

GENDER POLICY
JUDICIARY BRANCH OF GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA



GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT POLICY

2020- 2024



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FOREWORD

We are pleased to present the first ever gender policy for the Judiciary of Liberia that has been developed to ensure that gender is mainstreamed in all of our works and that gender issues are prioritized.

This policy should reinforce our collective determination to mainstream gender and promote gender equality within the Judiciary, thereby eliminating sexual and gender-based violence and all forms of discrimination particularly against women and girls. The fundamental principles and tenets of international instruments and conventions in addition to national laws that promote gender equality are the guiding principles of this policy. This is in light of the steps the Judiciary is taking to eliminate prejudices and abolish customary practices premised on the idea of inferiority or superiority of sexes within the organization.

This policy is intended to promote equal opportunities for all personnel and discourage practices that are based on gender inequality. It is a document that promotes respect, esprit de corps among all employees with the ultimate goal of enhancing the professionalism of the Judiciary as an organization worthy of the tasks and responsibilities it was established to perform.

As the Republic of Liberia strives to achieve SDG Goal 5 of Gender Equality by 2030, it is hoped that this policy will find a place in the overall country efforts in promoting women's effective participation and accountability within institutions. This policy should ensure that women are involved in every aspect of decision making at all levels in the Judiciary. It therefore involves the equal participation and representation of both men and women in the development and delivery of services by the Judiciary of Liberia.

Let me take this opportunity to implore all personnel of the Judiciary to utilize this policy as a foundation of gender mainstreaming and promoting the aspirations for gender equality and parity within the Judiciary. We should all be reminded that we owe a collective and shared responsibility to ensure that the standards we have set in this policy are achieved in an accountable and proficient manner.

**His Honor Francis S. Korkpor, Sr.
Chief Justice, Supreme Court of Liberia**

AKNOWLEDEMENT

We would like to acknowledge the technical and financial support provided by the EU/UN Spotlight Initiative through UNDP in their continued effort to ensure that gender is mainstreamed in the Judiciary and that gender equality is promoted. In particular, we acknowledge the special efforts of UNDP in supporting the development of the Strategic Plan 2019-2023 for the Judiciary which includes some aspects of gender mainstreaming in the administrative and operational frameworks. We want to extend special thanks and appreciation to the European Union through the EU/UN Spotlight Initiative for their support in the fight against sexual and gender-based violence and other forms of violence against women and girls in Liberia. We are grateful for your support, cooperation and collaboration at all levels and at every stage of this arduous journey towards gender equality. Special and heartfelt appreciation goes to the staff of the Judiciary for their relentless support provided during the development of the policy.

Our profound gratitude to the Government of Liberia for providing the political will for gender mainstreaming in the Judiciary and supporting its many branches in diverse ways to promote gender equality and women's empowerment.

We remain grateful to the Minister of Justice and team for the invaluable support provided in developing this policy document. The contributions made by the Ministry of Gender Children and Social Protection and the Gender and Security Sector National Taskforce is duly acknowledged.

His Honor Francis S. Korkpor, Sr.
Chief Justice, Supreme Court of Liberia

PREFACE

I am pleased to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to his Excellency President George M. Weah for his foresight and commitment to gender equality, and to also express our delight for the formulation of this policy. This is a further manifestation of the commitment of the Government of Liberia to the enhancement of gender equality in the context of effective and efficient sexist management.

This gender policy provides the desired framework for mainstreaming gender into all programmes with the broad view to addressing inequalities, eliminating violence against women and girls and providing equal opportunities for all regardless of gender.

I would also like to express my deepest appreciation to the European Union through the EU/UN Spotlight Initiative for the support provided for the development of this vital instrument. I hope this support will be extended to other institutions to enable all of us in the effort to mainstream gender and promote gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, which are crucial to sustainable development of the country.

Let me also express special thanks to the entire staff of the Judiciary for the dedication and the leadership provided in ensuring the development of this policy. It is my hope that this policy will be fully implemented, and its intended objectives will be fully achieved.

His Honor Francis S. Korkpor, Sr.
Chief Justice, Supreme Court of Liberia

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AFL	Armed Forces of Liberia
AU	African Union
BCR	Bureau of Corrections and Rehabilitation
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CSA	Civil Service Agency
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GFP	Gender Focal Point
GRB	Gender Responsive Budgeting
GSI	Gender and Social Inclusion
HIV/AIDS	Human Immune Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
HQ	Headquarters
HR	Human Resource
HTP	Harmful Traditional Practice
INCHR	Independent National Commission on Human Rights
LDEA	Liberia Drugs Enforcement Agency
LIS	Liberia Immigration Service
LNAP	Liberia National Action Plan
LNBA	Liberian National Bar Association
LNGP	Liberia National Gender Policy
LNP	Liberia National Police
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MoGCSP	Ministry of Gender Children and Social Protection
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PAPD	Pro- Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development
SEA	Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
SGBV	Sexual and Gender Based Violence
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNMIL	United Nations Mission in Liberia
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
VAW	Violence Against Women
WACPS	Women and Children Protection Services

DEFINITIONS

Gender	Refers to the social attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female and the relationships between women and men and girls and boys, as well as the relations between women and those between men. These attributes, opportunities and relationships are socially constructed and are learned through socialization processes. They are context/time-specific and changeable. ¹
Access to Justice	Access to justice is a fundamental principle of the rule of law. It enables people to exercise their rights and encourages effective participation in the legal system. In the absence of access to justice, people are unable to have their voices heard, exercise their rights, challenge discrimination, or hold decision-makers accountable. It emphasizes the right of equal access to justice for all, including members of vulnerable groups, and reaffirms the commitment of Member States to taking all necessary steps to provide fair, transparent, effective, non-discriminatory, and accountable services that promote access to justice for all. ²
Legal Aid	Free or subsidized services rendered to persons in order to promote and strengthen access to justice, involving criminal and civil, as well as administrative disputes in both formal (court) and traditional justice systems. ³
Transitional Justice	Transitional justice is a response to systematic or widespread violations of human rights. It seeks recognition for victims and promotion of possibilities for peace, reconciliation and democracy. Transitional justice is not a special form of justice but justice adapted to societies transforming themselves after a period of pervasive human rights abuse. In some cases, these transformations happen suddenly; in others, they may take place over many decades. ⁴
Gender Justice	Involves the equitable sharing of power and responsibility between women and men at home, in the workplace, and in the wider national and international communities. ⁵ Gender Justice is indispensable for development, poverty reduction, and is crucial to achieving human progress.

¹Gender Mainstreaming: Strategy for promoting Gender Equality. Office of the Special Advisor on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women. rev. August 2001

² United Nations and the Rule of Law <https://www.un.org/ruleoflaw/thematic-areas/access-to-justice-and-rule-of-law-institutions/access-to-justice/>

³National Legal Aid Policy of Liberia, 2019

⁴ International Centre for Transitional Justice available at <https://www.ictj.org/sites/default/files/ICTJ-Global-Transitional-Justice-2009-English.pdf>

⁵ Oxfam 2020 @ <https://policy-practice.oxfamamerica.org/work/gender-justice/>

Human Rights	Human rights are rights inherent to all human beings, regardless of race, sex, nationality, ethnicity, language, religion, or any other status. Human rights include: the right to life and liberty, freedom from slavery and torture, freedom of opinion and expression, the right to work and education, and many more. Everyone is entitled to these rights, without discrimination. ⁶
Equal Opportunities	Means ensuring the opportunity for full and equal participation of men and women in all aspects of political, social, cultural and economic life. ⁷
Gender Equality	Is the absence of discrimination on the basis of gender in opportunities, in the allocation of resources or benefits, or in access to services. It is thus the full and equal exercise by men and women of their human rights. Gender disparities are inequalities or differences based on gender. ⁸
Gender Mainstreaming	Is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels? It is a strategy for making women’s as well as men’s concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality. ⁹
Sexual and Gender Based Violence	Refers to any act that is perpetrated against a person’s will and is based on gender norms and unequal power relationships. ¹⁰
Sexual Abuse	Actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions. All sexual activity with a child is considered as sexual abuse. "Physical intrusion" is understood to mean "sexual activity". "Sexual abuse" is a broad term, which includes a number of acts described below, including "rape", "sexual assault", "sex with a minor", and "sexual activity with a minor" ¹¹ .

⁶ United Nations <https://www.un.org/en/sections/issues-depth/human-rights/>

⁷ Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe: Glossary on Gender-Related Terms (May 2006)

⁸ Ibid

⁹ ECOSOC, 1972/2

¹⁰ UNHCR SGBV Prevention and Response Training Package, 2016

¹¹ United Nations Glossary on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse: Thematic Glossary of current terminology related to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) in the context of the United Nations. Second Edition. 24 July 2017

Women’s Empowerment	Is a process of gaining power and control over their lives. It is part of many efforts aimed at bringing opportunities for both men and women. ¹²
Women’s Rights	The human rights of women and of the girl child are an inalienable, integral, and indivisible part of universal human rights. The full and equal participation of women in political, civil, economic, social, and cultural life, at the national, regional and international levels, and the eradication of all forms of discrimination on grounds of sex are priority objectives of the international community. ¹³
Sexual Exploitation:	Any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another. ¹⁴
Sexual Harassment	Sexual harassment is any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favour, verbal or physical conduct or gesture of a sexual nature, or any other behavior of a sexual nature that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause offence or humiliation to another, when such conduct interferes with work, is made a condition of employment or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment. ¹⁵
Gender Equality	Refers to the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same but that women’s and men’s rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female. ¹⁶
Sex Disaggregated Data	Data that is cross classified by sex, presenting information separately for men and women, boys, and girls. When data is not disaggregated by sex, it is more difficult to identify real and potential inequalities. Sex-disaggregated data is necessary for effective gender analysis ¹⁷ .
Patriarchy	Social system in which men hold the greatest power, leadership roles, privilege, moral authority and access to resources and land, including in the family. Most modern societies are patriarchal ¹⁸ .

¹²UN Secretariat, Inter-agency Task Force on the Implementation of the International Conference on Population and Development’s Programme of Action, ‘Guidelines on Women’s Empowerment’

¹³Annexes to the UNDP Gender Equality Strategy 2014-2017: The Future We Want: Rights and Empowerment

¹⁴ Ibid

¹⁵ Secretary-General’s bulletin Prohibition of discrimination, harassment, including sexual harassment, and abuse of authority 11th February 2008.

¹⁶ Ibid

¹⁷Gender Equality Glossary: UN Women Training Centre eLearning Campus (Home)

¹⁸Gender Equality: Glossary of Terms and Concepts. UNICEF Regional Office for South Asia. November 2017

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Gender equality and Women's empowerment are universally recognized as core development objectives, fundamental for the realization of justice, human rights, and key to effective and sustainable development outcomes. No society can develop sustainably without increasing and transforming the distribution of opportunities, resources, and choices for males and females so that they have equal power to shape their own lives and contribute to their communities.¹⁹

Furthermore, achieving gender equality should be fundamental to the fulfilment of the Judiciary's purpose because as spelt out in its mission, the Judiciary "...interprets the law to ensure the protection of rights for all, as guaranteed under the Constitution of the Republic of Liberia. To achieve this, we deploy highly trained personnel, supported by modernised systems and structures. Our conduct will be guided by uncompromising ethical values as a means of promoting fundamental justice and inspiring public confidence in the Judiciary."²⁰ This requires providing equal access to opportunities and distribution of resources to women and men.

As a state party to key international and regional instruments, Liberia is bound by commitments made at the United Nations Conferences on Women and, in particular, to the implementation of the Vienna Declaration and Program of Action in 1993, Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in 1995, the Maputo Protocol i.e. Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Right, signed in Maputo, Mozambique in November 2005, African Union (AU) Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality signed in 2004, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) (2004), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) (1984), United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, 2030 Agenda for SDGs. Since Liberia is a state party to these international instruments, it is incumbent on the country to adhere to the spirit and principles thereto.²¹

Additionally, this policy is guided by the commitments to gender equality in the Liberian Constitution, the Revised National Gender Policy²² and the Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development, (PAPD)²³ Liberia's Second Phase National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (2019-2023 of 2019) and other national instruments. The Constitution of Liberia further guarantees equal entitlements to all on human rights without discrimination. The country is committed to change discriminatory laws, policies and practices. This principle encourages the right of all persons to enjoy and practice their cultural and religious beliefs without discrimination on the basis of gender.²⁴

¹⁹ USAID Policy: Gender Equality and Female Empowerment, March 2012

²⁰ Judicial Branch Strategic Gender Policy, 2019- 2023

²¹ Revised National Gender Policy (2018-2022) 2017. P.17

²² Ibid

²³ A five-year National Development Plan towards Accelerated, Inclusive, and Sustainable Development. (July 2018 – June 2023)

²⁴ Revised National Gender Policy (2018- 2022) 2017.

Liberia has made tremendous progress in achieving gender equality over the years and the status of women has undoubtedly improved since the end of the 14-year civil conflict in October 2003. Justice and security institutions have made progress in increasing the number of women in their ranks, although the number of women in leadership positions is not yet at the 50-50 mark.²⁵In terms of the gender participation in legal and judicial institutions women in the Supreme Court of Liberia make 40%, Circuit Court Judges 15% Stipendiary/Associate Magistrate Court 0.7% Liberia National Police (LNP)17.5%, Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) 3.8%, Liberia Immigration Service (LIS) 30% and the Bureau of Corrections and Rehabilitation (BCR) 14.6%. Most notably, some of these institutions including the Liberia National Police (LNP), the Bureau of Correction and Rehabilitation (BCR) and the Liberia Immigration Services (LIS), all have gender policies and functioning Gender Units which were not in existence in the past.²⁶ However, effective equality between women and men in Liberia is far from being accomplished.

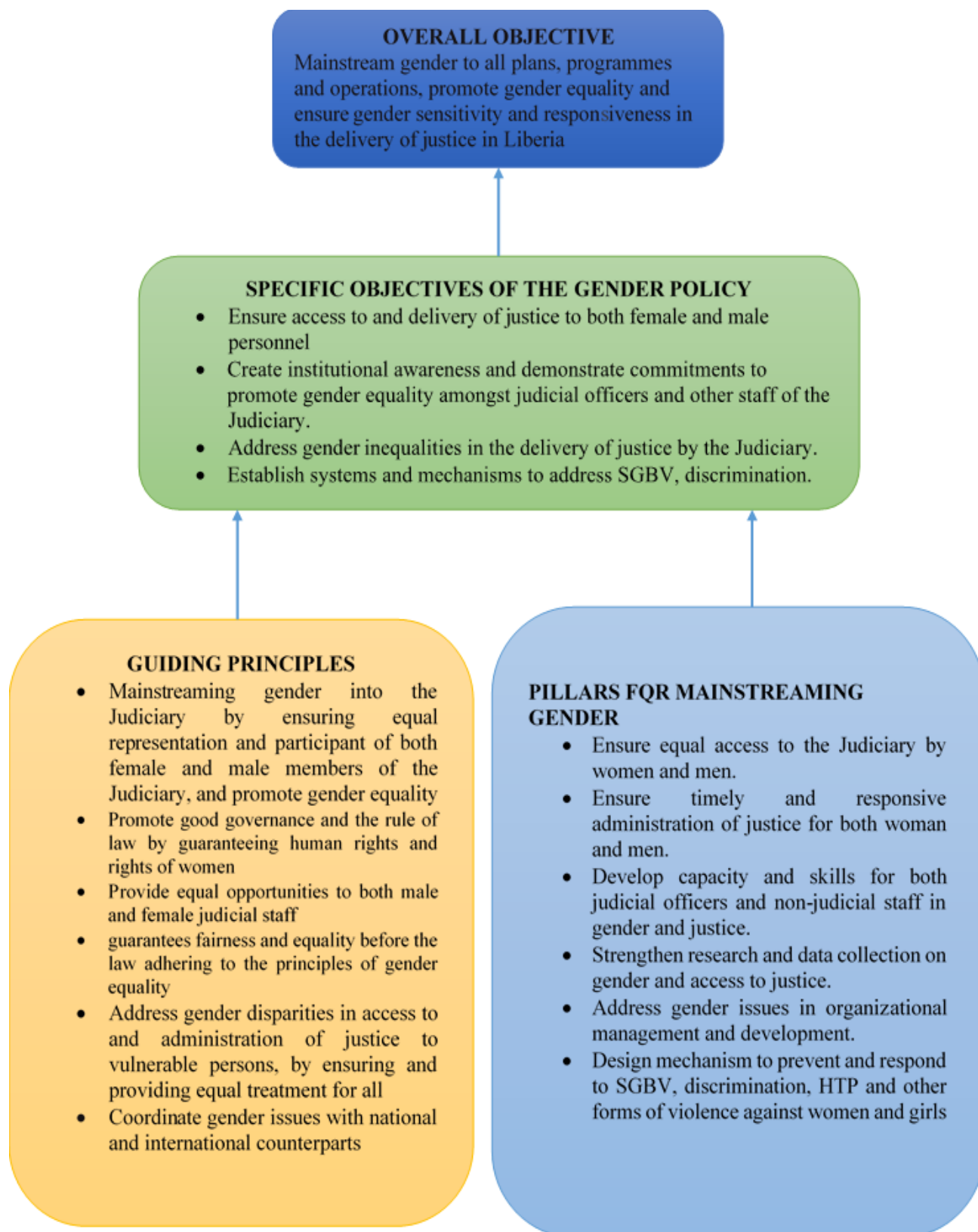
It is expected that the full implementation of this policy will address the existing gender gaps and structural barriers²⁷ which limit women and men to their traditional roles, and prevent women's empowerment opportunities, the enjoyment of their fundamental rights and attaining their full potential in both public and private life.

²⁵Final Report: Government of Liberia. Beijing+25 National Review Report. 25th Anniversary of the Fourth Conference on Women and Adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) P.11

²⁶ Revised National Gender Policy, (2018-2023) P.44

²⁷The Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MGCSP) has not received sufficient funding to prevent and respond to SGBV and HPs and promote realization of SRHR. Other relevant line ministries¹⁰ have also not prioritized any strategic interventions in their sector plans nor allocated budget to complement efforts by MGCSP.

OVERVIEW OF THE JUDICIARY GENDER POLICY



1.1 Rationale and Purpose for the Gender Policy

Under the Constitution of Liberia, 1986²⁸ the responsibility of clarifying law in Liberia rests on the Supreme Court of Liberia and other courts of law established by statute. A central maxim of the rule of law is that judicial power is exclusively exercised without impediment by an independent Judiciary. The Mandate of the Judiciary is to impartially hear and decide upon the legal disputes brought before it based on principles of non-discrimination on the basis of sex and fundamental human rights. It is the responsibility of the Judiciary to protect the rights of all citizens regardless of their economic, social, and political status. Therefore, the Judiciary is expected to implement this gender policy with the full realization that everyone is equal and should be accorded the same status irrespective of sex and position.

This policy is therefore developed in response to the abovementioned mandates, lessons learned over the past 14 years of civil conflict and results of the assessment of justice and security institutions on prevention, protection and response to Sexual and Gender Based Violence, Harmful Traditional Practice and Violence Against Women, coupled with series of interviews on gender mainstreaming conducted by UNDP in 2020. In general, the aim of this policy is to create an enabling environment that is conducive to promoting gender mainstreaming, women's human rights and advancement of gender equality.

From the interviews conducted with both technical and administrative staff, the need to integrate gender aspects into the overall aspect of the Judiciary was an idea welcomed by Judges, Magistrates and the Court Administrator of the Judiciary. The capacity to translate these core principles of human rights, gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment into operational activities will be realised by creating a special unit on Women's Human Rights and Gender.

This is the first gender policy of the Judiciary since its establishment; therefore, it takes into account strategic thinking that is expected to provide clear policy guidance for ensuring the proactive and consistent integration of gender equality in all aspects of the work of the Judiciary.

1.2 The Purpose of the Gender Policy

The main purpose of the Gender Policy is to establish a clear vision, guidance and commitments that pave the way for gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment to influence decisions, policies, plans, operations, programmes, procedures and practices that will promote the achievement of gender equality, gender justice, non-discrimination and fundamental human rights for everyone in Liberia regardless of race, gender, and socio-economic background.

²⁸The Judicial Power of the Republic shall be vested in a Supreme Court and such subordinate courts as the legislature may from time to time establish. The courts shall apply both statutory and customary laws in accordance with the standards enacted by the Legislature. Judgments of the Supreme Court shall be final and binding and shall not be subject to appeal or review by any other branch of Government. Nothing in this article shall prohibit administrative consideration of the justiciable matter prior to review by a court of competent jurisdiction.

The policy will ensure that particular attention is paid to national, regional, and global development frameworks. The policy will also ensure that the gender considerations promoted in the international gender equality and women's empowerment instruments are mainstreamed into all plans, programmes and activities. For example, the overarching principle of leave no one behind of the SDGs will be followed through in the same way like the requirements of the Pro-poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (PAPD).

This policy is strongly aligned with the Revised National Gender Policy which is the national framework and guide for integrating gender mainstreaming and promoting equality within all Ministries, Agencies and Commissions (MACs), embassies, public and private institutions, NGOs and other stakeholders to honour Liberia's commitments to gender equity and equality, as well as women's empowerment complemented by human and financial resources.

2.0 POLICY COMMITMENTS, GOAL, AIMS, OBJECTIVES, VISION AND PRINCIPLES

2.1 Policy Commitments

The Policy commitments are largely based on national, regional and international gender equality instruments including the Revised Liberia National Gender Policy of 2017, The Second Phase of the Liberia National Action Plan on Women Peace and security of 2019, Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace and Security that emphasizes gender mainstreaming as core in the promotion of culture of peace, democracy, economic and social development and, human rights. The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Violence Against Women and Girls (CEDAW).

2.2 Scope of the Gender Policy

The policy is an institutional document that provides guidance by outlining the vision, mission, strategic priorities and processes for mainstreaming gender perspectives into the Judiciary. This policy is applicable to all courts including Criminal Court E and the Circuit Courts and all personnel of the Judiciary.

The policy provides a broad strategic orientation for implementation, including institutionalizing gender equality in the organizational culture of the Judiciary, and advancing gender equality throughout all areas of work.

2.3 Vision of the Gender Policy

The vision of the Gender Policy is to see a Judiciary that promotes gender equality, human rights and dignity for all and recognizing the equal status of women and men in a harmonious, peaceful and secured environment characterized by equal participation in decision-making processes at all levels.

2.4 Aims and Objectives

The aim of this policy is to provide an overall framework on mainstreaming gender into the entire workforce, organizational structures, and policies of the Judiciary thereby

addressing gender issues and promoting gender equality. The policy will focus on the three main areas (i) organisational development and management in terms of equal representation, recruitment, promotion and retention of qualified male and female staff (ii) mainstreaming gender into all plans and programmes and how to make the Judiciary gender sensitive and responsive by involving women into decision making processes at all levels and promoting gender equality (iii) access to and delivery of justice to male and female personnel.

2.4.1 Objectives

- Establish systems and mechanisms to address discrimination, enforce women's rights and ensure access to justice for all regardless of gender.
- Establish systems and mechanisms to address SGBV, HTP and discrimination against women and girls.
- Ensure timely and responsive Administration of Justice for Women and Men.
- Develop capacity and skills for judicial officers and non-judicial staff in Gender and Justice.
- Create institutional awareness and demonstrable commitment to promote gender equality amongst judicial officers and staff of the Judiciary.

2.5 Guiding Principles

The principles that guide and direct the implementation of this policy includes the following:

- Mainstreaming gender into the Judiciary by ensuring equal representation and participation of both female and male members of the Judiciary, and promote gender equality
- Promote good governance and the rule of law by guaranteeing human rights and rights of women
- Provide equal opportunities to both male and female judicial staff
- Guarantee fairness and equality before the law, adhering to the principles of gender equality
- Address gender disparities in access to and administration of justice to vulnerable persons, by ensuring and providing equal treatment for all;
- Coordinate gender issues with national and international counterparts.

3.0 SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

The Judiciary of Liberia is expected to live to the expectations of the general population who are united in their demand for an independent, effective, accessible, fair, accountable and competent judicial branch of government. Currently, there are three specialised SGBV Courts in Liberia, the Criminal Court E in Monrovia²⁹ that is presided over by two female judges, the newly renovated SGBV courts on Bong and Nimba Counties that were handed over the Judiciary by UNDP in early 2020. Additionally,

²⁹ Court "E" was established by Act of Legislature in 2008 to provide speedy trial for rape and other sexual offences.

there are 28 Public Defenders deployed in the Counties (86% are males and 14% are females).³⁰ Office of Public Defenders (OPD) was established in 2009 by the government of Liberia with support from UNDP to provide free legal representation to all persons accused of crimes including SGBV and all forms of crimes committed against women and children.

This gender policy is therefore aligned with the Revised National Gender Policy of (2018-2022) of 2017 and the Strategic Plan of the Judiciary (2019–2023) of 2019 which has multiple variables intended to impact the administration of justice with noteworthy implications on successful achievement of the strategic objectives. These contextual variables are assessed as follows:

3.1 Performance context

The rule of law situation: World Bank Governance Indicators for Liberia between 2010 and 2017 underscore upward trends with respect to constitutional order and statutory law in Liberia. Institutionalising these trends will require judicial strategies that (a) ensure the *sustainability* of rule of law gains, including by reframing Liberia’s legal framework in support of a multicultural, liberal and democratic society, and (b) respecting an *ethos* of the rule of law whose primary emphasis is on the nexus between peace and justice. Accordingly, independent, competent judicial officers must be fully empowered to extend the scope of the rule of law across the entire country, remove impediments to governmental accountability, keep courts accessible to all litigants, and safeguard human rights to the greatest extent possible. The strategy will therefore prioritise actions that are intended to raise the *quality* of justice through the performance of all judicial officials³¹.

3.2 Human Rights Situation

Preventive measures designed by the Independent National Commission on Human Rights (INCHR) among others, will continue to mitigate risks of occurrence of serious or massive human rights violations. Liberians will continue to gain greater awareness of their human rights, which coupled with extended availability of legal aid and assistance across the country, will translate into corresponding demand for an effective and timely judicial response to infringements and violations.

Effective administration of justice and accountability in the context of transitional justice in Liberia will require the Judiciary to remain actively engaged with the applicable legal and policy frameworks. For instance, any new reparation scheme for victims and survivors will need adequate funding as well as recourse to judicial review and appeal of the decisions concerning entitlements. Two systemic challenges will confront the Judiciary in this regard; firstly, the Judiciary will be required to develop a consistent and coherent human rights jurisprudence in line with Liberia's national and

³⁰ Report of Existing Initial Services on Sexual and Gender Based Violence conducted by UN Women in 2019

³¹Strategic Plan of the Liberian Judiciary 2019- 2023

international human rights obligations. Secondly, human rights accountability in the transitional justice context of Liberia calls for wider coordination beyond the Judiciary, e.g. to institutionalise the protection of victims and witnesses. Yet the capacity of the judiciary branch to hold human rights violators to account will come under increased public scrutiny. The strategy will therefore prioritise actions that strengthen human rights litigation, including by providing human rights education for judicial officers.

Criminality will continue to be a pressing social problem associated with social and economic factors in the country. According to the Midterm Report of the UNODC Regional Programme for West Africa, November 2018, West Africa will face a rising trend of transnational criminality, with offences of terrorism, human trafficking, narcotic trafficking and cybercrime raising greater concern. Any new legislation on transnational crimes will in turn require new judicial knowledge and remedies, highlighting the need for continuing judicial education. Trends in criminality foreshadow increasing numbers of offenders within a criminal justice system that is already hurdled by huge criminal case backlogs and concerning proportions of pre-conviction offenders among prison detainees.³² The strategy will accordingly prioritise actions to reform and improve criminal procedures for disposal of cases in accordance with fair trial guarantees. Additionally, the Liberia National Police (LNP) observes that crimes of rape and domestic violence have accounted for more than two-thirds of reported serious offences in recent years.³³ New legislation (*Rape Law, 2005; Judiciary Law (Amendment) Act 2008*) to counter these offences was intended to spur better policing, prosecution and adjudication competences via specialised courts and judicial procedures. Currently, the specialised court handling these offences, “Court E” is only located in the capital. The strategy will prioritise actions that enable its rollout in the remaining counties.

Corruption levels: In 2010, *Transparency International Corruption Index* placed Liberia at position 87 of 178 countries with a score of 3.3.³⁴ Liberia moved to position 122 of 180 countries in 2017. Public protestation of corruption at institutional levels is therefore expected to continue to be a concern, creating critical demand for significant reform of public governance. Due to its unique function, any corruption in the Judiciary is a very serious concern. While stakeholder analyses of judicial corruption are limited, being largely based on perception and anecdotal evidence, it offers a suggestive basis for the need for robust efforts at improving judicial transparency. The strategy will require the Judiciary to respond systematically to perceptions of corruption by putting in place rigorous, institutional measures to safeguard its vulnerability to corrupt

³²Official statistics published in the Pro Poor Agenda for Development (Draft, July 2018) put pre-conviction detainees at 64% of the prison population.

³³ Liberia National Police Force, Annual Report 2016 and 2017, available at www.lnp.gov.lr

³⁴ Transparency International corruption measurements utilise an ascending scale of with a score of 0-1 representing excellence and more than 3 representing poor performance. See www.transparency.org

practices. Secondly, the strategic plan will enable the judiciary to generate robust countermeasures and to penalise corruption instances.³⁵

Public confidence: Low public confidence in the ability of the Liberian justice system to uphold the rule of law is concerning because it undermines recourse to courts of law for settlement of legal disputes. Decline in public confidence in the Judiciary has been manifested by the frequency of out of court compromises to forestall judicial roles and by people taking the law into their own hands. Surveys of public perception undertaken in recent years repeatedly cited corruption, expense, formality, unfairness and inefficiency as grounds for a rather negative image of the Judiciary. While the strategy against judicial corruption will directly involve public confidence-building, the plan will prioritise additional communication strategies to generate better public awareness of judicial roles and responsibilities.

There is risk that judicial services will be affected by shrinking fiscal space in the country. It calls for more strategic and proficient use of scarcer resources.

Financial constraints: The 2017 annual report produced jointly by UNDP and the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) observes that “*the national budget allocation for the justice and security sectors dropped from US\$ 94.9 million in 2016/17 to US\$ 83.9 million in 2017/18.*” The report underlines a risk that judicial services will be circumscribed by a “shrinking fiscal space” which calls for more strategic and proficient use of scarcer resources. In this regard, the departure of UNMIL in March 2018 after fourteen years will affect the availability of resources that were allocated to reconstruction of court buildings and related infrastructure projects, without reducing the gaps for finances that will be required to improve the quality of judicial services. The strategic plan will support better fiscal autonomy for the Judiciary in conjunction with more judicious allocation and utilisation of judicial budgets.

Caseloads: In 2017, counts indicated 7,000 cases pending. In 2018, the baseline number for cumulative cases suggested 16,000 cases pending, based on more accurate reporting and tracking of caseloads in all courts in the country. The overall case load is expected to more than double over the next five years, approaching 30,000 cases annually, concentrated in Magisterial Courts and Circuit Courts. The legal disputes in these courts mostly entail criminal trials and land-related claims, suggesting new caseloads continue

Over the next five years, caseloads will approach 30,000 cases annually, distributed unevenly in the Counties.

to be concerned with localised legal problems. Accordingly, corresponding efforts needed to resolve increasing caseload volumes should be decentralised to local levels while recognising need for case management flexibility. Additionally, it is expected that rapidly occurring

shifts in the national economy, for instance in natural resource mining, and greater mobility of Liberians, will cumulatively generate cases of increasing commercial

³⁵ Strategic Plan of the Liberian Judiciary 2019- 2023

complexity coming to the higher courts. Similarly, the number of cases for judicial review of governmental policies and actions would increase. Moreover, increases in caseloads will be uneven across the different regions. To manage the currently pending caseloads and put in place better systems to manage new cases, the strategic plan will require the Judiciary to overhaul its case management systems and procedures.

3.3 Organisational Context

The organisational context encompasses managerial supervision, policy guidance, technical expertise and administrative and financial resources required to implement the Strategic Plan 2019 – 2023. Within this internal environment, the following multiple variables are expected to significantly impact on the achievement of strategic objectives.

Jurisdictional layers: Under the Supreme Court of Liberia, the operation of court services is fragmented with Circuit Courts, Magisterial Courts and specialised courts including the Commercial and Debt Courts, etc. For Montserrado, legislation establishes two Circuit Courts with separate civil and criminal jurisdictions respectively and further divides the latter into five courts “A” to “E” the last of which has exclusive jurisdiction over sexual offences.

Circuit Courts have both original jurisdiction in felony cases carrying sentences of three years or more in prison and appellate roles over disputes arising from Magisterial Courts. They lack, however, powers to supervise lower courts. Specialised courts may alleviate problems of case backlog and congestion by fast-tracking different types of disputes, yet they also risk confusing the public. Multiple court layers with overlapping jurisdictions will need to minimise risks of inefficient and inconsistent use of experienced judicial officers, public ignorance of the court system and wasteful use of resources. Currently, the Supreme Court alone directs case law with national concerns in mind, a role mirrored in a centralised administration concentrated at the capital. Measures, such as rotation and *ad hoc* assignment of relieving judges, will continue to help mitigate occasional problems of understaffed courts, but alone are inadequate. In the longer term, re-organisation of courts for jurisdictional and administrative purposes in correlation with the volume, type and flow of caseloads is foreseen.

The jurisdictional layers created by legislation will require legislative reforms to streamline how courts are organised and how they function. Where aspects of the centralised administration are anchored in the legislation in force, changes here will also depend on legislative reform. Practice has repeatedly revealed that the existing legislation results in unforeseen procedural bottlenecks, for instance in the requirements for criminal indictments and jury convocation prior to commencement of criminal trials. Accordingly, the Strategic Plan stipulates an objective of spurring legislative reform enabling the Judiciary to support the development of proposals

toward this end. The Judiciary will execute improvements to the administration of courts prior to legislative reform pursuant to its other capacity building objectives.

The Strategic Role of the Supreme Court: In other comparable judicial systems, supreme courts often limit the cases they hear to those of public importance and therefore manage with a small number of justices. Liberians, however, have a constitutional right to appeal to the Supreme Court, which must determine all appeals from Circuit Courts and other specialised courts in the absence of an intermediary appellate court. Under its supervisory power, the Supreme Court admits and regulates the conduct and discipline of lawyers and makes rules too, for the conduct and discipline of judicial officers who are appointed by the President. Under its current adversarial procedures, the average rate of disposal of Supreme Court appeals is about 40 each year, creating a backlog of decisions and opinions. Considering that the Supreme Court performs an important strategic role of harmonising the application of laws via the appeals process, greater capacity will have to be built for reasonably fast disposition of an increased volume of appeals. What is additionally important is that decisions of the Supreme Court involving governmental accountability and other matters of significant public concern should be disseminated to a broad audience more systematically with a view to spurring related actions in the relevant institutions.³⁶

Human Capacity; in 2018, approximately 4.6 million Liberians had recourse to 240 courts in the country. These include 16 Circuit Courts, 171 Magisterial Courts and specialised courts which include divisions within circuit courts. About forty judges

In 2018, 4.6m Liberians should have recourse to all 240 properly staffed, competent courts according to the laws in the country. Increasing judicial human capacity is a key priority

comprise the Circuit Courts and specialised jurisdiction courts. The number of judges is fixed by the Judiciary Law, 1972. Magisterial Courts whose jurisdictional scope includes both criminal and civil cases, are staffed by 293 Magistrates (each administrative district

has a magistrate court where one stipendiary magistrate seats with two associate magistrates). A large proportion of Magistrates do not possess a Bachelor of Laws degree and will continue to need education through the Judicial Training Institute, so as to maintain competent standards of judicial service. Already, 60 new Magistrates received judicial training in 2017 and a similar number is envisaged to be trained in 2021. In 2019, 6 new public defenders were added to the criminal justice system bringing the number in the country to 40. Judicial training currently is premised on most courts lacking core skills. Future training should consider tailored needs since not all trial courts have the same jurisdiction and therefore judicial skills and knowledge must vary. The Judiciary directly employs about 2,000 staff in different roles such as court clerks, bailiffs and sheriffs, many of whom require continuing legal education cognisant of new developments in the law and in judicial operations.

³⁶ Ibid.

Administrative Capacity: Currently, the main tasks of the judicial administration in support of adjudication reflect traditional roles such as registry maintenance, clerical input and documentation, which includes monthly and quarterly reporting provided for by the Judiciary Law, 1972. Currently, case administrators play minor, secondary roles in case progression and disposal, which in criminal trials is determined by prosecutors and by parties and their lawyers in civil cases. Modern case management is the strategic challenge confronting the judicial administration as caseload volumes increase and diversify. Caseload assessments such as the study by USAID published in April 2018 demonstrate a clear trend of accumulative deficits in case flow management, from registration of pleadings or indictments to final determination at all levels of the Judiciary.³⁷ Two main weaknesses shown by the study are lax procedural compliance of rules by prosecutors/litigants and absence of procedural and substantive discretion on the part of judges to control proceedings and manage time taken to dispose cases. The Liberian National Bar Association (LNBA) submits too that the present case docket system for setting cases for hearing is outdated. With all the evidence in favour of a new case management system, the Strategic Plan stipulates an objective of establishing, piloting and rolling out modern case management. Case management will be interlinked with reform of the rules of procedures in criminal and civil trials pursued under the objectives of enhancing effective justice by reducing unnecessary delays. The administrative capacity for modern case management will be reconstructed so that administration encompasses new tasks such as information management, digital data management, implementation of satisfaction surveys, budgetary and cost optimisation, and collaborative interventions guided by a variety of operations codes and manual as well as this strategic plan.

Judicial Ethics: The Judiciary Law, 1972 obligates judicial officials to meet minimum standards of competence and to act in accordance with judicial ethics and canons. Judges may be removed for misbehaviour through an impeachment procedure of the Senate. Forty (40) canons on the ethics and decorum expected of judicial officials have been laid down by the Chief Justice. An additional set of 11 administrative rules are applicable to all Liberian courts and these regulate court hours, witness examination, court decorum and protocol, writing style and paper size for court documents, and prohibition against photography and live broadcasts of sessions.³⁸

Currently, a formal judicial complaint procedure works by the Chief Justice appointing

Despite two current mechanisms to check judicial ethics, their public use is marginal and public perceptions are low. A robust complaint mechanism with an independently enforced code of ethics is needed.

ad hoc panels to investigate complaints against judges. This inquiry procedure enforces the 34 canons on judicial ethics. A second procedure involves an administrative Courts Inspectorate Unit (CIU) which is mandated to conduct routine audits and investigations in all courts and provides

³⁸ Available @ <http://judiciary.gov.lr/general-rules-applicable-in-all-courts-of-liberia/>

the primary means of ensuring compliance in the various counties. Public recourse to the first complaints procedure is very low and suggests it may not be widely known. Despite these two procedures, public perceptions reveal concerning patterns of limited public confidence in respect for judicial ethics among judicial officials and staff. Stakeholder analysis underscores that more robust and independent mechanisms are required, such as a judicial service commission, established by law.

The Judiciary should elevate efforts to publicise and enforce its ethics. Accordingly, the Strategic Plan contemplates review of the existing canons and the elaboration of a new complaint mechanism based on individual obligations assumed under a contractual code of ethics. The plan also stipulates systemic assessments of the levels, types, location and costs of judicial corruption and inefficiency or the institutional practices that facilitate such practices. These measures must be publicised to ensure they become effectual.

Fiscal autonomy of the Judiciary is an essential condition of its independence. This condition is currently framed as constitutional guarantee of judicial salaries and under the *Fiscal Autonomy Law of 2015*. The state pays salaries and benefits for judges and magistrates. The judicial budget is prepared by the Court Administrator and is used to finance expenditures; the spending focus is mainly staff salaries, transport, court house construction or refurbishment, stationery and equipment. The challenges are more equitable distribution to support judicial services in all the counties, unequal expenditure between investment and recurrent costs and for the judiciary budget to reflect accurate costs of delivery of judicial services in the counties and administrative districts. For instance, the costs of training judicial officers and staff is not carried by the budgets. The Judiciary does not generate its own revenue. A 2018 assessment of budgetary outlays suggested that national financial resources allocated to the Judiciary has declined from US\$ 19 million allocated in 2016/17 to US\$ 16 million in 2018/19. Decline in external funding is a further risk which tracks the differing fiscal priorities of governmental and international partners. Judicial allocations are currently contained in judicial accounts with central government and are operated only with co-approval of the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning. This arrangement reinforces accountability but also limits judicial fiscal autonomy. The Judiciary Law of 1972 currently lacks detailed provisions on judicial expenditures. Nonetheless, the Strategic Plan will facilitate improvements in decentralised budgeting and prudent expenditure, with direct links to expenditure monitoring tools and procedures, under the revamped comprehensive case management system.

Information Technology: The Judiciary should capitalise on the rapid rise in access to the internet among Liberians, particularly the youth. The internet offers judicial officers reasonably inexpensive access to online legal resources, including caselaw, and opportunities to deliver judicial services via digital channels. Technological communication would reduce costs and the time spent on intra-judicial

communications, provided it is secure against cybercrimes and cyberattacks. The strategy will support continued modernisation actions that utilise information technology to improve efficiency and accessibility in the delivery of judicial services.

4.0 THE VISIONS, MISSION, PRINCIPLES AND VALUES OF THE JUDICIARY

An independent judiciary delivering timely and effective Service to all Liberians.

4.1 THE MISSION OF THE JUDICIARY

“We interpret the law to ensure the protection of rights for all, as guaranteed under the Constitution of the Republic of Liberia. To achieve this, we deploy highly trained personnel, supported by modernised systems and structures. Our conduct will be guided by uncompromising ethical values as a means of promoting fundamental justice and inspiring public confidence in the Judiciary”³⁹

4.2 PRINCIPLES AND VALUES OF THE JUDICIARY

Our values and principles guide our behaviour and shall be reflected in our everyday activities and affect the way we work together. They shall also be reflected in our dealings with key stakeholders. Our values are the fibre with which we weave a culture that will induce passion and provide the organisational motives and force to drive our strategic intentions.

Our values and principles are:

- ✓ Preserve, protect, defend, and uphold the Constitution.
- ✓ Fair, effective, accessible, and expeditious justice for the Liberian People
- ✓ Impartiality and non-discrimination (underlined in art. 8 of the Constitution)
- ✓ Integrity and honour (underlined in the Judicial Canons)

5.0 METHODOLOGY

The methodology that was used to develop this gender policy was extensively participatory, involving major stakeholders of the Ministry of Justice, the Judiciary and the Law Enforcement Agencies of security and justice institutions of the Republic of Liberia. Methodologies and approaches used included the following:

5.1 Extensive Desk Review

An extensive desk review of national, regional and international instruments on gender mainstreaming and equality was undertaken in order to draw conclusion and gain additional knowledge in order to enrich the development of this policy.

5.2 Interview of Key Stakeholder

Face to face interviews were conducted with key personnel of the Ministry of Justice during an assessment conducted by two (national and international) consultants hired by Spotlight Initiative on the Elimination of all Forms of Violence Against Women and Girls. The assessment was conducted to evaluate the capacity of justice and security

³⁹ Strategic Plan of the Liberian Judiciary 2019- 2023

institutions including the judiciary on prevention, response and protection of SGBV, HTP and other forms of violence against women and girls in Liberia. The personnel interviewed included the Minister of Justice, the Coordination of the Gender and Security Network, the Court Administrator of the Judiciary, the Judge of criminal Court E, Clerks, and other staff of the justice and security sector institution of Liberia including the personnel of Liberia National Police, Bureau of Corrections and Rehabilitation, Liberia Drugs Enforcement Agency, SGBV Crimes Unit etc. Focus group discussions were also held with 10 personnel of the Judiciary including 3 females on diverse dates (between 6th and 22nd of February 2020)

5.3 Primary Data Collection

Structured questionnaires were administered to 596 of the respondents across all ranks from all nine justice and security institutions (404 males and 192 females) representing 68% and 32% respectively. 59 respondents including 13 females were from the judiciary whilst 32 respondents including 16 females were from the Ministry of Justice as illustrated in the table below.

Table 1: Respondents to the questionnaire administered to justice and security institutions

Institution	FEMALE	MALE	TOTAL
Liberia National Police (LNP)	43	49	92
Ministry of Justice (MoJ)	16	16	32
Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL)	2	29	31
Ministry of National Defence	12	46	58
Liberia Drugs Enforcement Agency (LDEA)	8	59	67
Liberia Immigration Service (LIS)	25	38	63
Liberia National Fire Service (LNFS)	51	90	141
Judiciary	13	46	59
Bureau of Corrections and Rehabilitation (BCR)	22	31	53
Total	192	404	596

6.0 CONCEPTUAL AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The Constitution of Liberia of 1986 establishes an apex Supreme Court comprising the Chief Justice and four Associate Justices, with jurisdiction to determine all appeals arising from subordinate courts that are established by the Legislature. The original jurisdiction of the Supreme Court is engaged only in cases involving constitutional issues and where ambassadors, ministers or counties are parties. The Constitution empowers the Supreme Court to make rules concerning judicial and legal practice that apply to all courts of law.

Currently, an omnibus legislation – the Judiciary Law of 1972 – organises the administration of justice in Liberia. The legislation divides Liberia into fifteen judicial circuits aligned with administrative counties and designates a Circuit Court whose

jurisdiction covers its respective county, except for Montserrado County where civil and criminal jurisdictions are vested in two Circuit Courts respectively. Additional courts established at county level are vested with specialised jurisdiction, namely the Debt Court, the Monthly and Probate Courts, the Tax Court, Traffic Court, the Juvenile Court and the Labour Court.

The legislation provides for the qualifications and tenure of judges, for the judicial calendar terms and for judicial writs as well as procedures for the disposal of cases. Magisterial Courts are established at the district level and the legislation also regulates their operation and the tenure of their judges. The Judiciary Law further provides for the different functions of court officials including marshals, sheriffs, constables, clerks and attorneys, as well as for a jury system and for litigation involving indigent parties. Finally, it provides for the financial management of fiscal allocations to the Judiciary and court revenue, under the administrative oversight of the Chief Justice.

The Criminal Procedure Law of 1969 sets out the responsibilities of prosecutors, public defenders and jurors in the criminal justice system. Procedures have been stipulated for dealing with indictments, committal for criminal trial, witnesses, and pleas. For civil cases, the Civil Procedure Law of 1972 is applicable.

Sex-disaggregated participation in legal, judicial and security sector

	Legal, Judicial and security Sector	Male	Female
1.	Supreme Court	60%	40%
2.	Circuit Court Judges	85%	15%
3.	Stipendiary/Associate Magistrates	99.3%	0.7%
4.	Liberia National Police	82.5%	17.5%
5.	Armed Forces of Liberia	96.2%	3.8%
6.	Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization	70%	30%
7.	Bureau of Correction and Rehabilitation	85.4%	14.6%

Source: Revised Liberia National Gender Policy (2017)2018 -2023

6.1 Frameworks That Informed the Policy

6.1.1 National Frameworks

6.1.2 Revised National Gender Policy (2018-2022) of 2017

The policy recognises that gender inequities and marginalization of women in Liberia are perpetuated by socio-cultural perceptions, practices, and stereotypes that support male dominance and the subordination of women. Women and men, girls and boys,

have been ascribed different roles in society, and these roles often limit women's participation in socio-economic and political spheres⁴⁰.

Generally, women in Liberia have limited access to justice, education, healthcare, land, property compared to men. Women are disproportionately underrepresented at all levels of decision-making processes that causes socio economic issues associated with lack of access to justice, lack of protection from SGBV, HTP and other forms of violence perpetrated in the society.

According to the Revised National Gender Policy:

- The legal and judicial institutions have several challenges including shortage of qualified personnel.
- Gender discrimination in legal systems also includes the failure to punish perpetrators of GBV.
- Weak capacity to provide quality and equitable access to justice for the poor and vulnerable.
- Low quality of service provided by legal institutions, (including for survivors of GBV), the under-representation of women in the justice sector.
- Corruption, and the lack of protection of the rights of women and children.
- Lack of legal aid to vulnerable groups, mostly women.
- Inadequate capacity constraints, lack of human, material, and financial resources that severely hampers the administration and delivery of justice.

Addressing the above-mentioned challenges in an effective and efficient manner would require strengthening the capacity of legal and judicial institutions as severally recommended in this discourse, especially as laid out in the action plan.

6.1.3 Strategic Plan of the Judiciary Branch of Liberia, 2019 – 2023

The Judiciary adopted its *Strategic Plan 2011 – 2013* under the third pillar of the national *Poverty Reduction Strategy* developed in 2008, notably, “strengthening governance and the rule of law”. This alignment is built on two factors: (i) an ongoing transition after fourteen years of conflict, during which courts were destroyed and, by and large, rendered ineffective, and (ii) the dire need for sustainable development, which includes functional courts to adjudicate cases and underpin economic development. Consequently, the *Strategic Plan 2011-2013* targeted the reconstruction of court houses, registries and records, and human capacity and expertise needed to make the Judiciary properly functional across the country.

In retrospect, these targets proved ambitious for a three-year duration characterised by scarce resource mobilisation and weak monitoring capacity. This plan omitted appropriately tailored pilot schemes to test specific capacity development measures that would enable the rollout of proven successes countrywide. A great challenge then, as now, was the unavailability of funding to actualise strategic actions. Assessment of

⁴⁰ Revised Liberia National Gender Policy, 2017

the implementation of the *Strategic Plan 2011 – 2013* underscores the fact that stable levels of funds and evidence-driven prioritisation must be obtained for consistent attainment of any strategic goals.

6.1.4 The Pro- Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (PARD)

In July 2018, the administration of H.E President George M. Weah published an early draft of its Pro- Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (PAPD). The PAPD targets four results pillars, namely: (i) “Power to the people”; (ii) “Economy and jobs”; (iii) “Sustaining the peace”, and; (iv) “Governance and transparency”. Under the third pillar concerned with sustaining the peace, the agenda outlines priorities to strengthen access to justice, the rule of law and human rights.

The strategic priorities for strengthening access to justice are: (a) reducing pre-trial detention; (b) improving access to justice for the poor and vulnerable by increasing the number of prosecutors, judges, public defenders, legal aid practitioners and social workers and also harmonising formal and informal systems, and; (c) improving access to justice for women, for instance by strengthening the *WACPS*, the *SGBV Crimes Prosecution Unit* and *Court E* and enacting a *domestic violence law*.

In recognition of the critical role played by the Judiciary, the draft PAPD identifies the following priorities for judicial reform and judicial capacity development: (a) development of a case management policy and system; (b) increasing the numbers and building the capacity of judges, clerical staff, and public defenders, especially in rural areas; (c) addressing the timeframe for court terms; (d) improving physical infrastructure for jury management facilities; (e) digitizing court systems beginning with commercial courts, and; (f) harmonising and clarifying court fees and costs.

6.2 Regional Framework

The African Union (AU) and ECOWAS also recognise that gender inequalities are predominant in their member states including Liberia, where opportunities in terms of access to justice, and healthcare needs are available to men more than to women. In recognition thereof, and among many other initiatives, the African Union Commission, in July 2004, adopted the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA), in which all 54 AU Member States committed to sign and ratify the Maputo Protocol by the end of 2004 and to harmonize their national laws with the Protocol and international and regional commitments for the promotion of gender equality.

6.3 International Framework

Liberia has ratified or acceded to most of the core international human rights conventions⁴¹ and is also a party to the major regional human rights instruments.⁴² Furthermore, several international instruments⁴³ require Liberia to take special measures to protect the rights of women and children at all times. As a State Party to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights as well as the Rights of Women in Africa (the "Maputo Protocol"), Liberia has made commitments to exercise due diligence in combating Gender Based Violence and discrimination. As such, Liberia is under obligation to take all appropriate measures to ensure that there are adequate sanctions on all forms of violence against women and girls.⁴⁴

Several conferences and meetings have been held in different places that resulted in the formulation of the following instruments on gender mainstreaming, discrimination, gender equality and elimination of violence against women and girls. At the global level, treaties, declarations commitments applicable to Liberia include:

1. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) 1979.
2. Optional Protocol on CEDAW.
3. Convention on the Rights of Child (CRC) (1990);
4. Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).
5. Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006).
6. International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966).
7. International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights (1966).
8. UN Security Council Resolution 1325.
9. UN Security Council Resolution 1820.
10. UN Security Council Resolution 1612 (Children and Armed Conflict).
11. Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995);
12. International Conference on Population and Development (1994);
13. United Nations Declaration on Violence Against Women (1993);
14. Millennium Declaration and MDGs (2000);
15. Universal Declaration on Human Rights (1948);
16. Vienna Declaration and the Plan of Action (1993).

⁴¹ The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) (2004), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) (2004), the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT) (1993), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) (1984), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) (1990), and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) (2012).

⁴² The African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) (1982), the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC) (2007), and the Protocol to the ACHPR on the Rights of Women in African (the "Maputo Protocol") (2007).

⁴³ CRC, CEDAW, CRPD, ACRWC, and the Maputo Protocol.

⁴⁴ CEDAW art. 2(c), for example, provides that States must "establish legal protection of the rights of women on an equal basis with men and ensure through competent national tribunals and other public institutions the effective protection of women against any act of discrimination." The Maputo Protocol, art. 4, paras. 2(a) and (e), explicitly provides that laws prohibiting violence against women must be enforced and perpetrators held accountable.

7.0 POLICY PRIORITY AREAS AND STRATEGIC ACTIONS

Based on the gaps identified by the capacity needs assessment and so many other engagements with the judiciary of Liberia including interviews, public perception surveys, the following policy priority areas need to be addressed in order to mainstream gender and promote gender equality in the Liberian judiciary.

7.1 Gender, Human Rights and Access to Justice

7.1.1 Objectives

- To promote human rights through accessible and affordable justice system aimed at the eliminating all forms of gender-based discrimination, inequality, and abuse.
- To increase timely and responsive administration of justice for women and men.
- To strengthen the legal and regulatory frameworks of the judiciary to eliminate discrimination, gender inequality and all forms of violence.
- To ensure that gender is mainstreamed into proposed Legislation and internal regulations in the administration of justice.

7.1.2 Strategic Actions

- Strengthen the capacity of justice actors to prevent, respond and provide protection from all forms of violence against women and men, boys and girls.
- Conduct gender and human rights trainings to build capacity among all key stakeholders to protect the rights of all citizens regardless of gender.
- Repeal obsolete laws that promote discrimination and gender inequality.
- Develop and implement gender mainstreaming and gender sensitive policies.
- Strengthen capacity of legislators and other legal drafters for the formulation of appropriate gender sensitive legal frameworks.
- Build capacity and raise awareness on mainstreaming gender into all plans and programs of the judiciary.
- Increase the number of female judges (judicial personnel) at all levels, especially at county levels.

7.2 Recruitment, Retention and Promotion

The capacity needs assessment recently conducted identified the limited number of female judges and magistrate to adjudicate criminal matters especially cases involving women and children. The 2019 perception survey and stakeholder analysis further identified redressing the barriers faced by vulnerable groups, particularly women and minors who are involved in criminal justice procedures, as a priority to ensure that victim-centred procedures in criminal cases involving women and minors will be systematically rolled out in the counties.

7.2.1 Objectives

- Increase the number of male and female to perform the duties professionally to achieve the organizational mandate.

- To strengthen the capacity of personnel from HR and Gender Unit on the implementation and monitoring of the gender policy.
- To ensure the recruitment and retention of qualified personnel especially females in the judiciary in order to provide efficient and effective access to justice for all in Liberia.
- To ensure transparency in recruitment, retention, and promotion in the judiciary.

7.2.2 Strategic Actions

- Consultative meetings with senior management to inform the public on the recruitment policy.
- Conduct training on policy implementation, effective monitoring, and evaluation.
- Adopting a 25% quota system as per the national gender policy for recruitment of female judges and broadcasts on national media outlets.

7.3 Staff and Institutional Capacity Development

7.3.1 Objective

To ensure a well-trained and motivated workforce with the special needs of women given a priority

7.3.2 Strategic Actions

- Develop a curriculum on gender mainstreaming and gender equity and gender equality.
- Conducts session on Gender and the Law as a key part of induction training and provide adequate resources for the judicial training institute to monitor the extent to which trainees apply the knowledge and skills from the course.
- Provide specific mentoring programme for new judicial officers, during which they will be mentored and supported by more experienced judicial officers to understand how the context (especially gender) influences their work.

7.4 Increase Timely and Responsive Administration of Justice for Women and Men

Specific activities should be planned and implemented to address physical barriers that make access to justice for women and men particularly difficult, as well as obstacles that unnecessarily lengthen the time in which women and men can obtain justice.

7.4.1 Objectives

To provide timely and responsive access to justice for women and men and address systems, structures and procedures that enhance discrimination and inequalities.

7.4.2 Strategic Actions

- Fast track all cases in the courts that involve pregnant women and breast-feeding mothers.

- Allocate space in the Family and Children's court premises where mothers can breastfeed, and children can play.
- Provide free legal representatives for vulnerable clients including survivors of sexual violence in accordance with the National Legal Aid Policy of 2019.

7.5 Career Staffing and Leadership

7.5.1 Objective

To ensure that the career path of all serving personnel is well understood and leadership clearly defined.

7.5.2 Strategic Action

Sponsor female judiciary personnel to attend universities and provide targeted leadership training to all female officers at least twice annually

7.6. Improve Public Trust and Confidence in the Judiciary

Public Perceptions of Liberian Justice and Security Institutions conducted by UNDP in February 2019 identified the low level of public trust and confidence in the Judiciary and further rates the Judiciary as one of the top most corrupt institutions in the justice and security institutions. It is therefore necessary to make plans to increase the level of confidence that the public has in the Judiciary through improving and restructuring the way in which the Judiciary interacts with the public with a key focus on improving communication and information sharing. The Judiciary will also strengthen strategic partnerships with various stakeholders so as to improve collaboration for greater efficiency and effectiveness on gender issues. The plan will promote ethics and integrity in the Judiciary through a specific strategy, as well as promote public evaluation of Judiciary services. The judiciary should also ensure that perceptions of transparency and gender responsiveness of the Judiciary is improved. The Judiciary will take steps to project the image of an accessible, responsive and gender sensitive institution by addressing the physical barriers and negative public perceptions.

7.6.1 Objectives

To build public perception and confidence in the judiciary thereby disseminating all information about the activities of the judiciary through transparent and accountable means.

7.6.2 Strategic Actions

- Establish reception areas/information points at all court premises to provide needed information to members of the public.
- Print brochures in different languages with basic information about the judicial system. The brochures should emphasize how the Judiciary pays special attention to gender issues.

- Hold radio discussions throughout the country to provide key information about the judicial system with emphasis on the special attention to gender issues.

7.7 Gender Based Violence and Violence Against Women and Girls

7.7.1 Objectives

- To ensure that women and girls are protected from SGBV and all forms of violence at all places and at all times.
- Create a positive legal and human rights environment that protects, prevents and responds to and eliminates all forms of violence against women and girls in the public and private spheres.

7.7.2 Strategic Actions

- Conduct mandatory trainings and raise awareness on SGBV, harmful practices and all forms of violence against women and men in the judiciary.
- Strict enforcement of the sexual harassment provision in the gender policy of the judiciary and make perpetrators accountable for their actions.

7.8 Gender Mainstreaming, Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment

The goal of gender mainstreaming is to ensure that women are involved in every aspect of decision making at all levels and promote gender equality and ultimately women’s empowerment. This means that gender analysis and mainstreaming shall be promoted in all policies, programs and operations to ensure that both women and men have equal benefit.

7.8.1 Objective

- To integrate gender into all plans, operations, and programmes of the judiciary.
- To promote gender equality and women’s empowerment in order to enhance equal participation of both women and men in all programs and plans of the judiciary.

7.8.2 Strategic Actions

- Work in close collaboration with MoGCSP to train all judges, magistrates in matters relating to law, and gender in order to ensure that they are able to provide fair hearing and rulings that recognize gender issues and/or barriers.
- Design and implement incentives and awards ceremonies to deserving personnel with outstanding knowledge on gender.

7.9 Gender, Monitoring and Evaluation

7.9.1 Objectives

To determine progress achieved through the implementation of the gender policy on the status of women, girls and vulnerable groups in the courts and to determine the number of cases being tried throughout the year disaggregated by gender.

7.9.2 Strategic Actions

- Evaluate and monitor the implementation of this policy yearly
- Coordinate and monitor all gender issues at every level
- Conduct a yearly impact of all priority areas of this policy
- Assess the effectiveness of this policy yearly

8.0 IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

Institutional framework for policy implementation will lie with various departments and/or committees of the Judiciary. However, a gender unit should be established with specific Gender Focal points in all counties to coordinate the implementation of the policy and issues related to gender mainstreaming.

The roles and responsibilities for oversight and implementation of the policy are as follows:

1. Oversight for Policy Implementation: This will be led by the head of the gender unit appointed by the Senior Management Committee. The Senior Management Committee shall ensure adequate allocation of resources for Implementation of the Gender Policy during the annual Judiciary planning and budgeting process.
2. The Gender Focal Point: The Gender Focal Points will liaise with other staff at HQ at all times including during recruitments, transfers, promotions and deployment of staff and also during preparation of annual budgets and reports.
3. Specific Responsibilities: Specific responsibilities for implementation of different aspects of the Policy will be allocated by the Senior Management Committee.
4. Oversight for policy Implementation will be carried out by the staff of the established gender units and gender focal points in the Counties.
5. The Administrator General shall ensure the establishment of Gender Unit in the Judiciary as it is done in Liberia National Police, Bureau of Corrections and Rehabilitation, Ministry of Justice, Liberia Immigration Service, and other government institutions. The responsibilities of the Gender Unit shall include:
 - i Ensure that gender is mainstreamed into all plans, programmes and operations of the judiciary.
 - ii Ensure that women are involved in decision making processes at all levels.
 - iii Ensure that female judges and magistrates are deployed in all counties.
 - iv Strengthen the capacity of all judicial staff on gender issues, gender equality and gender mainstreaming.
 - v Ensure gender equality is promoted and captured into the core programmes of the judiciary.

- vi Ensure access to justice for all regardless of sex, tribe and race.
- vii Institute measures to deal with SGBV, HTP discrimination, sexual harassment and abuse in the workplace.
- viii Liaise with other partners (national and international) to promote gender equality and mainstreaming.
- ix Monitor and report to senior management progress made on gender issues in the judiciary.
- x Provide quarterly and yearly progress report on gender issues in the judiciary.

The Public Relations Office of the judiciary should project the image of an accessible, responsive and gender sensitive institution by addressing the physical barriers and negative public perceptions. Specific interventions in this regard are as follows:

1. Make information about the Judiciary easily available to the public with emphasis on the Judiciary's commitment to gender mainstreaming, equality and equity. There should also be efforts to ensure that information is disseminated to people who are illiterate by using different mediums in all local languages in the country.
2. As part of making information available, establish information/reception areas at all court premises. The staff who sit at these points should be trained and regularly monitored in order to ensure that they are respectful, courteous, provide correct and up to date information to court users and the public, and are gender sensitive.

8.1 Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation

8.2 Implementation

The implementation of this policy shall be done within the framework aligned with the NGP to ensure synergy and consistency on strategies on gender mainstreaming and promoting equality in Liberia.

All sections and priority areas identified in the implementation plan should be rolled over a period of five years (2020- 2024). The Gender Unit is responsible to take a lead in the implementation of this policy and ensure that gender is mainstreamed into all plans, programmes and operations with the fullest support of the head of HR and the Director of training. The unit shall ensure effective monitoring, supervision and reporting of gender issues as well as providing technical assistance to all other units and sections on matters relating to gender. In order to achieve this, Gender Unit needs to be fully capacitated financially and materially in order to fully implement all sections of the implementation plan within the stated time frame. This can only be achieved by involving the Gender Unit in every decision-making process including budgetary allocations.

Additionally, the capacity of the staff at the gender unit needs to be strengthened with specialized gender trainings and knowledge on national, regional and international instruments needs to be fully strengthened. Furthermore, the training unit shall ensure that gender forms part of all trainings ranging from recruitment, in-service and all specialized capacity building programmes.

The judiciary shall make it mandatory to disseminate this policy widely to all staff in every county and ensure that all judicial staff sign a commitment pledge for upholding. This will enable senior managers and sectional heads to hold their staff accountable for the adherence and full implementation of this policy. All heads of section shall therefore provide guidance to their staff to ensure that gender is mainstreamed in all areas of work and that gender equality standards are upheld. Furthermore, gender dimension should be included in all the structures and components of all the units and all heads of sections should be held accountable to ensure effective implementation of this policy.

8.3 Monitoring

Responsibility for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of this policy shall lie with the senior management team that oversees the implementation of all policies in the Judiciary and shall be done in line with the monitoring strategies enshrined in the national gender policy and the Liberia's Second Phase National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (2019-2023) of 2019. In this regard, the sole responsibility of monitoring the evaluation of implementation of this policy lies within the purview of the proposed gender unit of the judiciary.

The responsibility for gender mainstreaming, the promotion of women's human rights and the advancement of gender equality will be done through the institutional machinery. Internal monitoring mechanisms in collaboration with the gender unit should ensure that all officers adhere to this policy. Furthermore, for monitoring and evaluation to be effective, it will be worthwhile for the Judiciary to establish an independent commission to monitor the implementation of the policy. The committee will work together with the Ministry of Gender Children and Social Protection to design monitoring mechanisms enshrined in Revised National Gender Policy.

In order to achieve desired outcomes, adequate human and financial resources should be allocated to the implementation of gender mainstreaming. This will entail better utilization of current resources, the assignment of additional resources where required and the alignment of resources with expected outcomes. All the priority areas outlined this policy should be considered during the government planning and budgeting process and activities from this policy and its 5-year implementation should be integrated into the Judiciary's annual plan. This requires the judiciary developing agreed-upon norms and standards, indicators and targets, and evaluation frameworks to implement the policy. An external evaluation by the MoGCSP, the UN Women and UNDP to verify implementation of the policy in the judiciary organizational structure and activities should be undertaken after four years.

Every staff of the judiciary shall have primary responsibility for ensuring that the respect for women's human rights and the advancement of gender equality are effectively carried out. All Senior Managers should be held accountable for gender mainstreaming and equality efforts. Accountability frameworks (including provisions on gender responsive budgeting, gender programming, reporting and staffing) will be part of all training programmes designed.

8.4 Evaluation

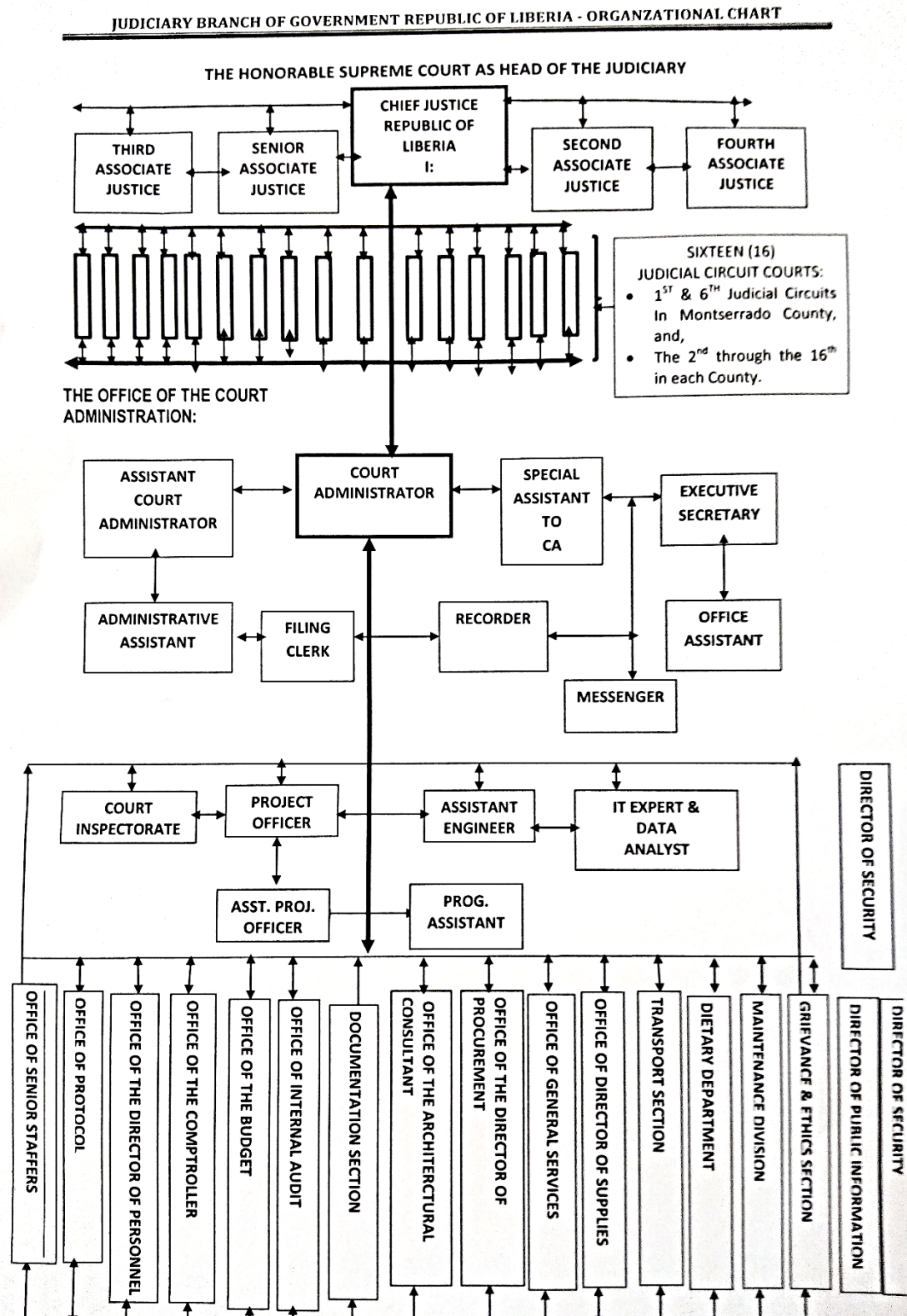
The proposed Gender Unit shall, in collaboration with MoGCSP, undertake the evaluation of the effectiveness of this policy and its implementation processes by conducting regular research (twice yearly) to assess the merits, worth, impact and value of mainstreaming gender and importance of promoting gender equality. Additionally, evaluation undertaken will provide significant information about the barriers to and challenges on the implementation and draw a comparison between different the components of implementation process. Reports of all such research should be shared with senior management and actions taken on the gaps identified.

Additionally, the proposed gender unit will take the lead in the implementation of all provisions that are enshrined in this policy. The monitoring interventions should cover all the courts nationwide and the alignment with the implementation of the national gender policy.

9.0 Annexes: REFERENCES

- Gouvernement of Liberia. (2019). Strategic Plan for the Liberian Judiciary. Monrovia.
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- UNICEF (2017). Gender Equality: Glossary of Terms and Concepts. UNICEF Regional Office for South Asia. November 2017
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- Liberia's Second Phase National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (2019-2023 of 2019)
- Government of Liberia (2018). Pro Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (PADP) A Five-Year National Development Plan Towards Accelerated, Inclusive, And Sustainable Development (July 2018 – June 2023) September 30, 2018

9.1 Annex II: Organisation Structure of the Judiciary



9.2 Annex III: Strategic Action Plan on the Implementation of the Policy

PRIORITY AREA	OUTCOME	OUTPUT	ACTIVITIES	INDICATORS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	COST USD	2021	2022	2023	2024
1. Gender, Human Rights and Access to Justice	1. To promote human rights through accessible and affordable justice system aimed at the eliminating all forms of gender-based discrimination, inequality, and abuse	1.1 Enhance security and safety for marginalized women and men in all communities nationwide	1.2 Strengthen capacity of justice actors to prevent, respond and provide protection from all forms of violence against women and men, boys and girls	1.3 Number of gender and human rights training conducted Baseline: 0 Year: 2020 Target: 1 training session per quarter targeting 50 staff totaling 16 training sessions with a total of 1,300 staff Year: 2024	Court administrator, Gender Unit, MoGCSP, MoJ, development partners, Judicial Training Institute	Cost of one training session: DSA for 2 trainers @ USD 300 X 3 days = USD 1,800 Refreshment for 50 participants @ USD 20 each X 3 days = USD 3,000 Transport Fare for 50 participants @ USD 6 each per day X 3 days = USD 900 Hall rental @ USD 500 Training material @ USD 1,500 Total for one training session =	✓	✓	✓	✓

						USD 7, 200 X 16 training sessions = USD 115, 200				
	2. To increase timely and responsive administration of justice for women and men	2.1 Build capacity of both traditional and formal justice system actors	2.2 Conduct gender and human rights trainings to build capacity among all key stakeholders to protect the rights of all citizens regardless of gender	2.3 Increased percentage of judicial staff with knowledge on gender policy Baseline: 0 % Year: 2020 Target: 95 % Year: 2024	Court administrator, Gender Unit, MoGCSP, MoJ, development partners, Judicial Training Institute	Cost of one training session: DSA for 2 trainers @ USD 300 X 3 days = USD 1, 800 Refreshment for 50 participants @ USD 20 each X 3 days = USD 3, 000 Transport Fare for 50 participants @ USD 6 each per day X 3 days = USD 900 Hall rental @ USD 500 Training material @ USD 1, 500 Total for one training session = USD 7, 200 X 16 training sessions =	✓	✓	✓	✓

						USD 115, 200				
	3. To strengthen the legal and regulatory frameworks of the judiciary to eliminate discrimination, gender inequality and all forms of violence	3.1 Develop and implement gender responsive laws, policies and regulations to eliminate SGBV and all forms of violence and discrimination against women and girl, men and boys	3.2 Repeal obsolete laws that promote discrimination and gender inequality 3.2.1 Develop and implement gender mainstreaming and gender sensitive policies 3.2.2 Strengthen capacity of	3.3 Number of laws enacted/repealed to eliminate discrimination, promote gender equality and end impunity against all forms of violence Baseline: 4 legal frameworks Year: 2020	Court administrator, Gender Unit, MoGCSP, MoJ, development partners, Judicial Training Institute	Cost of one day training session for legislator and drafters DSA for one gender and legal training specialist @ USD 300 Refreshment for 10 participants @ USD 20 each = USD 200 Transport Fare for 10 participant @ USD 6 each = USD 60 Total = USD 560	✓	✓	✓	✓

			legislators and other legal drafters for the formulation appropriate gender sensitive legal frameworks	Target: Repeal, amendment and implementation of existing laws to align with international standards and prevailing challenges Year: 2024						
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	<p>4. To ensure that gender is mainstreamed into proposed Legislation and internal regulations of the administration of justice</p>	<p>4.1 Institute culture of respect for the human rights of women and men, including the elimination of negative stereotypical representation of women and girls</p>	<p>4.2 Build capacity and raise awareness on mainstreaming gender into all plans and programs of the judiciary. 4.2.1 Increase the number of female judges (judicial personnel) at all levels, especially at county levels.</p>	<p>4.3 Number of judicial staff trained on gender mainstreaming and promotion of gender equality Baseline: 50 Year: 2020 Target: 400 Year: 2024 2. 4.3.1 Number of judges and other female judicial staff at senior management level Baseline: 3 Year: 2020 Target: 10 Year: 2024</p>	<p>Court administrator, Gender Unit, MoGCSP, MoJ, development partners, Judicial Training Institute</p>	<p>Cost of one training session: DSA for 2 trainers @ USD 300 X 3 days = USD 1,800 Refreshment for 50 participants @ USD 20 each X 3 days = USD 3,000 Transport Fare for 50 participants @ USD 6 each per day X 3 days = USD 900 Hall rental @ USD 500 Training material @ USD 1,500 Total for one training session = USD 7,200 X 16 training sessions = USD 115,200</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>
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2 Recruitment, Retention and Promotion	1. Increase the number of male and female to perform the duties professionally to achieve the organizational mandate	1.1 Develop a gender sensitive Recruitment and retention policy that caters for the needs of women and men	1.2 Consultative meetings with senior management to inform the public on the recruitment policy	1.3 Production of minutes of senior management meetings on recruitment and promotions policy Baseline: 0 Year: 2020 Target: 144 well written minutes Year: 2024	MOJ, Senior management and Human Resource Department of judiciary, the proposed Gender Unit, MoGCSP and development partners	This does not require a budget as it can be handled from normal administrative coffers	√	√	√	√
	2. To strengthen the capacity of personnel from HR and Gender Unit on the implement	2.1 Train human resource personnel on implementation and monitoring of the gender policy	2.2 Conduct training on policy implementation, effective monitoring, and evaluation	2.3. Number of staff trained on policy implementation, monitoring and evaluation Baseline: 0	Judicial training institute, MoGCSP, HR Unit, Gender Unit and NGO's etc.	DSA for one consultant facilitator @ USD 300 X 1 day = USD 300 Transport fare for 8 gender unit staff @ USD 6 each = USD 48 Hall rental @ USD	Training and monitoring	Monitoring	Monitoring	Monitoring

	<p>ation and monitoring of the gender policy</p> <p>2.2.1To ensure the recruitment and retention of qualified personnel especially females in the judiciary in order to provide efficient and effective access to justice for all in Liberia.</p>			<p>Year: 2020 Target: 8 Year 2024 2.3.2 Periodic reports on monitoring and evaluation Baseline: 0 Year: 2020 Target: 48 periodic reports (1 X 12 months X 4 years) Year: 2024</p>		<p>500 = USD 500 Refreshment for 8 participants plus facilitator @ USD 20 each = USD 160 Total = USD 1, 008.00</p>				
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	3. To ensure transparency in recruitment, retention and promotion in the judiciary	3.1 Develop affirmative strategies on recruitment	3.2 Adopting a 25% quota system as per the national gender policy for recruitment of female judges and broadcasts on national media	3.3 Number of female judges recruited in the judiciary increased Baseline: 2020 Target: 2021	MOJ, Senior management and Human Resource Department of judiciary, the proposed Gender Unit, MoGCSP and development partners	This does not require a budget as it can be handled from normal administrative coffers	√			
3. Staff and Institutional Capacity Development	1. To ensure a well-trained and motivated workforce with the special needs of	1.1 Initiate training programmes that empower staff in the judiciary	1.2 Adapt the Training of Trainers Methodological Guide developed by UN Women on women's human rights	1.3 Training package developed Baseline: 2020 Target: 2021	Judicial Training Institute, proposed Gender Unit, MoGCSP, MoJ, senior management, HR and	DSA for one consultant @ USD 300 X 5 days = USD 1,500.00	√			

	women given a priority				heads of sections					
			1.2.1 Conduct training session on Gender and the Law as a key part of induction training	1.3.1 Number of newly recruited staff trained Baseline: 0 Year: 2020 Target: 200 Year: 2024	Judicial Training Institute, proposed Gender Unit, MoGCSP, MoJ, senior management, HR and heads of sections	Cost of training per year = DSA for 2 trainers @ USD 50 X 1 day = USD 100 Refreshment @ USD 20 X 50 participants plus 2 trainers = USD 1,040 Transport fare @ USD 6 X 50 Hall rental @ USD 500 Training materials @ USD 200 Total = USD 1,840 X 4 years = USD 7,360.00	√	√	√	√

			<p>1.2.2 Conduct in-service training on gender and the law</p>	<p>1.3.2 Number of continuing staff trained Baseline: 0 Year: 2020 Target: 1000 Year: 2024</p>	<p>Judicial Training Institute, proposed Gender Unit, MoGCSP, MoJ, senior management, HR and heads of sections</p>	<p>Cost of training per quarter = DSA @ USD 50 X 2 facilitators X 3 days = USD 300 Refreshment @ USD 20 X 60 participants plus 2 trainers = USD 1,200 Transport fare @ USD 6 X 60 = USD 360 Hall rental @ USD 1,500 Training materials @ USD 600 Total = USD 3,960 X 16 quarters = USD 63,360.00</p>	√	√	√	√
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			1.2.3 Put in place a mentoring programme for junior judicial staff	1.3.3 Gender-sensitive change in the attitudes and behavior of mentored staff Baseline: 0 Year: 2020 Target: 100 % change in attitude of mentored staff Year: 2024	Judicial Training Institute, MoGCSP and middle level managers of the judicial service	Does not require a budget	√	√	√	√
4. Timely and Responsive Administration of Justice for Women and Men	1. To provide timely and responsive access to justice for women and men and address systems, structures	1.1 A more gender responsive judiciary that provides speedy trial on SGBV cases, holding perpetrators accountable for their	1.2 Fast track adjudication of backlog cases with special attention to vulnerable groups including pregnant women and breast-	1.3 Increased percentage disposal of backlog cases Baseline: 0 % Year: 2020 Target: 90 % Year: 2024	Criminal Court E in Monrovia, Gbarnga and Nimba	Does not require a budget	√	√	√	√

	and procedures that perpetuate discrimination and inequalities.	actions, and also address gender inequalities	feeding mothers								
			1.2.1 Allocate space in the Criminal Court E premises where mothers can breastfeed and children can play	1.3.1 Provision of space Baseline: 0 Year: 2020 Target: 3 (one in each Court E facility) Year: 2021	Judicial service administration	To be determined by the judicial service administration	√				
			1.2.3 Provide legal aid for vulnerable clients including survivors of sexual violence in accordance with the National Legal Aid Policy of 2019	1.3.2 Legal aid representation for vulnerable and disadvantaged groups Baseline: 0 % Year: 2020 Target: 100 % Year: 2024	SGBV Crimes Unit, Judicial service and Public Defenders	Does not require a budget	√	√	√	√	

5 Improve Public Trust and Confidence in the Judiciary	1. To build public trust and confidence in the judiciary	1.1 An improved public image, confidence in and respect for the work of the judiciary	1.2 Establish reception areas/inform ation points in all court premises to provide needed information to members of the public.	1.3 Number of reception areas/inform ation points established Baseline: 0 Year: 2020 Target: 15 (one in every County) Year: 2021	Judicial service administra tion	To be determined by the judicial service administration	√			
			1.2.1 Print brochures in different languages with basic information about the work of the Judiciary with special reference to gender issues	1.3.1 Number of copies of brochures printed and distributed Baseline: 0 copies Year: 2020 Target: 4000 copies Year: 2024	Judicial service administra tion	Estimated cost of printing 1 copy brochure @ USD 10 X 4000 copies = USD 40,000.00	√	√	√	√

			1.2.2 Hold radio discussions throughout the country to provide key information about the judicial system with emphasis on the special attention to gender issues	1.3.3 Number of radio discussions held Baseline: 0 Year: 2020 Target: 208 radio discussion programs held (1 once a week) Year: 2024	Gender Unit Judiciary, training academy, MoGCSP	Estimated cost of 1-hour radio @ USD 100.00 X 208 radio hours = USD 20,800.00	√	√	√	√
6 Gender Based Violence and Violence against Women and Girls	1. To ensure that women and girls are protected from SGBV and all forms of violence at all places and all	1.1 A gender sensitive judicial system that takes into consideration the needs of both women and men, girls and boys, and that expeditiously	1.2 Conduct mandatory trainings and raise awareness on SGBV, harmful practices and all forms of violence against women and men in	1.3 Increased number of SGBV mandatory trainings conducted Baseline: 0 Year: 2020 Target: 16 trainings conducted Year: 2024	Judicial training institute, MoGCSP, HR Unit, Gender Unit and NGO's etc.	Cost of one training session: DSA for 2 trainers @ USD 300 X 3 days = USD 1,800 Refreshment for 50 participants @ USD 20 each X 3 days = USD 3,000 Transport Fare for 50 participants @ USD 6 each per	√	√	√	√

	times;	adjudicate SGBV cases	judiciary			day X 3 days = USD 900 Hall rental @ USD 500 Training material @ USD 1, 500 Total for one training session = USD 7, 200 X 16 training sessions = USD 115, 200				
	2. Create a positive legal and human rights environment that protects, prevent and respond to and eliminate all forms of violence against women		1.2.1 Strict enforcement of the sexual harassment provisions in the gender policy of the judiciary and make perpetrators accountable for their actions	1.3.1 Percentage of judiciary personnel punished for SEA Baseline: 0 % Year: 2020 Target: 100 % Year: 2024	Court administrator Gender Unit, MoGCSP, MOJ and development partners	Does not require a budget	√	√	√	√

	and girls in the public and private spheres									
7 Gender Mainstreaming, Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment	1. To integrate gender into all plans, operations and programmes of the judiciary	1.1 A judiciary that mainstreams gender into all plans, programs and operations and empowers women to attain their full potentials	1.2 Collaborate with MoGCSP to train all judges, magistrates in matters relating to law and gender to enable them provide fair gender sensitive hearings and rulings	1.3 Percentage of judges and magistrates trained in the law and gender issues Baseline: 0 % Year: 2020 Target: 95% Year: 2024	MoGCSP, MOJ and LNP and development partners	DSA for consultant @ USD 300.00 X 1 day X 4 sessions = USD 1,200.00 Stipend @ USD 50.00 X 200 judges/magistrates X 1 day = USD 10,000.00 Training materials @ USD 1000 X 4 sessions = USD 4000.00 Total = USD 15,200.00	√	√	√	√

	2. To promote gender equality and women's empowerment in order to enhance equal participation of both women and men in all programs and plans of the judiciary		1.2.1 Design and implement incentives and awards ceremonies to deserving personnel with outstanding knowledge on gender	1.3.1 Number of staff receiving incentives and awards Baseline: 0 Year: 2020 Target: 10 (yearly) Year: 2024	HR, Gender Unit, Judicial Training institute, MoJ, Court Administrator, MoGCSP, development partners	Estimated cost of an award @ USD 100.00 X 10 awards X 4 years = USD 4000.00	√	√	√	√
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9.3 Annex IV: International Instruments

9.3.1 Universal declaration on Human Rights

Article 2 of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights of 1948 which states that ‘everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status’.

9.3.2 The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women

The 1979 (1981) Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) provides a comprehensive framework to guide all rights-based action for gender equality, including that of UNDP. Under this treaty, gender inequality is understood to be the result of discrimination against women. CEDAW calls for equality in outcomes rather than simply equality in opportunities. Thus, it is not sufficient that anti-discrimination laws are put into place: The state has the obligation to take all necessary steps to ensure that women actually enjoy equality in their daily lives. CEDAW defines discrimination and the range of steps that states must take to eliminate it, affirms women’s rights in specific areas, and makes provisions for ratification, monitoring, reporting and other procedural matters.

9.3.3 The Beijing Platform for Action

The 1995 Beijing Platform for Action is “an agenda for women’s empowerment” signed by all governments that is seen as a “necessary and fundamental prerequisite for equality, development and peace.” The Platform provides a blueprint for women’s empowerment that is exceptionally clear, straightforward, and actionable. The document includes gender analysis of problems and opportunities in 12 critical areas of concern, and clear and specific standards for actions to be implemented by governments, the UN system and civil society, including, where appropriate, the private sector. In addition, the Platform provides the first global commitment to gender mainstreaming as the methodology by which women’s empowerment will be achieved. It states that in implementing the suggested actions, “an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes should be promoted so that before decisions are taken an analysis is made of the effects on women and men, respectively.”

9.3.4 The Millennium Development Goals

The MDGs, in effect, consolidated previous agreements, including those on women’s rights, women’s empowerment and gender equality, into a single set of core goals, targets and benchmarks for the development community. The Millennium

Declaration from which they were drawn took a clear position, which has since been elaborated in multiple documents, that gender equality is both a right in itself and a driver of development. The MDGs reflected that through a specific goal (MDG 3), although the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment as a condition for the achievement of the other goals was not well-reflected.

9.3.5 UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women

The 1993 Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women is the first international human rights instrument to address the issue of violence exclusively and explicitly against women. It affirms that the phenomenon violates, impairs, or nullifies women's human rights and their exercise of fundamental freedoms. The Declaration provides a definition of gender-based abuse, calling it "any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life. The Declaration further states that gender-based violence takes many different forms and is experienced in a range of crisis and non-crisis settings. It is deeply rooted in structural relationships of inequality between women and men. During conflict, systematic gender-based violence is often perpetrated and/or condoned by both state and non-state actors. It thrives on impunity both in times of war and in times of peace.

9.3.6 The International Conference on Population and Development

The 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in Cairo was a milestone in the history of population and development, as well as in the history of women's rights. ICPD delegates reached a consensus that the equality and empowerment of women is a global priority. This issue was approached not only from the perspective of universal human rights, but also as an essential step towards eradicating poverty and stabilizing population growth. A woman's ability to access reproductive health and rights is a cornerstone of her empowerment. It is also critical to sustainable development.

9.3.7 Women, Peace and Security Framework and Commitments

The UN's guiding documents for women, peace and security are Security Council Resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1889 (2009) on women, peace and security and 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), 2106 (2013) and 2122 (2013) on sexual violence in armed conflict. These resolutions have laid the foundation for the efforts of the UN community to expand the role of women in leadership positions in every aspect of prevention and resolution of conflicts, including peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts, and to improve protection of women and girls within a framework of rule of law and respect for human rights.

9.3.8 UN Framework Convention for Climate Change

The Cancun Agreements emerging out of the UN Framework for Climate Change COP-16 in 2010 were the first global climate change policy to include multiple references to gender equality.

9.3.9 Aid Effectiveness Commitments

Policies on gender equality must be matched by the needed resources to implement them. The importance of gender equality in resource allocation was underscored in the 2008 Accra Agenda for Action (AAA), building on the 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. Through the Accra Agenda for Action, developing countries and donors commit to ensure that their respective development policies and programmes are designed and implemented in ways consistent with their agreed international commitments on gender equality, human rights, disability and environmental sustainability. The Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation endorsed in 2011 recognizes that gender equality and women's empowerment are critical to achieving development results and agreed to accelerate and deepen efforts to (1) improve information systems with disaggregating data by sex; (2) integrate targets for gender equality and women's empowerment in accountability mechanisms; and (3) address gender equality and women's empowerment in all aspects of development efforts, including peacebuilding and state building.

9.4 ANNEX V: REGIONAL LEVEL INSTRUMENTS

9.4.1 The African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa constitutes a milestone in the promotion, protection, and respect for the rights of women in Africa. This Protocol reaffirms the principle of promoting gender equality as enshrined in the Constitutive Act of AU as well as the NEPAD.

9.4.2 AU Women's Decade is to advance gender equality by accelerating the implementation of the Dakar, Beijing and AU Assembly decisions on gender equality and women's empowerment. The decade will be implemented in two phases; 2010-2015 and 2015-2020 with reviews in 2015 and 2020. The Decade's objectives include: poverty and promoting economic empowerment of women and entrepreneurship; agriculture and food security; women's health; maternal mortality and HIV&AIDS; education; science and technology; environment and climate change; peace and security, and violence against women; governance and legal protection; finance and gender budgets; women in decision-making roles; youth mentoring and women's empowerment.

9.4.3 African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child which reaffirms adherence to the principles of the rights and welfare of the child contained in the declaration, conventions and other instruments of the Organization of African Unity and in the United Nations and in particular the United Nations Convention on the Rights of

the Child; and the OAU Heads of State and Government's Declaration on the Rights and Welfare of the African Child.

9.4.4 New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) underlines the commitment of the African States to ensure the full participation of African Women as equal partners in African development and states its determination to ensure that the rights of women are promoted, realized and protected in order to enable them to enjoy fully all their human rights.

9.4.5 Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (2004) reaffirms the commitments of the AU and international instruments on human and women's rights. The AU Conference of Ministers responsible for Women's Affairs and Gender in 2005 adopted two documents that facilitate the implementation of the Solemn Declaration by member states. These are: Implementation Framework and Guidelines for reporting on the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa.

9.4.6 The ECOWAS Gender Policy represents a new approach and elaborates a set of principles, emphasizing among other things the affirmation of maximum political will on gender policy as a tool of ECOWAS institutions and programs, establishment of gender management systems in all the member states