhouse gases to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, along with an NDC Financing Strategy and Implementation plan supported by UNDP.

On the programmatic side, UNDP supported the National Oil Palm Platform of Liberia (NOPPL), bringing together relevant stakeholders in the oil palm sector. During the year, NOPPL facilitated the development of a National Oil Palm Strategy and Action Plan for Liberia (NOPSAPL) aimed at transforming Liberia's oil palm sector into a sustainable, vibrant, responsible, and productive sector that contributes to economic growth while maintaining forest coverage and biodiversity. In addition, a Private Sector Strategy (PSS) was produced and validated to allow for more sustainable private sector engagement within the sector.

Additionally, efforts to reach the NDC target to produce 300,000 energy-efficient stoves by 2030 include the production of 400 energy-efficient cookstoves. Funded by UNDP Liberia

in partnership with Green Gold Liberia and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), 40 women from five vulnerable communities in Monrovia completed a two-month intensive training on producing Eco stoves. UNDP also donated 12 solar freezers, 3 units of solar dryers and 3 units of energy efficient industrial ovens for support to 3 fishing communities in Robertsport, Marshall and New Kru Town in further efforts to support the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in the fishery sector.

MONROVIA METROPOLITAN CLIMATE RESILIENCE PROJECT

Major steps were taken to ensure that Liberia prevents and responds to the effects of climate change and natural disasters. The Monrovia Metropolitan Coastal Resilience Project (MMCRP) was launched with support from UNDP and funding from the Green Climate Fund, laying the groundwork for the protection of the fragile West Point community from the effects of coastal erosion and storms. The MMCRP will construct coastal revetments to prevent further destruction of livelihoods and properties while implementing integrated coastal management to conserve mangrove forest ecosystems.

The project will protect and build the climate resilience of approximately 10,500 people in West Point and avoid damages of up to USD 47 million to the individual and communal property of West Point residents, as well as securing launch sites for fishing boats with a positive impact on the fisheries sector.

NATIONAL ADAPTATION PLAN FOR LIBERIA

The Environmental Protection Agency, with the technical and advisory support of UNDP and following funding from the Green Climate Fund, launched the abridged version of the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) for Liberia.

The NAP is aimed at helping Liberia tackle the issue of climate change through a sound adaptation programme that involves a whole of society approach to achieving the country's goals and specific objectives. The NAP was developed through a consultative multi-stakeholder process that included the Government, the private sector, international partners, and civil society.

The NAP focuses on six sectors that are priorities of the Government of Liberia in its efforts to adapt to the impacts of climate change: agriculture, coastal zones, forestry, energy, waste management and fisheries.

UNDP Liberia supports NAP implementation by designing, financing, and implementing priority actions. Effective implementation of the NAP will be supported by reinforcing enabling governance structures, including those set out in the National Climate Change Policy and Response Strategy.

Additional support and increased partnerships, including with the private sector, will be required for Liberia to achieve its Adaptation goals.

WASTE MANAGEMENT

Six local entrepreneur organizations were provided grants of US\$120,000 to implement solid and plastic waste management innovative challenges. These include producing construction materials from plastic waste, enhanced awareness and waste management, and production of petroleum products from plastic waste. Through these grants, the organizations have implemented schemes for plastic recycling with the production of petroleum products from plastics, charcoal from organic waste, tiles and construction bricks from recycled plastic.

In total, 14 organizations received grants for implementing long-term agri-production, waste management and commercialization schemes, benefiting more than 200 direct beneficiaries.

Additionally, a civil society organization (CSO) was recruited through the Innovative Waste Management challenge to raise awareness on the "Rs" and produce blocks and fuel from plastic through innovative means.

MINING COMMUNITIES AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM) is the main source of income for over 100,000 gold and diamond miners in Liberia. Out of the 1,293 mining operations in the country, 88.3% are ASM. The ASM sector faces significant challenges due to limited regulation and limited knowledge of existing laws by miners, leading to environmental degradation and human rights violations. Many miners operate in an illegal, unprotected, and inefficient work environment. This often results in negative health, safety, security, environmental, and socio-economic impacts that affect the miners, the natural environment, and communities across the country.

UNDP supported the relevant regulatory authorities and agencies (Ministry of Mines and Energy and the Environmental Protection Agency) to develop a user-friendly ASM handbook that provides guidance to miners and host communities about regulations, norms and practical steps to improve health, safety, and environmental and human rights protection in ASM. Liberia ASM Handbook by Environmental Governance Programme (EGP) - Environmental Governance Programme (EGP) - Exposure.

In partnership with a local civil society organization, the Society for the Conservation of Nature of Liberia, the programme supported local authorities in the organization of the first multi-stakeholder workshop about the handbook, targeting miners, associations, and communities in Bomi County, which is few kilometres from a key ASM hotspot around the Gola Forest National Park of Liberia and Sierra Leone's Gola Rain Forest National Park.

The program has conducted user-friendly training using audio-visual materials targeted mining communities, raising awareness using local community radio stations around mining camps, and working with local CSOs, including the umbrella association of artisanal and small-scale miners, to keep engaging and educating miners about the use of the handbook.

The EGP program has supported the expansion of the ASM Working Group to include gender and human rights actors. This group is a unique platform that can support the work of the EGP, using the network of the CSOs and ASM umbrella organization to keep engaging the miners and working with them to support positive change. ■

ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT



As the country responded to the COVID-19 pandemic, UNDP supported measures to alleviate the socio-economic impact of the pandemic on vulnerable groups. The “Livelihoods Project” aims to contribute to the country’s post- COVID-19 recovery, creating opportunities for income-generation and reducing inequality, particularly among the poor and vulnerable segments of the population (women and youth) in 7 counties— Grand Bassa, Grand Cape Mount, Grand Gedeh, Lofa, Montserrado, Nimba, and Sinoe.

The programme has two key components: support for the creation of sustainable, viable and diversified livelihood opportunities for youth, women and persons with disabilities through investment in and development of community infrastructure, environmental services and vocational/life skills, including digital skills; and inputs and technical advice to increase local food production. There is also a focus on strengthening business and enterprise development services by promoting access to finance, capacity- building and innovation.

THE BUSINESS “GROWTH ACCELERATOR”

The UNDP Growth Accelerator, an entrepreneurship challenge programme, implemented in partnership with the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and Icampus Liberia, awarded five enterprises approximately \$40,000 each in business development grants. The five successful enterprises were provided mentorship and technical assistance to scale up their businesses, diversify their production, and invest in new equipment.

Joshua Zemah, one of the grant recipients, is the founder of Redimere Inc., the first Liberia brand of chocolate. Joshua dreams of building a Liberian-owned chocolate factory with high-quality, affordable products for all. The grant has allowed him to purchase several pieces of equipment and assemble a cocoa roaster locally.

UNDP aims to scale this initiative in 2022 by investing USD 860,000 in seven businesses and five agricultural cooperatives.

AGRICULTURAL GRANTS

Eight local entrepreneur organizations were provided grants totalling US\$200,000.00 to implement agri-production and commercialization schemes. The supported activities include the production of cotton, sanitary pads, and cotton clothes by poor women and persons with disabilities; production of low-land rice seed inputs to be sold to farmers; production of poultry feeds; and production of cocoa and oil palm seedlings.

These grants have resulted in the establishment of commercial schemes for the supply of agri-inputs, including seeds, to local farmers.

Recognizing the importance of the agriculture sector for improving livelihoods and reducing poverty in Liberia, UNDP also contributed over US 200,000 worth of assorted supplies of power tillers, motorbikes, and 14.3 metric tons of Nerica seed rice to the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) to support farmers & extension services.

SUPPORT FOR BUSINESS START-UPS

In 2021, UNDP worked in partnership with the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, as well as the Ministry of Agriculture to support the Government's efforts to strengthen business and enterprise development services for Micro, Small, and Medium Sized Enterprises (MSMEs) by promoting access to finance, capacity building and innovation.

UNDP supported 50 MSMEs through capacity strengthening to help their enterprises become more productive and compliant with national regulations. Business development services,



including marketing and financial management, were provided to the MSMEs to improve business competitiveness. Additionally, the MSMEs were provided start-up capital totalling \$80,000, with each business receiving between \$700 and \$3,000 based on their business ideas.

AFCFTA AND WOMEN CROSS BORDER TRADE

In line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goal 5, Liberia is committed to achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls.

With technical support from UNDP and UN Women, the Government of Liberia undertook a series of consultations with Liberian women entrepreneurs involved in cross-border trade to sensitize them about the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) agreement, which became operational in January 2021.

The outcomes of the consultations were incorporated into the Women in Trade Report, which is a key step toward giving women a voice in the AfCFTA agreement. The report identified barriers and opportunities that women can explore to enhance their abilities to fully benefit from the agreement and will feed into the continental process of developing a protocol for women in cross-border trade.

In the coming year, the collaborating partners will work with the Government to ensure that women owned businesses can fully benefit from the AfCFTA agreement. ■



DIGITALISATION



DIGITALIZATION OF LAW ENFORCEMENT AND JUSTICE SECTORS

The UN Joint Rule of Law Programme, supported by UNDP Liberia, launched the first Case Management Information System (CMIS) for the Liberia National Police and the Judicial Case Management Information System for the Judiciary and the Prosecution Department of the Ministry of Justice as part of the initiatives to improve the criminal justice system in Liberia.

County attorneys, data clerks, statisticians, information technology support staff, and police officers were trained to gather and report real-time case statistics using a modern open-source web and mobile application. The mobile app works online and offline and includes security features and GPS functionality to capture locations where offences occur, enabling their digital mapping.

Since its implementation, the police are now able to produce analyses on crime patterns quickly. The system has also enhanced the capacity of the Judiciary to track both criminal and civil cases online in real-time and measure the rate of case disposal. This will, in turn, enable the Judiciary to take appropriate measures by assigning additional judicial officers to areas with high numbers of cases in court dockets, high rates of pre-trial detention and prison overcrowding. Further, the capacity to

keep track of all cases will minimize the number of persons whose matters fall through the cracks, causing them to be forgotten in prison. CMIS will ultimately ensure that cases are processed faster and improve accountability and transparency in the system. Additionally, UNDP Liberia partnered with the government to roll out trainings in the use of digital tools of data collection, as a way of transitioning from paper-based to computer-based methods of data collection.



TOWARDS A COST-EFFECTIVE NATIONAL ELECTRONIC PAYMENT SWITCH

Liberia made progress towards increasing financial inclusion. According to the 2021 Findex data, 52 percent of the people in Liberia (age 15+) have accounts at a financial institution or with a mobile money provider. This is an improvement of 16 percent relative to the situation in 2017 when about 36 percent owned accounts. (In 2011 only about 19 percent had accounts.) However, the Liberian financial sector faces challenges that continue to negatively impact financial inclusion.

The Central Bank of Liberia (CBL) has invested in the modernization of the country's Payment Systems Infrastructure, particularly addressing the Systemically Important Payment Systems for large Value payments.



However, gaps exist in the National Retail Payment Systems. Digital payments are costly because commercial banks each have their payment switches that are not interoperable, hindering the transition to a cash-lite society as envisioned by the government. This is a challenge best addressed by the establishment of a National Electronic Payment Switch (NEPS).

Liberia's National Financial Inclusion Strategy (NFIS) aims to increase access to formal financial services for the population (aged 15 years and older) from 35.7 percent to 50 percent by 2024. The NFIS Framework is built on three main pillars:

- Access to Financial Services and Credit
- Digital Financial Services
- Consumer Protection and Financial Capability



In order to attain its financial inclusion goal, the Central Bank of Liberia is working on upgrading the National Electronic Payment Switch to ensure digital payment transactions in the country are cost-effective.

In 2021, the CBL requested the African Development Bank, UNDP and the World Bank for support to upgrade the National Electronic Payment Switch (NEPS). As a result, UNDP in partnership with the AfDB, provided USD100,000 towards providing independent technical assistance, which has yielded a feasibility assessment outlining what needs to be done. A mutually agreed action plan detailing responsible institutions, priority actions and the cost of implementing the project was also produced.

UNDP will provide seed funding of USD 500,000 pending contributions from other donors for critical activities such as retaining the current consultant, facilitating south-south learning exchanges, and other capacity-building activities for CBL staff.

The fund will also support legal and regulatory reviews of the country's payment landscape. ■

GENDER COMMITMENT



LIBERIA SPOTLIGHT INITIATIVE, UNDP CONTRIBUTIONS

Liberia Spotlight Initiative is one of UNDP Liberia’s key gender equality programmes to eliminate sexual and gender-based violence against women, girls and sexual minorities, contributing to achieve SDG 5 on gender equality.

The European Union and the United Nations launched the Global Flagship Spotlight Initiative programme in 2018 aimed at addressing all forms of violence against women and girls and eliminating harmful practices through a transformative and evidence-based approach, addressing unequal power relations between men and women and focusing on gender equality and women’s empowerment. This is in response to the need to strengthen the Government of

Liberia’s capacity to eradicate cases of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), harmful traditional practices (HTPs) and build better institutional frameworks for enhanced protection capacities and services to survivors.

Under the Initiative, UNDP leads pillar 2 which focuses on enhancing integrated multi-sectoral capacities of national institutions, organizations and partners in preparedness, prevention and response; supports pillar 4 which focuses on integrating multi-sectoral response services to all survivors ensuring effectiveness and efficiency; and pillar 6 which focuses on developing and operationalizing a coherent and inclusive framework engaging the different actors including CSOs, the private sector and women’s movement groups to eliminate violence against women and girls in Liberia.

FAST FACTS

UNDP LIBERIA PLAYED AN INSTRUMENTAL ROLE IN SUPPORTING GENDER-SENSITIVE COVID-19 RECOVERY EFFORTS THROUGH SEVERAL STRATEGIC ENGAGEMENTS. THESE WERE SOME OF THE KEY PROGRAMMING ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2021:

01



Provided technical support and guidance to the Ministry of Gender Children and Social Protection, leading to the transfer of funds for developing the Country Gender Equality profile. The newly developed CGEP acts as a tool to provide a timely and effective understanding of the current operating context in relation to gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE) to national and international partners.

02



Five CSOs were supported to conduct activities for awareness raising on SGBV prevention as well as to advocate and lobby for changes in laws and policies that discriminate against women. The CSOs also raised awareness on the existing legal and policy frameworks that seek to address SGBV and HPs. With the grants provided to CSOs, over three women's rights movements were established and actively provided awareness and advocacy activities in various communities. At the same time, a youth group made a petition to a member of the Liberian Legislature for the ban on child marriages and the promotion of girls' education in Liberia.

03



With support from UNDP and funding from the EU/UN Spotlight Initiative, a gender policy for the Judiciary was jointly developed by the Judiciary and an international consultant. This resulted in a recommendation to establish a gender unit and an internal mechanism to identify, report and respond to gender issues.

04



Provided technical support for the renovation of the Women and Children Protection Section (WACPS) and the Liberian National Police (LNP) offices in Zorzor, Lofa County and Sanniquellie, Nimba County. The two refurbished WACPS/LNP facilities have radically changed the operations of WACPS in the counties. As a result, WACPS staff have increased public confidence in law enforcement officers. The facilities are victim- and child-friendly, with spacious facilities for privacy and a comfortable working environment. This support has improved the performance of their overall operations.

05



Provided technical support and guidance to WACPS and procured various ICT equipment and stationery at the refurbished WACPS/LNP facilities in five Spotlight counties. WACPS/LNP are mandated to respond speedily and appropriately to SGBV and harmful practices (HP) at the national, local, and community levels. In addition, there has been improved coordination with other partners.

06



Provided technical assistance to the Ministry of Gender and various ICT equipment and stationery were procured to strengthen the coordination mechanism among GBV task force members. This support was aimed at enhancing the capabilities of national GBV Task Force members in the Five Spotlight County. A total of 39 (19 males and 20 females) GBV task force members at the County level were trained in various topics identified to improve communication flow and coordination to prevent and/or take timely action in cases involving SGBV and HP in national, local, and local governments.

07



Provided technical support to the Ministry of Justice through the National Pathologist Unit, which led to the procurement and handover of assorted forensic equipment, furniture and clinical supplies for the Pathologist Laboratory Unit at the John F. Kennedy Memorial Hospital. Forensic pathologists have now increased confidence in gathering empirical evidence, which further results in the timely prosecution of cases in a gender-sensitive manner. Further, equipment is being used to strengthen the pathologists' forensic evidence gathering capacities which support the Government of Liberia's effort to collect scientific evidence for the timely adjudication of SGBV. Using the equipment builds on best practices and lessons learned in prosecuting SGBV crimes, harmful traditional practices, and violations of sexual reproductive health rights regionally and globally.

08



Provided technical support and guidance to CSO partner (Medica Liberia), which led to engagement meetings and further helped to strengthen additional eight community-based organizations' (CBOs) capacities to monitor SGBV cases and raise awareness in communities through developed strategies and costed action plans. The partner also reviewed, revised, and validated the in-service training curriculum of three national justice and security institutions (the Judiciary, Liberia National Fire Service and the Ministry of Justice) with the aim to mainstream gender, prevent and address SGBV with the integration of SGBV prevention, harmful practices prevention and SRHR promotion within their training manuals.

09



Provided technical support and guidance to Liberia Institute of Public Administration (LIPA), which led to the capacity building of nine Justice, Security and Gender Institutions. The training and coaching activities were aimed at strengthening the capacity of 130 (74w & 56m) personnel from security and justice institutions to adequately respond to and eradicate cases of SGBV and HTPs, thus building better institutional frameworks for enhanced protection capacities and services to survivors in the 5 Spotlight Counties.

10  With technical guidance to raise awareness and promote the operation of courts in Lofa and Grand Gedeh counties, two CSOs were awarded low-value grants to raise awareness around facilitating speedy trials of sexual violence crimes, restoring public confidence in the judicial system, promoting human rights, and curtailing the devastating impact of SGBV on women, girls and other vulnerable populations.

11  Provided technical support and guidance to the Judiciary for remodelling two Circuit Courts in Lofa and Grand Gedeh Counties to establish victims' protection rooms to facilitate speedy trials of sexual violence crimes. Consequently, communities are increasingly reporting SGBV cases to be referred to the Courts in the selected counties for timely prosecution.

12  Provided technical support and guidance to the Sexual Gender Based Violence Crimes Unit of the Ministry of Justice, implementing key activities to enhance the prosecution of sexual violence crimes in Liberia. As a result, a total of one hundred three survivors of sexual violence, particularly rape, were beneficiaries of support covering psychosocial counselling, feeding and transportation, emergency package and medical assistance through the SGBV Crimes Unit of the Ministry of Justice. Beneficiaries per counties were: Montserrado-31, Lofa-10, Grand Gedeh-31, Nimba-11, and Cape Mount-20. Seventy-one psychosocial counselling sessions were conducted for survivors and their family members.

EMBARKING ON THE GENDER SEAL JOURNEY

In 2021, UNDP Liberia commenced its Gender Equality Seal (GES) journey, which promotes an organizational culture of equality and incentivizes Country Offices to integrate gender into all aspects of their development work. The GES is a UNDP flagship initiative to build capacities and support transformational gender equality results in and outside of UNDP.

During the year the office established a Gender Focal Team (GFT) to work on gender mainstreaming and empowerment activities within the Country Office and with Implementing Partners. The GFT seeks to contribute towards the achievement of the gender equality outcomes defined for the organization at the corporate level as well as complement the CPD at the local level.

The GFT has representation from both Operations and Programme and is chaired by the Resident Representative, while the Deputy Resident Representative for Programme oversees the implementation of the action plan to ensure gender mainstreaming in programs and projects as well as gender parity and gender sensitivity in the workplace.

The GFT collectively worked on the Gender Equality Seal Certification process for the Country Office by conducting its self-assessment (UNDP Gender Equality Seal Baseline Assessment), which is the first step towards certification. The assessment was submitted for review to the corporate GES Team. To sustain and expand the gender potential of UNDP Liberia, capacity-building initiatives of its personnel are being conducted to develop and deliver transformational gender responsive programming. ■

OPERATIONS

PEOPLE STRATEGY 2030



Highlights

- New family friendly policies developed (Flexible working arrangement, working from home)
- Developing Digital talent
- Enhancing the UNDP career experience
- Virtual career labs
- New contracts modality
- Stipends introduced for interns
- Launch of people development strategy
- Revision in the PMD policy
- Launch of career Management tools
- Learning and development programme
- Learning Paths

LAUNCH OF NEW GUIDELINES FOR CONDUCTING INTERVIEWS AND INTRODUCTION

Launched in 2019, UNDP's People for 2030 Strategy is transforming the organization's people culture and capabilities to help UNDP deliver better development results. At the heart of this strategy, UNDP strives to attract top talent and foster diversity by creating an open, inclusive, non-discriminatory, and respectful work environment.

UNDP Liberia's ability to collaborate cohesively and efficiently using digital tools has improved the way UNDP works and has helped the country office better deliver its programme and services to partners.

During 2021, UNDP Liberia country office started using many digital tools to work more efficiently, leveraging the tools in SharePoint Online and Microsoft 365 applications, truly enabling internal communications and collaborating more efficiently. Cloud-enabled tools helped make work more collaborative and transformative, and has reduced the use of paper.

UNDP Liberia also initiated greening solutions, such as changing ordinary lights to LED, which has brightened the office. Additionally, moonshine funding allowed implementing solar solutions in the office.

UNDP Liberia has also supported government counterparts, civil society and IPs to use digital tools like Zoom, online platforms and video conferencing systems for meetings and remote engagement, creating greater flexibility and enabling new ways of doing things. In addition, considering that staff stays in the office most of their time during the week, the office facelift project has improved the staff's ability to work in a more people-friendly environment. There is also a range of activities to promote bonding and togetherness, including retreats and regular Friday happy hours and birthday celebrations.

HR'S RESPONSE TO CLIENTS

- Issues resolved within 5 working days
- issues not resolved within 5 days are escalated for management's intervention

RECRUITMENTS

- 100% of recruitments are completed in line with the timeframes outlined in the Recruitment Strategy

HR ADMINISTERS UN AGENCIES

- Finalize Payroll Entries and submit to UNDP Global Shared Services Centre by the 12th of every month
- 100% green HR dashboard throughout
- 100% Cost Recovery done on a monthly basis for services rendered to other UN Agencies

PARTNERS, RESOURCES/CONTRIBUTIONS

A Special thanks to all development partners who supported UNDP's work in Liberia



2021 UNDP Liberia Funding Partners

PARTNER	GRAND TOTAL (AMOUNT IN USD RECEIVED)
Peacebuilding Fund	2,878,389.98
Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA)	1,324,415.12
Spotlight Initiative	1,117,815.21
Irish Aid	827,088.46
Global Environment Facility	553,079.62
Green Climate Fund	523,932
Government of the Netherlands	337,969.37
Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office	215,460
Government of Liberia	158,346
Swedish Environment Protection Agency	64,813.12
Basque Water Agency URAgentzia	23,816.35
Department of Foreign Affairs Trade & Development-DIFID	23,815.73

Note: does not constitute an exhaustive list of funding

2021 UNDP LIBERIA REGULAR RESOURCES

TRAC 1	6.836.011,23
TRAC 2	868.294,98





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