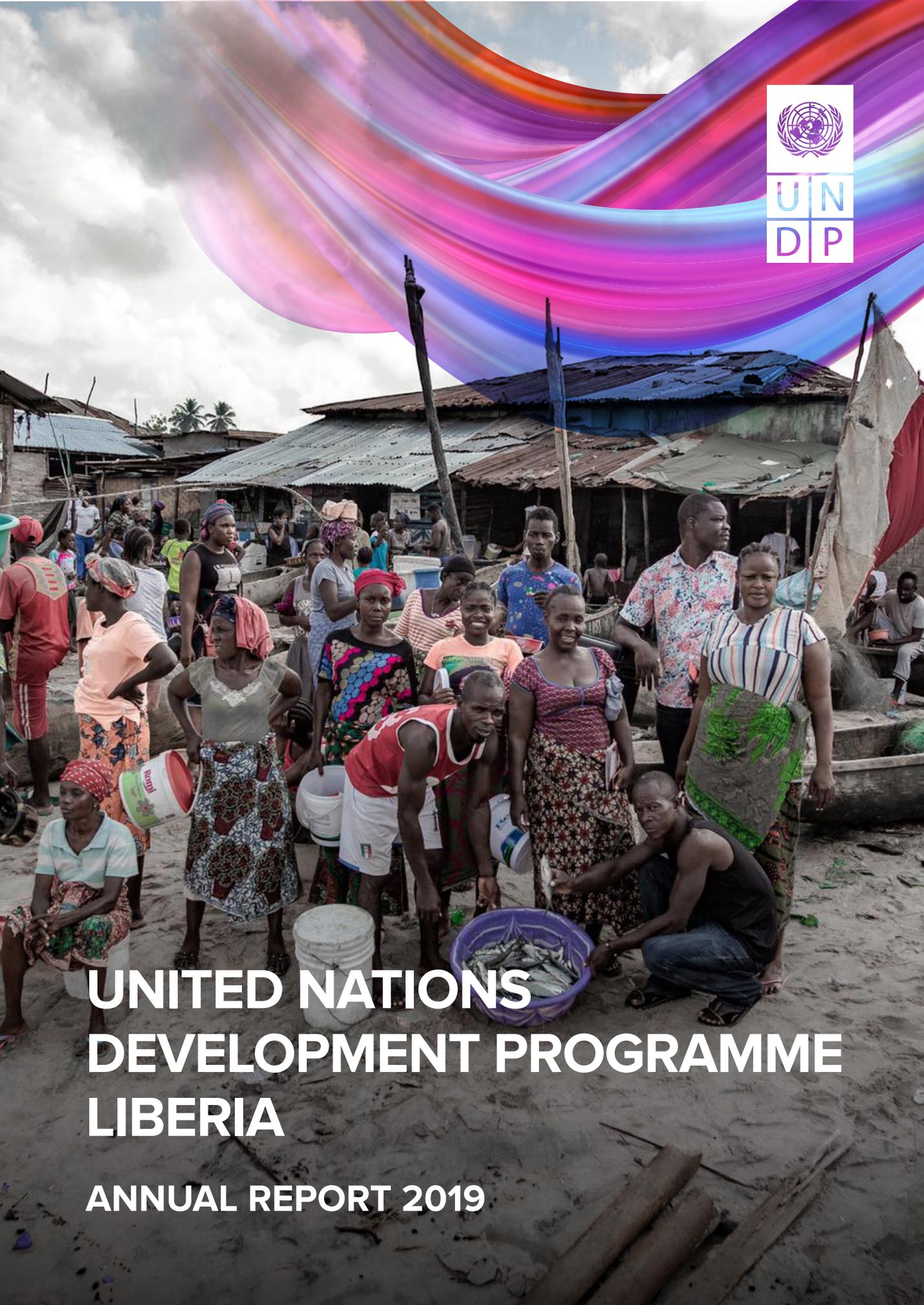




UN
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UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME LIBERIA

ANNUAL REPORT 2019

Foreword

Investing in development today defines tomorrow

I am proud to present to you the 2019 United Nations Development Programme in Liberia Annual Report. Looking back over the past year, UNDP in Liberia has demonstrated its trusted and steady partnership with the people and Government of Liberia as they faced a period of challenges and opportunities.

This Report highlights the results of UNDP's work over 2019. In its support to Liberia, UNDP helped the Government of Liberia to ensure that voices of the citizens and other stakeholders were built into national planning and budgeting, a plan in line with Agenda 2030. UNDP also helped Liberia to strengthen its systems, most notably in the justice and security sectors, gender mainstreaming, and climate change and adaptation.

As the UN's development agency and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) integrator, UNDP is helping the Government of Liberia to implement its Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development plan that also centres the SDGs. However, the onset of economic and social challenges in 2019 has delayed progress.

Currency depreciation, high youth unemployment, and high inflation led to the slashing of the economic growth forecast, from 4.7% to 0.4%, well below the 7% average annual growth required to attain the SDGs. As a result, the Government requested assistance from International Monetary Fund (IMF), and committed to working on a number of reform measures to safeguard against further slowdown of the economy. Part of the IMF agreement is Extended Credit Facility of US\$213.6 million over four years. The initial amount of US\$23.4 million was disbursed in December to boost economic recovery and foster macroeconomic stability.

With these economic challenges, the Government may need to re-calibrate its national development agenda as key assumptions upon which it is based may no longer hold. A new path to achieving pro-poor development will have to be worked out that prioritizes social expenditure education, health, etc.

UNDP remains steadfast in its support to the Government and people of Liberia to tackle some of these challenges. As the partner of choice in supporting sustainable development in Liberia, we continue to set the pace for leveraging itself as the #NewUNDP.



The United Nations system reform, which delinked UNDP from the UN Resident Coordinator's Office in January 2019, has assigned UNDP the UN's SDG integrator. UNDP is also the founder of the Climate Promise, helping countries around the world including Liberia to reach Paris Climate Agreement contributions in combating climate change.

The enthusiasm that followed this reform was hampered by the coronavirus pandemic with serious likelihood to derail progress in the achievement of the SDGs. The recovery process must be guided by a comprehensive assessment of the socio-economic impact of COVID-19 to ensure that it is green, inclusive by focusing on the vulnerable, innovative, boundless and resilient. Achieving this requires a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach.

I would like to thank our development partners without whom UNDP's work would be near impossible. Their continuing support has enabled UNDP to reach across the years to properly invest in meaningful change.

Lastly, I would like to thank the Government and people of Liberia. We are at your service. As the Resident Representative for Liberia, I commit UNDP's resolve to stay the course, to help the Government and the people of Liberia to reach their goals for a prosperous and healthy nation this year and beyond.

Pa Lamin Beyai
Resident Representative
UNDP Liberia



By the Numbers 2019

UNDP Liberia



3,380 WOMEN

entrepreneurs benefited from UNDP's BOSS project



65,446 PEOPLE

accessed basic government services at County Service Centres



1,723 PEOPLE

received legal aid services



20,000 HECTARES

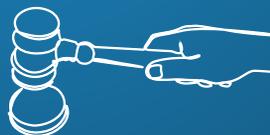
of forests sustainably managed under community conservation agreements



2 SPECIALIZED

CRIMINAL COURTS

established in Bong and Nimba counties



172 CONVICTIONS

out of 188 sexual and gender-based violence cases

Boosting the Pro-Poor Agenda for Sustainable Development

In 2019, UNDP's Human Development Index showed Liberia in the low human development category, ranking 176th out of 189 countries. However, over 30 years of development, Liberia has taken meaningful steps towards improving the lives of its citizens. In 2000, the average life expectancy from birth was 51.7 years, and today it is 63.7 years. Child mortality dropped significantly from 243 deaths of children under five-years-old out of 1,000 live births to 74.7 deaths. And Liberia's Gross National Income per capita has increased by 12.7 percent since 1990.

To put people, planet and prosperity at the fore, the Government of Liberia developed its flagship plan, the Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (PAPD). As a trusted partner of the Government, UNDP has supported the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP) push forward its national development plan.

In 2019, the MFDP with support from UNDP carried out stakeholders' orientation on the Development Plan, which laid the basis for national implementation, monitoring, coordination and reporting on the PAPD, attended by 104 civil society and local government participants (91 men and 13 women).

Prior to the orientation, 600 copies of the PAPD were printed for distribution. Additionally, a citizens' guide to the PAPD was developed and 600 copies were printed with the support of UNDP and distributed among stakeholders from government, civil society organizations and sub-national actors to promote citizens' engagement and participation in the implementation of the PAPD. This is expected to expand the scope of access and understanding of the PAPD to the larger population and improve monitoring, and checks and balances on development

interventions at the local level.

As part of preliminary steps taken to improve internal coordination and implement the PAPD, MFDP developed its Strategic Plan (2019-2023). Six hundred copies were printed and distributed to staff and other stakeholders. Sixty MFDP staff members contributed to the development of the document in a three-day strategic working session.

A National Aid Management Procedural Manual has been developed, which was supported by UNDP. The manual strengthens implementation of the National AID Policy developed in 2018 for effective aid coordination and mobilization. Twenty staff members (5 women and 15 men) contributed to the drafting of the document.

Also, three national consultants were recruited for six months to support the Government of Liberia through the MFDP in the conceptualization and designs of Government and donor-funded projects and programmes. The process included detailed costing, monitoring and evaluation, and implementation plans and facilitated in the development, review and establishment of strategic plans, frameworks, standards, policies, and methodologies required to drive government programme and project delivery.

The consultants worked closely with Directors of the Division of Development Planning to identify capacity needs of staff in preparing concept notes and project proposals. Training was conducted, an initial project proposal template was developed, a business climate improvement forum was organized and a sector template was developed for resource use and domestic revenue mobilization.



Accelerating Sustainable Development in Liberia

The fulcrum of President George Weah's administration is his flagship Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development. In it, the Government outlines its ambitious plan to boost the economy, eradicate poverty, and protect its environment with pro-poor policies, all which are in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Yet, with a decade left to achieve the SDGs and a slowing economic horizon, Liberia's Government recognized the need to accelerate action and called on its partners, including UNDP, to help refocus all stakeholders with sights on a whole-of-society approach to the SDGs.

In September 2019, over 350 participants attended a National Economic Dialogue (NED). Funded by UNDP, **USAID**, **ECOWAS** and others, and in partnership with the **European Union**, the Dialogue saw a wide cross-section of Liberian actors like government officials, political leaders, youth, women, development partners, civil society, and academia to engage in a three-day event where discussions lead to tangible and commendable outcomes.

The NED provided a useful platform for national stakeholders to among other things: distill required policy actions to implement specified strategies in the National Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development; propose new innovative policy directions, strategies and programs; and build national consensus and momentum behind the stipulated policies, strategies and programs.

Following the successful conclusion of the Dialogue, which proffered a range of recommendations aimed at stabilizing the Liberian economy, President George Weah constituted Cabinet Subcommittees with a mandate to accelerate his Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development.

The President established the Public Finance Mobilization and Management Subcommittee, the Investment and Private Sector Growth Subcommittee, the Unemployment and Skills Development Subcommittee, and the Peace Building and Reconciliation Subcommittee.

The various Subcommittees will work closely with the Ministry of State for Presidential Affairs and are charged with a specific role to improve coordination to achieve results-based management.

Part of the Agenda is to plan and participate in the Annual National Economic Dialogue (ANED), report to the Cabinet on successes, challenges and way forward, as well as communicate activities and achievements to the public.

Additionally, President Weah requested the 54th National Legislature to advise and provide guidance on all legislative and other necessary measures necessary for the implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's report, including the establishment of economic and war crime courts in Liberia—a major recommendation from the NED conference.



A PRESIDENTIAL PARTNERSHIP

President George Weah (above) shakes hands with Pa Lamin Beyai, UNDP Resident Representative during the high-level dialogue: The National Economic Revival and Growth, Critical Issues, Challenges, and Way Forward. Togar McIntosh (below), the Chairman of the National Economic Dialogue, turns over the NED recommendations to President Weah.

Photo: UNDP Liberia





ENSURING EVERY CITIZEN IS HEARD

UNDP Liberia is supporting the Government of Liberia in building a mobile & online citizens' feedback mechanism for near real-time exchanges. #Innovation #SDGs

Photo: UNDP Liberia

Strengthening the social contract

Governance & Public Institutions

Liberia is working toward strengthening its institutions. From justice systems to basic government services, from human rights to elections, Liberia with the support of UNDP is laying the groundwork for making progress with Sustainable Development Goal 16, improving the quality of governance systems in the country, and ensuring equitable access to its services.

UNDP Liberia's work in democratic governance promotes the maintenance of rule of law, access to justice, improving the efficiency and accountability of the public sector and minimizing corrupt practices. UNDP supports a more accountable and efficient government, together with a public sector that delivers quality services, while advocating for reforms and institutional capacity development in Liberia.

UNDP's Governance and Public Institutions pillar seeks to bolster the efforts of the Government of Liberia in reforming and improving governance systems that adhere to and promote good governance and democratic values. Its interventions include: enhancing the rule of law and promoting accountable and transparent governance that is also inclusive and in accordance with international human rights standards; deepening the democratization process by improving electoral institutions, processes and laws; as well as increase transparency and accountability in governance processes.



13,941
DOCUMENTS

issued to Liberian citizens
at the County Service
Centres in 2019



100,000
PEOPLE

reached with human
rights information in
UNDP campaign



1,723
PEOPLE

provided with legal aid
and assistance including
legal representation

Building a strong civil service

UNDP has partnered with the Government of Liberia to help it build a strong civil service. Training staff and providing much-needed equipment are two strong investments in helping Liberia reach this goal.

The Liberia Institute of Public Administration (LIPA) Regional Training Hub in Buchanan, established in 2018 with support from the UNDP, has received equipment to help its e-learning capacity (server, computer, etc.), in 2019. Senior executive officials and students in the region are expected to benefit from the facility while it responds to increasing demands at the Grand Bassa Community College (GBCC).

Similarly, the Department of Economics at the University of Liberia received basic equipment to help students fully take advantage of their education. UNDP provided computers, printers and accessories to strengthen the lab for evidence-based policy analysis, research studies and statistical development. This investment will result in better-trained and market ready graduates able to work efficiently in their chosen fields.

Internal Audit: To increase transparency and ward off

corruption within the Government, Liberia's internal auditing staff received training and certification of the Certified Government Auditing Professional (CGAP), an internationally recognized certification for internal auditors. Forty-six internal auditors (8 women; 38 men) from the Internal Audit Agency (IAA) benefited from the training. A step-by-step regulation has also been developed in order to operationalize the IAA's Act, the agency's guiding framework, resulting in effective and well-functioning institutions.

The Procurement Sector: To boost the capacity of Liberia's public procurement civil service, UNDP's Denmark office and the Public Procurement and Concession Commission (PPCC) partnered to deliver CIPS trainings (Charter Institute of Procurement and Supply) to 149 civil servants. The trainings will enhance the public procurement system and improve the existing capacity of procurement practitioners, which ultimately leads to the professionalization of the procurement profession in Liberia. Additionally, procurement practitioners will become more conscious, efficient and effective in the management of public resources.

Transparency, accountability and integrity

Stamping out corruption and increasing transparency in its workings are priorities of the Government of Liberia and UNDP has provided tools to help Liberia reach its goals. In 2019, UNDP boosted the capacity of Liberia's Anti-Corruption Commission in delivering on its mandate.

LACC successfully recovered some US\$73,600 to date. This was a result of sending 29 cases for prosecution; six trials were held with four convictions. There are three ongoing and five cases under review by the Supreme Court. This is expected to serve as a deterrent in preventing people from misappropriating national resources.

As part of reaching out to local officials in the enforcement of asset declaration as per the LACC mandate, 46 local officials (36 men; 10 women) declared assets, out of which LACC verified 21 representing 45.6% in excess of the conventional 10% to 20% acceptable as best practice globally.

In strengthening compliance at the central level, a procurement compliance and awareness training was conducted for 165 officials (38 women; 127 men). This was jointly executed by the Public Procurement and Concession Commission (PPCC) in collaboration with LACC to enhance transparency and accountability, and to strengthen the procurement capacity of key government institutions.

Constitutional Review

The dividends of Constitutional Reform

Constitutional reform remains a unique opportunity for advancing reconciliation, political dialogue, peace consolidation, and a means to achieve consensus on sensitive and unresolved issues that underlie Liberia's past conflict.

With UNDP support to the Constitutional Review in 2019, the Law Reform Commission organized two working sessions involving a consortium of civil society organizations, the legal community, and the executive and legislative branches of Government with the aim of rejuvenating the constitutional review process and proposing changes to the current Constitution. Through these engagements, the Law Reform Commission, in collaboration with other stakeholders, formulated, reviewed, and submitted eight proposals to the leadership and members of the Legislature as well as the Presidency (the President and his Cabinet).

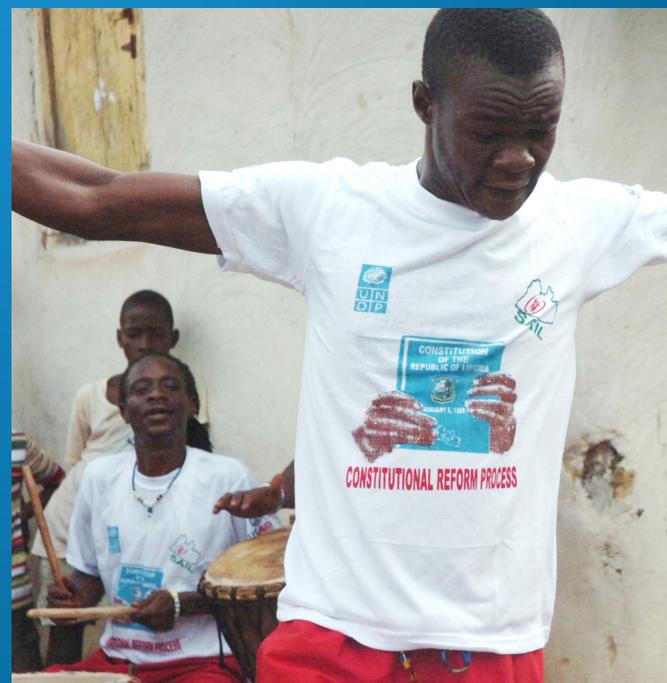
Consequently, both Houses of the National Legislature voted unanimously and agreed to amend the following Articles of the Constitution (28, 45, 47, 48, 49, 50, and 83), which in summary means amending the tenure of the President from six to five years; the Senate from nine to seven years and Representatives from six to five years. On Article 47 of the Constitution, the term of the President Pro Tempore of the Liberian Senate is to be reduced from six years to five years. On citizenship, a natural born citizen of Liberia may hold another citizenship, but shall not qualify for elected national or public service positions and appointed positions, among others.

A referendum on the proposed amendments is now scheduled for October 2020 as provided by law and stipulated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This means that the proposed changes in the Constitution have met all legal requirements and are ready to go into effect. A gazette issued

by the Ministry in 2019 provides clear, correct and adequate information to the voting public about the proposed constitutional amendments in preparation for the voting process.

The success of this rests squarely on the shoulders of the Legislature as such it requires their attention and time. Nonetheless, the Law Reform Commission, with help from UNDP in 2019, remains engaged with the Legislature and the Executive to ensure that the appropriate legislative action is taken through the adoption of a Joint Resolution. The amendment of the Constitution is expected to create further equality for all, including women.

UNDP's support to Liberia's Constitutional Review Committee has been ongoing since 2013 and was funded by the **European Union, USAID, UNMIL, Sweden** and other partners. It is a key priority of the Government of Liberia that creates the platform for nation-building, reconciliation, peace consolidation, security and development.



National Reconciliation

Under the Social Cohesion and Reconciliation Programme, UNDP with support from the **Peacebuilding Fund** (PBF) provided critical support to various national institutions to advance national reconciliation through legislative reforms and civic engagement with a focus on accelerating transitional justice in Liberia and the promotion of peaceful coexistence among communities.

To boost the meaningful participation of women in social cohesion and reconciliation programmes, UNDP allocated half of the programme's budget towards gender inclusion.

Using the bottom-up approach, 21 community dialogues were conducted to assess conflict triggers, 14 district level dialogues to validate the triggers identified, and seven county reconciliation dialogues to develop County Action Plans.

The dialogues increased the participation of diverse stakeholders in developing the reconciliation roadmap of the counties, engender local ownership of reconciliation processes and to mitigate drivers of conflict so that sustainable development can take place at the local level.

Participants included traditional leaders, youth, women, disadvantaged groups, security/law enforcement officers, and the media. A total of 1,985 respondents (778 women; 1,207 men) and discussants participated in 42 dialogues. As a result of the dialogues, five of the seven counties developed local-level Reconciliation Action Plans, helping counties take appropriate measures to maintain peace, and in some cases, adopt recommendations by the Truth and Reconciliation process.

UNDP also provided support to the Peacebuilding Office through the Ministry of Internal Affairs, to work with communities in resolving long standing border and land related conflicts. At least one boundary conflict was resolved in Lofa County. Significant progress has also been made in resolving the boundary disputes between Bong and Gbarpolu as well as Rivercess and Sinoe Counties.

Additionally, consultations were held in support for the erection of 14 memorials as part of the reconciliation process, providing people with historical touchstones. The meetings discussed the acquisition of land, and plans are underway for construction of the memorials.



Fair elections, strong democracy

Strong, transparent, fair elections make for a healthy democracy, and with support from UNDP, Liberia has made significant advances towards its SDG 16 targets. As part of its support to the Government of Liberia through the National Elections Commission (NEC), UNDP supported the institutional strengthening, management and administrative frameworks, and electoral law reform processes in line with the NEC Strategic Plan, also consistent with recommendations made by national and international elections' observers.

The Commission, with funding from the UNDP-managed **Elections Basket Fund (European Union, Sweden, Canada, and Ireland)**, supported eight intensive regional consultations on Electoral Law reform throughout the 72 electoral districts of Liberia.

Consequently, NEC developed the electoral legal reform action plan, which was endorsed by the NEC Board of Commissioners. As a result of these consultations, the key issues under consideration are: the change of election day, with the view to increase participation and decrease costs; reform in Electoral Dispute Resolution; restructuring the NEC to allow for more efficient electoral administration; reduction in the tenure of some elected officials, including the President, and the NEC Board of Commissioners; enhancing political participation of women, youth and persons living with disabilities; and review of political parties organization and independent candidates' framework. It is envisaged that the outcome of this endeavor will improve the conduct of elections and bring Liberia further on par with international best practices. This, by extension, will engender democratic governance and the sustenance of peace.

The National Legislature has given the yes vote to constitutional provisions that affect elections. In addition to the reduction in tenures of the Presidency and the Legislators, elections will be held on the second Tuesday in November instead of second Tuesday in October as a way to avoid low turnout during the monsoon season. There is also the reduction in the time allotted for the hearing of complaints coming from General Elections from 30

days to 15 to hasten resolution and ease potential conflict.

On staff capacity building, the programme supported several study tours for key NEC personnel to expose them to other jurisdictions in Africa specifically Ghana, Kenya and South Africa. The project also supported the holding of a BRIDGE (Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections) training in election administration, voter registration and election logistics.

The various trainings focused on enhancing the capacity of data management, research, monitoring and evaluation system in the field of logistics, training and field coordination; internal communication, and results management. In addition to external exposure, the NEC benefited from training to improve its storage and inventory systems, including through the training on Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) Business Solution Workflow and enhancing security features of NEC central warehouse.

There are still gaps in several areas of electoral operations and administration, necessitating continuous support to the institutional strengthening and capacity building. The UN Needs Assessment Mission (NAM) conducted in July 2019, recommended the continuous advisory and financial support to the 2020 Special Senatorial elections and 2023 General Elections.

The technical advice and assistance are to be provided to the NEC in the following areas: budget planning, legal, voter registration, electoral operations, external relations, civic and voter education, and support to the gender unit, ICT infrastructure, as well as the national security election coordination mechanism.

NAM also recommended a continuous advice and assistance to the NEC in consolidating its institutional capacity throughout the electoral cycle. Its findings are expected to guide the development of the five-year election support project. UNDP will continue to actively engage the NEC to ensure that these challenges are overcome in 2020.

A Government for the people: Ensuring everyone's voice is heard

Improving public service delivery is one of the Government's priorities, and as such, has requested the help of UNDP to achieve this aim.

Through the County Investment Facility, UNDP is working directly with the Ministry of State to boost performance management in the public service.

In 2019, UNDP helped the Government to design a performance management system that improves the overall performance of the civil service with measurable indicators to monitor improved service delivery. This is done through a combination of performance contracting and active harvesting and analysis of citizens' feedback data, with the Performance Management Compliance System (PMCS) and Citizens' Feedback Mechanism (CFM) in place.

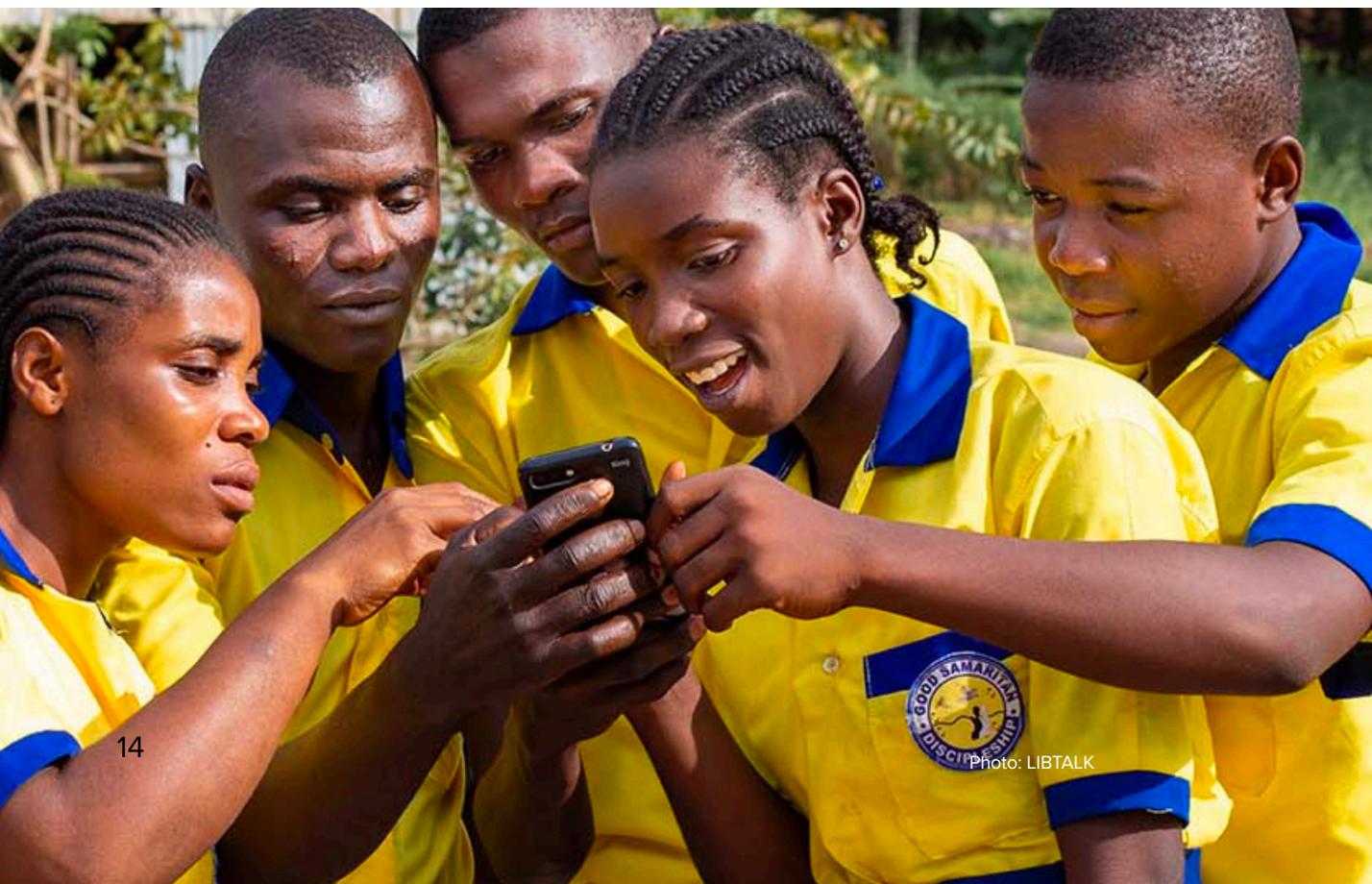
With the voice of the people in a direct line to the Government, it is able to monitor the performance of its various service offers, ministries and agencies,

as well as monitor its implementation of the National Development Plan. The Government is also able to respond to citizens' opinions and concerns regarding the delivery, non-delivery, and quality of public services including health, education, and infrastructure.

Last year, UNDP provided human resources, equipment and installation of the feedback platform. Two GSM companies (Orange and MTN) were contracted to be used as conduit for both internet and text message to the system.

The InfoNET, a leading indigenous technology development facility with a unique niche in public and private sector innovation, installed the platform and conducted training staff at the national and sub-national levels.

The toll-free number is up and running for all Orange and MTN customers. **Press 2424 to have your voice heard.**



Plans for the people

Using data to inform Government plans

There are people behind the numbers, and data reflecting the people of Liberia have an enormous role to play in informing decision-makers on policy. In Liberia, UNDP's support to the national statistics agency, Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services (LISGIS), has resulted in the production of several vital dataset, many of which fed into the development of the Government's National Development Plan with the Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES) among others.

In 2019, LISGIS with support from UNDP conducted a three-day validation exercise on the thematic analysis of the HIES. The first HIES was conducted in 2016. Given the need for gathering updated data for monitoring, the Pro-poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development, another survey was commissioned in 2018. The HIES gathered data from a cross-section of the population, with special attention to gather information on women.

Additionally, UNDP in collaboration with the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP) and LISGIS procured and delivered equipment to the University of Liberia's Department of Economics, in order to strengthen the economic research forecasting and policy analysis capacity of its lab.

Your voice: Liberia enhances its social contract

(Continued from page 14)

In addition to the feedback mechanism, UNDP also helped the Government to roll out its Performance Management Compliance System, which strengthens accountability and serves as a social contract between the government and citizens of Liberia. The strength of this two-pronged approach is that it combines a top-down ministerial performance contracting with a bottom up citizens' feedback system.

Officials who sign performance contracts will identify and commit to clearly defined annual targets along with indicators of success and monitoring tools to measure service delivery performance. The feedback mechanism, in turn, will generate information and data on the quality of public services for the end users, which will inform the performance of various ministries and subsequently have a significant impact on the rating of their performance contracts.

Training on the new systems for Ministries, Agencies and Commissions (MACs) started in 2019. The trainings ensure that staff possess the skills for setting, monitoring, and reporting on targets in their respective institutions. Approximately 336 public servants from 112 MACS were trained to draft the performance contracts for their entities.

In collaboration with the Africa Cabinet Government Network (ACGN), the project trained Cabinet Secretariat and Cabinet Focal Points in the MACs to (i) prepare draft Cabinet agendas and recommendations to the President regarding meeting outcomes; and (ii) develop and maintain an effective database of Cabinet documents.

The training strengthened the Cabinet's coordination with MACs and enabled the MACs to meet the reporting requirements as per the revised Cabinet Guidelines.

Rule of Law & Access to Justice

Access to justice is a vital part of UNDP's mandate to reduce poverty and strengthen democratic governance. It is a basic human right as well as an indispensable means to combat poverty, prevent and resolve conflicts within the broad context of justice reforms. Empowering the poor and disadvantaged to seek remedies for injustice, strengthening linkages between formal and informal structures, and countering biases inherent in both systems, can provide access to justice for those who would otherwise be excluded.

Support is comprehensive and sector-wide covering key institutions, and aimed at increasing overall access to justice from "entry-to-exit" within the justice system. It is focused on both the structural and procedural impediments.

Justice underpinned by Human Rights

Strengthening the Rule of Law in Liberia: Justice and Security for the Liberian People, supports the Government of Liberia in its efforts to build a society on the principles of rule of law, human rights and justice. It seeks to strengthen national institutions to provide accessible and equitable justice services while providing right-bearers with the opportunity to seek redress and access legal assistance.

The UNDP and Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights joint programme's niche lies in supporting justice and related systems so that they work for those who are poor and disadvantaged and is committed to using a human rights-based approach in its programming, guided by international human rights standards and principles.

By increasing public confidence in the sector, support is designed to be catalytic, strengthening State-society relations and creating an enabling environment for development. Moreover, this is consistent with UNDP and OHCHR's strong commitment to the fulfillment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Under this programme, funding from the Governments of Sweden and Ireland through the **Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA)** and **Irish Aid** respectively, has facilitated implementation of numerous activities that have benefitted various sectors of Liberia's justice system.

In 2019, the programme supported decentralizing and right-sizing operations of justice and security institutions by investing heavily in enhancing their presence, reach and capacity in outlying areas. The provision of legal services was supported and systemized through two approaches. First, by strengthening national institutional support, and second, through the strengthening of civil society.

By the Numbers

MINISTRY OF JUSTICE

- 6 prosecutors, 2 case liaison officers, 2 victim support officers training in sexual & gender-based violence
- 339 justice chain actors (115 women) trained in SGBV
- SGBV unit received 222 cases, 45 cases prosecuted & 22 convictions secured
- 99 SGBV survivors received counselling services

JUDICIARY

- 60 new magistrates/judges (12 women) trained & deployed in all 15 counties
- 6 public defenders (2 women) deployed to 6 counties to increase access to free legal representation

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

- 9 human rights monitors recruited, trained and deployed to monitor human rights violations



By the Numbers

LEGAL AID & ASSISTANCE

- 670 pre-trial detainees provided with legal aid services
- 648 conflicts & disputes mediated outside formal justice system

IMMIGRATION SERVICES

- 663 Liberia Immigration Services Officers (183 women) received specialized training

NATIONAL POLICE

- 184 officers (52 women) trained in community policing
- 128 community leaders (37 women) trained in community policing
- 60 Women and Children Protection Services officers trained in SGBV forensics & human trafficking

MINISTRY OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS

- 15 County Security Council & District Security Council committees established
- 25 probation officers (8 women) trained



Photos: UNDP Liberia



A woman and child join the UNDP-supported public awareness campaign on the Government's Land Rights Act passed in 2019.

Photo: UNDP Liberia

Promoting Human Rights in Liberia

UNDP Liberia and the **Office of the High Commissioner and Human Rights (OHCHR)** in collaboration with the **Ministry of Justice, Governance Commission** and the **Independent National Human Rights Commission** supported the development of a new and costed National Human Rights Action Plan that provides a road map for the protection of human rights, while ensuring that Liberia makes concerted efforts toward keeping its international human rights obligations.

UNDP Liberia also worked towards improving the availability, accessibility and appropriateness of justice, security and protection services for women and girls by sustainably improving the investigation and prosecution capacity of the Women and Children Protection Section and the sexual and gender-based violence Crimes Prosecution Units.

Aimed at gaining a better understanding of how residents perceive the rule of law landscape and how they choose to resolve disputes, UNDP and OHCHR administered a Public Perception Survey of Liberian Justice and Security Institutions. The survey gathered responses from 3,504 households across the entire country.

UNDP also conducted a Comprehensive Review of Liberian Justice and Security Sectors Data to examine the extent to which the public engages with the government and their level of trust in the various justice and security institutions in order to assess capacity gaps.

Strengthening local government

Liberia is ensuring its decentralization efforts are understood, informed and supported by the people. In 2019, UNDP assisted Liberia in its goals to continue in its aim of decentralizing its services while strengthening the quality of its delivery to the citizens of Liberia.

UNDP helped spread awareness of the newly-passed Local Government Act. Over 50,000 people were reached through town hall meetings, university debates, radio talk shows, trainings for local government officials (superintendents, chiefs, women and youth groups, development superintendents, etc.), and through the distribution of 2,000 copies of the Act. Among the areas covered was access to basic land services, which remains a challenge for women in rural communities.

The national Decentralization Programme, supported by UNDP and the **Government of Sweden**, ensures that basic services are provided to everyone regardless of where they live, through the County Service Centers (CSCs). The decentralization of vital basic services to all parts of the country has largely been successful and widely used by Liberia's citizens.

The Centers provide the only opportunity for citizens and residents to access key services such as business registration, birth certificates (0-12 years old), vehicle registration, marriage certificates, as well as pay taxes without travelling to Monrovia. It has also eased the stress of commuting long distances under horrendous conditions to the Capital, thus reducing unnecessary transportation costs. The establishment of CSCs has also helped the Government to better understand the complex issues they will face as they begin to advance the decentralization policy.

In 2019, almost 14,000 documents were issued at CSCs, including birth, marriage (civil and traditional) certificates, vehicle and business registration along with other documents. In addition to documentation services, the CSCs serve as a source of revenue generation for the government. Since opening, the CSCs have generated over US\$1 million for government coffers.

In furtherance to the decentralization process and with the roll-out of the Local Government Act of 2018, four County Treasuries have been established in Nimba, Bong, Margibi and Grand Bassa counties in 2019. This has reduced payment time to local vendors by half. Local authorities now process transactions and issue cheques outside the central Government.

Various capacity building programs were also implemented including a mentoring program, training of trainers, and a training of senior staff in monitoring and evaluation. As part of this support, several knowledge products including the CSCs Standard Operations Procedures Manual and the Mentees Handbook were completed and distributed. Mentees are 42 local government officials who underwent training and mentorship on decentralization and local governance. They were exposed to areas such as: participatory local governance, leadership, report writing, communication and coordination, records keeping, management, time management, strategic planning, research and data analysis, and computer skills.

In previous years, donor partners included **European Union (EU) United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Sweden, United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)** and technical support from **UN Women**.





BOOSTING ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES FOR LIBERIA'S MOST VULNERABLE

A woman sells fruits and vegetables at a roadside market on the road to Nimba. UNDP and its partners are investing in Liberians to engage in sustainable economic activities across the country.

Photo: UNDP Liberia

Inclusive growth for all Liberians

SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION

UNDP's Sustainable Economic Transformation work in Liberia ensures that growth benefits the marginalized and most vulnerable people of society. It also supports the creation of meaningful jobs and livelihood opportunities across key productive sectors in the Liberian economy. Interventions include: (a) strengthened evidence-based planning, monitoring and reporting (b) support to enhancing the formation of small and medium enterprises and (c) effective natural resource management.

Climate change is also a driving force of Liberia's development gains and environmental degradation impacts both the health and wealth of the nation. Under the Inclusive and Sustainable Development pillar, UNDP helps the Government, business, and citizens grapple with climate change and supports the whole-of-society approach to climate adaptation initiatives country-wide.



4,000
JOBS

created through the BOSS project



21
EARLY WARNING SYSTEMS

installed across Liberia to reduce the risks of harm due to extreme weather events



20,000
HECTARES

protected in a sustainable forest management agreement with western Liberia communities

Pathway to prosperity

Small businesses can be the pathway to prosperity in many parts of Liberia, and if successful, can contribute significantly to Liberia's poverty reduction rates.

UNDP and its partners have invested in boosting the micro-, small- and medium enterprises through the Business Opportunities Support Services (BOSS) project, helping entrepreneurs establish, run and grow their small businesses.

Accessing affordable capital to start or grow a business is one of the roadblocks to success, and given the current economic climate and skepticism of lending institutions, especially for those entrepreneurs living in rural areas, loans were out of reach for BOSS beneficiaries.

To remedy this, the BOSS project mapped out the financial needs of the beneficiaries and provided support to enhance small business development in four counties (Nimba, Bong, Margibi and Grand Bassa). The Project facilitated a US\$16,000 loan from banking institutions to some businesses showing promise. This is significant because many of the beneficiaries would not have received any loans before the intervention as they were deemed high-risk.

BOSS was instrumental in improving the economic situation of some 4,279 people, 79 percent of whom are women. This was achieved through interventions like skills training, coaching and mentoring as well as providing start-up capital for beneficiaries.

The support included providing equipment, materials and technical support to entrepreneurs and cooperatives. In collaboration with the Ministry of Commerce and Industry Small Business Department, five BOSS centers were also established in Bong, Grand Bassa, Margibi, Montserrado and Nimba counties as well as the creation of 4 mini IT rooms in four of the project counties.

The BOSS project also provided technical assistance and capacity support through coaching and mentoring in business planning and management to 135 people (93 women and 72 men) entrepreneurs in the four counties.

Building the capacities of women in business management is important as it helps their business improve and grow, which in terms benefits the family. The knowledge acquired plus capital injection contributed to the expansion of many preexisting businesses while others successfully started their own enterprises.

Purchasing equipment and turning individuals in cooperatives and allowing them to share equipment did not only reduce their needs for loans, but it also improved social cohesion. This has resulted to the job creation for over 4,000 people in rural communities.

IN FOCUS: Boats give boost to local fishers

Using a stick as an oar and a disused log as a boat, young boys on school holiday take turns to learn their parents' craft in Small Fanti Town, in Buchanan, Grand Bassa County. The primary economic activity in this informal settlement is fishing. Kick-about on the beach by the kids are punctuated with helping their parents mend fishing nets or giving a hand in clearing boats ahead of fishing trips.

Under the BOSS project, UNDP Liberia has equipped a local fishing association with three motorized fishing boats to increase their production and improve the standards of living in the community. The three boats directly support over 100 homesteads.

Photos: UNDP Liberia



Keeping our Climate Promise

In 2016, the world set ambitious climate targets under the Paris Agreement. As each country faces different challenges and landscapes, the nationally determined contributions (NDCs) are nation-owned and driven in which countries set their own environmental targets to reach by 2030. But coming into the last decade of action towards the SDGs, UNDP has offered help to countries to accelerate their action towards reaching their goals. Liberia is one of UNDP's Climate Promise countries, set to receive additional resources and expertise to boost their NDCs. In 2019, UNDP and partners helped Liberia to run a dialogue to identify gaps and potential revisions to its NDC.



Gaming has become a global pastime. Led by UNDP and our partners, this new mobile game educates people on climate solutions and allows them to vote on the actions they would like to see their country take. The results will be collected and delivered to global leaders. Over 1.2 million people have played so far.



Turning palm oil into a sustainable industry

The Good Growth Partnership (GGP) is providing technical support at the national and the landscape levels to the Government of Liberia so that there can be an overhaul in the way oil palm is produced. The GGP aims to ensure reduced deforestation from oil palm products, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and enhance biodiversity conservation and sustainable forest management. Efforts toward achieving this have involved bringing together, diverse stakeholders to promote action and causing new partnerships to be forged.

Systemic strategies are being developed that would improve land use planning and farmer capacities. The GGP is being implemented in Liberia through a UNDP and Conservation International partnership comprising four areas: multi-stakeholder dialogue and action; policy reform; land use planning and farmer support systems.

UNDP, through the Good Growth Partnership project, was instrumental in the signing a conservation agreement between Conservation International and communities in the western region to sustainably manage 20,000 hectares (ha) of community forest within the western region of the country. Of that amount, 5,000 ha is of high conservation value and high carbon stock.

In exchange for the protected forest, the community will benefit from a range of sustainable employment schemes, including 40 green jobs in front-line conservation. Two platforms, the National Oil Palm Platform of Liberia and the North West Oil Palm Landscape Forum, were established to help promote opportunities and mitigate any challenges between communities and the industry.

There has been robust and inclusive stakeholder engagement, including with local communities. The implementation of the conservation agreements in the north-west has promoted biodiversity and forest conservation, as well as facilitated alternative livelihood opportunities for communities and individuals in the landscape. Together these actions are promoting sustainable oil palm production in Liberia.



GOOD GROWTH PARTNERSHIP: People living near palm oil plantations are reaping economic opportunities as a result of the Sustainable Palm Oil Project. Photos: UNDP Liberia

National Climate Change Strategy

In 2018, UNDP's support to the environment through the National Adaptation Plans project (NAPs), developed a National Policy & Response Strategy on Climate Change with the aim of providing a direction for the country's effort in addressing climate change.

As a follow-up, awareness-raising exercises were conducted in 2019 at the national, sectoral and local levels to inform and sensitize stakeholders on climate-related issues, which would serve as the basis for mainstreaming climate change into sectoral initiatives at various levels of government.

With continuous support to national counterparts to implement the strategy, it is expected that the sectors' resilience to climate change will be strengthened to enable the country respond to the threats posed by climate change.

The Next Generation of Climate Experts

At the heart of many of the greatest challenges facing Liberia in its effort to combat climate change is also the lack of trained expertise and the absence of the mentorship and training necessary for them to engage in activities across the critical sectors that are most vulnerable to climate change.

The University of Liberia, in partnership with UNDP and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in 2019, launched a graduate program in environmental studies. The School offers both undergraduate and graduate academic programs teaching Liberia's next generation of environmental experts.

It addresses the need for research, and capacity development that will contribute significantly to solving environmental issues in Liberia and the region. These professional programs also capture climate change adaptation and vulnerability, as well as, disaster management thereby responding to increasing labour-market demand for professionals knowledgeable about these issues in Liberia and internationally.

This initiative supported by UNDP's National Adaptation Plans Project (NAPs) in partnership with the **Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)** is also funded by the **Green Climate Fund**. The two-degree granting Environmental Studies and Climate Change programme is to help promote and contribute to the NAPs

of Liberia. The focus will be on developing a greater understanding of environmental disasters, related issues of climate change and biodiversity.

In addition to the new University programmes, UNDP has facilitated the launch of the Least Developed Countries Consortium on Climate Change at the University of Liberia. This initiative will open frontiers for capacity development, knowledge exchange, policy support and collaboration with other universities within the consortium.

To help meet the critical need of mitigating climate change, the EPA, working with the National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA) supported five staff members (3 women; 2 men) to participate in an intensive training in disaster risk management and reduction strategies held in Israel. The trainees will then be prepared to return to the NDMA and provide mentorship and training to colleagues in the agency.

Ultimately, it is envisioned that these trainees – and those they mentor – will become the next generation of climate change adaptation champions in the agency, and in their capacity, support the development and implementation of disaster strategies and activities for the purpose of increasing resilience. In this way, the training provided through the NAPs project will have an exponential multiplier effect.

Digital transformation of climate knowledge

In an effort to strengthen the knowledge base for adaptation, UNDP supported the development of a knowledge management platform hosted by the Environmental Protection Agency. The platform is designed to synchronize existing climate information platforms used in other government departments. It allows connection with national, regional and international networks and research institutes. This platform facilitates access to relevant events, workshops and training courses. It also serves as a repository of data and knowledge products, which will contribute to the sustainability of the NAP project by creating highly accessible information systems and strengthening capacity for knowledge sharing between divergent groups during and beyond the lifetime of the current project. (<http://ccksp.gnf.tf/>)

Additionally, UNDP supported the development of Liberia's Disaster Database; a cloud-based disaster platform developed for the National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA) to provide information and track disasters nationally. This system is in support of the National Disaster Risk Management Strategy. It aims to provide disaster information including data about victims and relief personnel; data about damages to buildings, infrastructure and belongings; geographical data about roads and other landmarks; logistics data; communication and message data; financial data needed to manage the collection and distribution of donations; data in blogs; etc. (<https://ndmal.com/>)

SOLAR FOR HEALTH

With funding from UNDP's core resources, a solar for health project launched in 2019. When completed, the project will provide solar lighting and power for critical services and equipment for the operating theaters, laboratories and maternal health centers of 12 health facilities selected by the Ministry of Health from seven counties- Lofa, Bong, Bomi, Gbarpolu, Grand Bassa and Grand Cape mount and Montserrado.

The use of solar energy at the health facilities instead of diesel generators is expected to reduce CO2 emission as part of efforts to achieving targets for Liberia's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) implementation. UNDP is encouraging investment in renewable energy as part of efforts aimed at greening the environment and fighting climate change.



In 2019, Liberia developed a National Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience Strategy with help from UNDP and **The Green Climate Fund**. The strategy, which was informed by a wide cross-section of Liberian stakeholders, will be presented to the cabinet in 2020 by the National Disaster Agency.

Early Warning Systems save lives & livelihoods

Early warnings to natural hazards limit the damage done to people and property, and as Liberia faces some extreme hazards like droughts and floods, the installation of early warning systems can avert disaster and protect vulnerable people.

UNDP's Early Warning System (EWS) Project, managed by the Ministry of Transport, was designed to respond to Liberia's capacity to counter extreme weather and climate hazards and shocks. Twenty-one systems were installed in Liberia's five domestic airports and one international airport and are fully operational. UNDP supported the training and certification 48 staff members (8 women) in various climate science courses: aviation meteorology, climatology, agro-meteorology, and meteorological database management.

With support from the EWS project, the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) of the National Disaster Relief Agency was rehabilitated and equipped to make the EOC effective, operational and functional. This center will facilitate the collection, management and retrieval of information for timely decision making before, during and after disasters.

As part of efforts to enhance access to weather and climate information, the Department of Meteorology in partnership with the Environmental Protection Agency, Ministry of Agriculture, National Fisheries & Aquaculture Authority, Forestry Development Authority and UNDP conducted a two-day climate information user training workshop focusing on communication and use of the weather and climate information received from the system.

The training targeted extension officers, farmers, fishermen, local media practitioners from community radio stations and other end users. It was important because it enhanced understanding of the weather information displayed by the system as well as the use of the information when received.

To further enhance this process, 25 android devices loaded with the WeatherBug app developed under the EWS project were distributed to stakeholders for use within workplaces and communities. This will enable farmers plan their activities in a timely manner with the understanding of weather patterns in relation to climate change.

IN FOCUS: Turning plastic waste into wealth

Potable water comes in plastic bags, with many of them end up in the ocean damaging vital marine ecosystems and spoiling pristine beaches. This poses a direct threat to the fishing industry—a source of income for many Liberians. To combat the plastic waste, UNDP's Your Waste is my Wealth project turns plastic waste into durable floor tiles that cost half the price and last twice as long as similar products, while also providing much-needed income. Support from UNDP has grown the company into a model business in Sanniquellie, Nimba. Efforts of reviving Liberia's once thriving tourism industry will also depend on preserving its kilometres of sandy beaches.

#ClimateAction



Photos: UNDP Liberia

Managing Liberia's natural resources

Liberia has rich natural resources, which provide economic prosperity but also serve as the biodiversity basis for environmental stability. It is vital to balance the two, while also fostering social cohesion as an underpinning factor to natural resource management.

In 2019, UNDP helped to roll out an innovative Multi-Stakeholders' Platform (MSP) initiative for community engagement in concessions' operations in five additional communities bringing the total to 15 in affected communities across the country. The platforms have contributed to strengthening engagement between the national government, concession companies, and concession-affected areas, reducing conflict between concessionaires and communities. Women and youth play a vital role in not only participation, but in leadership of the platforms, which have led to a more comprehensive and holistic approach to how the platforms work in the communities.

With the creation of MSPs in the affected communities in Nimba and Maryland, dispute mechanisms and conflict mitigation have been strengthened, which directly led to curtailing

rising dissatisfaction and preventing conflict. Adherence to the social corporate responsibility by the concessionaires has also curtailed some conflicts.

Consultative engagements among and between local government, affected communities and Arcelor Mittal in Liberia, have helped balance the expectations of the population as it relates to benefits for affected population and social development funds.

The implementation of approved work plans annually developed by the MSP with coordinating support from the National Bureau of Concessions (NBC) and partners has guided platform participants and provided a sense of ownership.

Furthermore, UNDP has helped the NBC to train 41 staff members (11 women; 30 men) in public procurement, public financial management, human resources, among other courses. This training under the Liberia Institute of Public Administration has become a strategic tool for organizational repositioning, performance improvement and achievement of goals.

IN FOCUS: TURNING WASTE INTO WEALTH

Photos: UNDP Liberia





WOMEN TURN GENDER ROLES ON THEIR HEADS

Ruth Kollie, 32, is overcoming gender stereotypes by not only owning but running one of the most successful welding shops in her community in Ganta. Ma-Ruth Welding Shop fabricates steel doors, cooking pots, gates and much more.

UNDP Liberia works with the Government and other partners to ensure women's full and effective participation in the economy

Photo: UNDP Liberia

Ensuring development is for all

Gender & Social Inclusion

Women and girls face a tremendous number of challenges in Liberia, and often fall behind men and boys in human development opportunities as they arise.

Women hold only 11.7 percent of parliamentary seats. Only 18.5 percent of women have reached the secondary level of schooling compared to 39.6 percent of men. Women also have a high rate of pregnancy related deaths; of 100,000 live births, 725 women die. Liberian teens between 15 to 19 have one of the highest rates of pregnancy in the world with 136 births per 1,000 teens. Women participate in the labour market at a rate of 54.7 percent compared to 57.5 percent of men.

In 2019, UNDP increased its expertise to focus on gender issues both as a service for Liberia, but also to improve its own capacity. As a result of investing in gender specialists in the country office, UNDP improved its ability to mainstream gender in its internal and external work, reporting, and human resources.



25,025
WOMEN

received legal awareness & training



129
WOMEN

trained in domestic laws and international human rights norms



222
CASES

received by the Sexual & Gender-based Violence Unit with 22 convictions secured



Spotlight Initiative

To eliminate violence against women and girls

A Spotlight to protect women & girls

Over 610,000 people are directly and over 1 million people are indirectly benefiting from the **Spotlight Initiative** programming in Liberia in its first year of work. This flagship **European Union** and **United Nations** gender programme aims to address all forms of violence against women and girls, and eliminating harmful traditional practices through a transformative and evidence-based approach, addressing unequal power relations between men and women and focusing on gender equality and women's empowerment.

Liberia is one of the countries benefiting from the joint UN programme, and in 2019, UNDP and other UN agencies began work to support the Government on its quest to eradicate cases of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and harmful traditional practices (HTPs), and build better institutional frameworks for enhanced protection capacities and services to survivors.

Under Spotlight, UNDP contributed technical and material support to public institutions at the national, subnational and community levels.

Specialized trainings for law enforcement personnel and CSOs enhanced capacity of law enforcement and affiliated agencies to effectively investigate,

Almost two-thirds of women and girls (64.5 percent, 2017/2018) in Liberia face all forms of violence, according to the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection.

collect evidence and prosecute SGBV cases. The trainings resulted in improved access to effective integrated multi-sectoral restorative services to all survivors and groups affected by SGBV/HTPs.

UNDP also led and supported the hosting of a national colloquium on SGBV prevention and response to improve coordination, networking and information sharing amongst stakeholders. Participants of a two-day event identified current challenges faced in addressing SGBV such as untimely trials, limited youth-friendly providers at the SGBV one-stop centers, accountability, best practices and recommendations for moving forward.

Also in 2019, stakeholders validated a comprehensive prevention strategy action plan on the Spotlight Initiative on SGBV. Key findings from data collected, as well as sexual and gender-based violence prevention strategies for the country were presented during the event.



PARTICIPANTS LEARN HOW THEY CAN STOP SYSTEMIC VIOLENCE Photos: UNDP Liberia

Women as agents of peace

Liberia's post-conflict landscape put an increased focus on the role of women and girls in peacebuilding. To help with Liberia's goal of adhering to the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security.

In partnership with UNDP and UN Women, the agencies provided updates on the status of Liberian security sector institutions and progress towards the Resolution. This included achievements of gender equity in the number of women and men employed by security institutions, the advancement of women into leadership positions in the sector, as well as the legal and policy frameworks supporting gender parity within each of the institutions.

A resulting review outlined 14 recommendations for continued progress in promoting gender equity in the Liberian security sector. The recommendations were validated, resulting in the development of

a roadmap. The roadmap has resulted in the development of gender mainstreaming strategies in ten security institutions which have seen a steady increase in the number of women represented in security institutions as well as key decision-making positions.

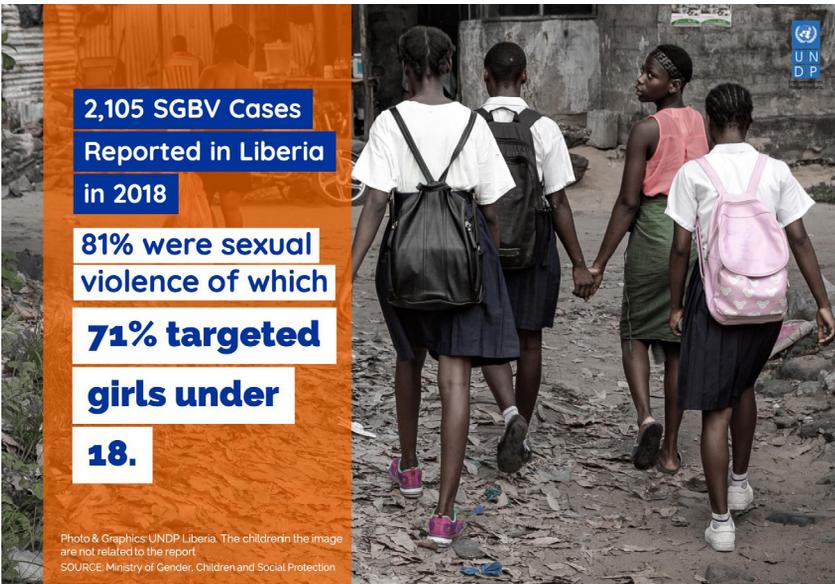
Meanwhile, UNDP helped the National Bureau of Concessions, with funding from the Peacebuilding Support Office, to establish 15 multi-stakeholder platforms. Participants platforms received training in gender-responsive conflict management, prevention and mitigation, mediation, communication, advocacy and non-violence action approach, gender equity, civil and human rights, as per the UNSCR 1325.

Women and youth involvement in leadership of the platforms has promoted inclusion, brought to light the differentiated needs of different groups and generated a comprehensive approach in solving problems facing their communities.

Gender-inclusive security

Liberia's justice and security sector received UN support under the Nothing for Us Without Us campaign in partnership with UNDP, UN Women and IOM. As part of efforts aimed at strengthening and improving the capacity of justice and security institutions to develop and implement gender responsive laws, policies and frameworks, a joint programme implemented by UNDP/UN Women/IOM called "Nothing for Us Without Us" provided support to the Government of Liberia in its efforts to promote gender equality within the security sector and enhance the capacity of national justice and security institutions to prevent and respond to all forms of violence against women. UNDP and OHCHR consolidated the Programme by focusing on outcomes that address access to justice across the criminal justice chain and implementing activities that enable coherence.

The Programme in partnership with UN Women, supported the enactment of the Domestic Violence Bill into law and worked closely with the Ministry of Gender Children and Social Protection and the Women Legislative Caucus to help strengthen the law and raise awareness. The enactment of the law represents a watershed in the pathway towards the elimination of violence against women in Liberia. The law is expected to protect women and girls against various forms of violence.



**2,105 SGBV Cases
Reported in Liberia
in 2018**

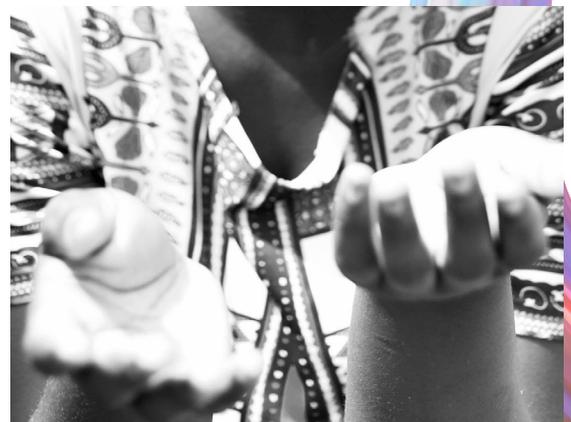
**81% were sexual
violence of which**

71% targeted

girls under

18.

Photo & Graphics: UNDP Liberia. The children in the image are not related to the report
SOURCE: Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection



UNDP Liberia and partners are helping the Government of Liberia and civil society to better protect women and girls.
Photos: UNDP Liberia

Fighting sexual and gender-based violence

Violence against women and girls is one of the most pervasive, widespread and devastating human rights violations in the world today, and is particularly prolific in Liberia. It is a major obstacle to the fulfillment of their human rights and to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Affirmative actions, sustained engagement and practical solutions are needed to end sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV).

Institutional response regarding specialized prosecution of perpetrators of SGBV was sustained in 2019 under UNDP's Rule of Law Programme (see Rule of Law & Access to Justice for a full overview of these results). Consequently, support to Liberia's Criminal Court E, a dedicated court to sexual and gender-based violence, enabled the court to function more efficiently despite the numerous challenges faced by the justice system. Out of 252 cases assigned to Criminal Court E in Monrovia, 172 convictions were secured.

Further, the project continued to focus on decentralizing operations of justice and security institutions by investing heavily in further enhancing their presence, reach and capacity in outlying areas. Legal aid services were provided to 670 pre-trial detainees, including 84 women at the police stations and prisons, resulting in a 3 percent reduction in arbitrary pre-trial detention. In addition, 1,723 persons benefitted from legal aid services provided by CSOs.

WOMEN ACCESSING SECURITY SERVICES: Through its Rule of Law Programme, UNDP Liberia supported the training of 50 police officers including 29 women on the rights of women and girls. The purpose of the training was to reduce discriminatory attitudes and behaviours toward them and strengthen gender responsiveness across the justice chain.

Pre- and post-trainings have demonstrated positive results and increased knowledge aimed at promoting and improving availability, accessibility and appropriateness of policing services for women and girls, including those threatened by or experiencing violence.

Photo: UNDP Liberia



Climate adaptation plans become gender inclusive

Climate change impacts affect women and men, girls and boys differently. For example, women in Liberia are the primary caretakers, are the main users of water and land, and rely on access to natural resources, which are dwindling.

UNDP in close collaboration with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), is engaged in mitigating women and girls' vulnerability to the adverse effects of climate change. UNDP's gender expertise was drawn on for an assessment on the Gender and Social Impact of Climate Change in Liberia under the National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) project.

The report endorsed and signed by the Executive Director of EPA, brought to light the differentiated adaptive capacities of men and women. It highlights the needs and interests of women and men in the sectors of fisheries, forestry, agriculture and confirms that climate change has human rights, socio-economic and gender dimensions given that droughts, extreme weather events, tropical storms, floods and sea level rises have a disproportionately large effect on the more vulnerable people and undermine efforts for human development, human productivity and capability.





IN FOCUS: Tupee Nabgo, 66, is a widow. She's a mother of five children and grandmother of four. And she's also the commander of a ship overseeing 25 fishermen and 30 fishmongers who are women.

The majority of the members of this team in Buchanan were previously unemployed or struggling to support their dependents. Many of the fishmongers are young single mothers supporting large families. UNDP Liberia helped Nabgo and her team with a motorized boat as part of the Business Opportunities through Support Services (BOSS) project.

UNDP Liberia also trained some of the members of the association in entrepreneurship and how to run small and micro enterprises.

Photos: UNDP Liberia



Ensuring people with disabilities can seize every opportunity

People with disabilities live in Liberia, but due to a lack of reliable data, their demographics remain elusive. Data ranges from between 14 percent and 20 percent; meaning there are as many as 1 million people with disabilities in Liberia, and yet their access to opportunities may be out of reach.

Liberia signed the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) in 2007, followed by ratification by the National Legislature in September 2018. As a result, the National Action Plan 2018-2022 proposes a number of activities like inclusive education and inclusive public outreach, which UNDP Liberia has assisted in.

In 2019, UNDP helped the Government hold townhalls to raise awareness of both the National Action Plan and the newly signed Land Rights Act. As a result, over 200 people with disabilities who attended the two-day event are now more aware of their rights to access public facilities (public transport and buildings, etc.), access to inclusive education, health, justice, employment and livelihoods.

Photos of participants: UNDP Liberia



“Disability is just a word to me. I can do anything. Well, except football. I lost my football leg.”

**Dankens G. Nyanforh, 42
Monrovia, LIBERIA**



IN FOCUS: Dankens Nyanforh, 42, speaks French, Arabic & English; bakes pastries and dreams of travelling the world. He keeps his passport on him all the time. “For when opportunity knocks”, he says. UNDP Liberia is committed to the Agenda 2030 pledge to leave no one behind. Photo: UNDP Liberia

Putting Youth in the Driver Seat

Liberia is a country of young people. Currently, young people between the ages of 15 and 35 make up 79 percent of Liberia's population. Yet, Liberia's youth are some of those left farthest behind. At least 85 percent of the youth are unemployed, driven by poverty and exclusion from limited opportunities.

Lessons from Liberia's conflicts have shown that marginalization and exclusion from economic opportunities are some of the root causes. This adds to the urgency of addressing the high levels of youth poverty, unemployment, and lack of education.

UNDP and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) with funding from the Liberia Multi Partner Trust Fund/Peacebuilding Office (LMPTF/PBO) are partnering with the Ministry of Youth and Sports and the Ministry of Health to address the issues of drug use and rehabilitation, and as well as capacity building and skills training of at-risk youth in Liberia.

The 18-month pilot project, the "Socio-Economic Empowerment of Disadvantaged (SEED) Youth in Liberia" Project focuses on providing vocational training and technical skills to disadvantaged youth to help them realise their potential.

UNDP is also partnered with the Catholic Agency for Overseas Development to conduct entrepreneurship training. To complement the training, 217 young people were given psychosocial support and medical screenings at UNFPA/Ministry of Health drop-in centres to help address mental and physical issues they may face to further strengthen their potential to succeed.

The young participants have different levels of education and took advantage of courses on adult and financial literacy, business management and entrepreneurship, and provided training in service, retail and manufacturing businesses.

Within this session, participants were taught how to develop business ideas, business planning, start-up capital, money management, people/business management, client-base expansion and growth.

UNDP and partners also provide five-month vocational skills sessions in plumbing, hair dressing, carpentry, among others. There is a village savings and loan component of the training to focus on building capacities in livelihoods and income, while supporting positive community growth, team-work, social cohesion and savings to improve self-development.

VOICES OF LIBERIA'S YOUTH

Arthur Trobeh, 30, (photo top right) holds a BSC in Mass Communications and Biblical Studies from the African Bible College. He has worked with the Allay Printing Press as Desk Top Publisher and Graphic Designer and at the Rising Academy, he served as Operations Assistant. Arthur says he lost his younger brother in a fire that left him in a traumatic state of mind which eventually led him into the ghetto.

"This training will help me get my life back on track. I am grateful to UNDP and partners for this initiative," Trobeh says.

Miatta Zinnah, 35, dropped out of school in grade 10, but has now found a new calling. She is acquiring skills in plumbing, which she says she

loves. "I have a passion for plumbing even though people think it's a man's job," Miatta says (photo left).

Wala Williams, a graduate of the Haywood Mission School found himself in the streets due to peer pressure. He has computer skills. "I have experience in decoding phones," Wala says (photo below right).





Cemeteries and abandoned buildings are some of the places at-risk youths, also known as zogos, call home. Drugs, violence and crime are ever so close. UNDP Liberia and UNFPA Liberia, funded by the **UN Peacebuilding Fund** are working to support Liberia's vulnerable youth.

Photos: UNDP Liberia



HIV & AIDS: UNDP's support to the National AIDS Commission (NAC) in the establishment of 15 County Steering Committees in the 15 counties of Liberia has resulted in local authorities taking ownership of the national response to HIV and AIDS by having regular coordination meetings, and developing joint action plans, among others.

UNDP in Liberia

In 2019, UNDP adopted its new five-year programme, a strategic vision of UNDP's assistance as Liberia's trusted development partner. The Country Programme Document for 2020-2024, endorsed by the Government of Liberia, was built not only with UNDP expertise in mind, but by the voices and contributions by civil society, development partners, and developed with national counterparts. This new country plan is aligned with UNDP's six signature solutions, the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and the Government's national development framework. Through this new plan, UNDP provides strategic support to the Government in the areas of institutional building, good governance and transparency, economic growth and climate change adaptation.

Integrating the SDGs in Liberia

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are the blueprint for change, and with only one decade left to achieve the 17 Goals, the world must go farther and faster in its collective efforts to ensure no one is left behind.

Liberia has aligned its Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development with the SDGs, and going into the Decade of Action for Agenda 2030, the Government has called on UNDP to help integrate the SDGs into its national planning.

UNDP was requested to play primary roles in supporting the President's special initiatives, such as the Citizens Feedback Mechanism and Performance Contracting, the Management of the Election Basket Fund and the Adaption of the Community Development Programme (PUDC). The PUDC is seen in Liberia as critical for poverty reduction and the quest to leave no one behind. The success of this programme in Liberia rests on commitment of funding by the government as well as rallying external financing, given the limited room for borrowing.

Partners & Resources

UNDP Liberia thanks all our funding contributors in 2019 and beyond.

Top Contributors to UNDP Liberia 2019

Global Environment Facility	\$3,542,539
Government of Sweden - SIDA	\$2,084,955.18
Liberia Multidonor Trustfund	\$2,022,437.98
European Union	\$1,841,297.03
Resident Coordinator's System	\$1,428,235.39
Spotlight Initiative	\$1,269,917
Liberia Peacebuilding Trust Fund	\$1,032,321
Green Climate Fund	\$901,650

*Not a complete list of funding

UNDP & the UN in Liberia

In 2019, the United Nations underwent its first year since the adoption of Resolution 72/279, an agreement of all Member States to reform the UN. This reform saw the delinking of the Resident Coordinator's Office and UNDP, among other changes. Overall, this reform has allowed UNDP to place its focus globally on its development agenda, while providing some administrative support to the UN family.

Along with UN agencies, UNDP has been an integral part of several joint initiatives, some which launched in 2019. The Spotlight Initiative is one of UNDP's largest joint programmes in partnership with UNFPA, UN Women, and UNICEF to implement activities aimed at eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls.

UNDP is also working with the Office of the High Commissioner and Human Rights in collaboration with the Ministry of Justice, Governance Commission and the Independent National Human Rights Commission to strengthen Liberia's human rights capacity. This collaboration resulted in the development of a new and costed National Human Rights Action Plan, which provides a road map for the protection of human rights, while ensuring that Liberia makes concerted efforts toward keeping its international human rights obligations.

Greening UNDP in cost-effective ways

With a view to reduce costs, increase efficiency and improve of quality of services, UNDP continued to improve its operational and programme business processes and developed standard operating procedures for its key processes. The full roll-out of a mobile money mechanism for workshop payments in all counties across the country and local electronic funds transfer has produced tangible benefits for UNDP and partner UN Agencies in terms of streamlining the payment process, eliminating/reducing staff safety and



The UN House in Monrovia is home to the United Nations Agencies, Programmes and Funds serving Liberia. Photo: UNDP Liberia

security risks and leakages from cash handling, improving transparency and accountability in the process, reducing administrative costs and increasing efficiency.

UNDP has also improved the way its vehicles operate with a new pool fleet management system and GPS tracking system to increase transparency, accountability and efficiency.

Having all of Liberia's UN agencies under one roof has allowed UNDP to save over US\$1million, cut fuel usage by 30 percent, and also reduce CO2 pollution with lower generator loads. With a view to reduce greenhouse gas emission and bring about sizable impact, UNDP is exploring funding potential to install a solar PV system reducing the reliance on generators and local power supplies.

The Human Development Index

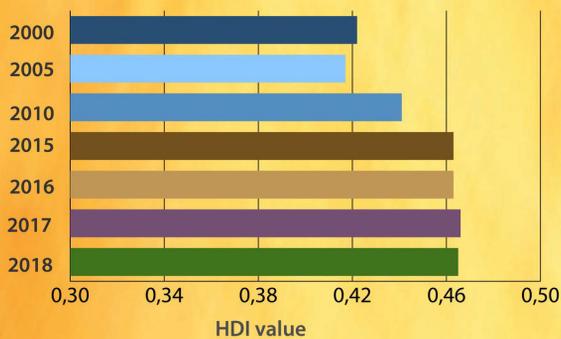
Inequalities: beyond income, beyond averages, beyond today

UNDP's Human Development Report for 2019 reveals the world's inequalities and helps decision-makers to shape the future of development.

For Liberia, the data show a slight dip in progress between 2017 and 2018, but remarkably demonstrates the significant improvement of human development in 20 years.

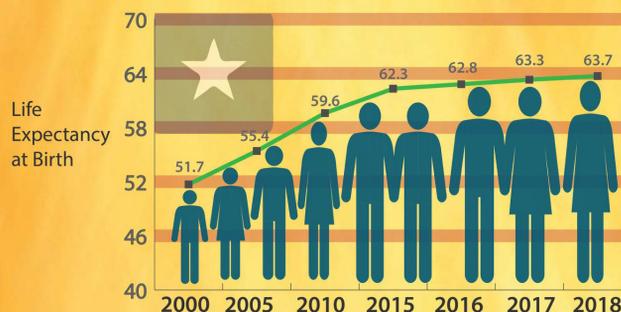


TRENDS | LIBERIA: HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX (HDI)



SOURCE: HUMAN DEVELOPMENT REPORT, 2019
@UNDPLiberia

TRENDS | LIBERIA: LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH



SOURCE: HUMAN DEVELOPMENT REPORT, 2019
@UNDPLiberia

2020 & Beyond



UNDP envisages high demand for support and expectations from national and development partners. Growing economic challenges, attendant socio-political tensions and impending elections are all issues that would require UNDP's strategic support.

Liberia has requested UNDP to play primary roles in supporting the President's special initiatives such as the Citizens Feedback Mechanism and Performance Contracting, the Management of the Election Basket Fund and the Adaption of the Community Development Programme (PUDC).

The PUDC is seen in Liberia as critical for poverty reduction and the quest to leave no one behind. The success of the PUDC in Liberia rests on commitment of funding by the government as well as rallying external financing, given the limited room for borrowing.

While we have made strong achievements in 2019, we are mindful of the challenges ahead. We will intensify capacity development assistance to Government and CSO counterparts to ensure increased quality delivery, with a particular focus on programme and financial management. We will also explore partnerships with nontraditional donors, and adopt a portfolio-based approach, co-creating programmes with partners to ensure buy-in, ownership and sustainable exit strategy.

Our ongoing work in supporting the electoral process will increase. We will strengthen our monitoring and evaluation system and increase capacity for evidence-based planning and response with the introduction of Crisis Risk Dashboard and other tools that will improve our programme quality and impact of results.

A new programming focus will be to improve accountable and responsive governance, increase opportunities for youth employment and entrepreneurship, create space for private sector participation, and address environmental challenges and priorities.

To tackle climate change, the Government of Liberia has requested UNDP to support the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) revision process, including raising ambition. With the anticipated support, the government is considering including short-lived climate pollutants as new gases in the revised NDC, particularly those used in refrigeration and A/C systems. To raise finance, an ambitious private sector engagement strategy together with an NDC financing strategy will be developed and implemented. Additionally, a pipeline of bankable projects will be developed in priority sectors and funding sources identified.

As there is only a decade left to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, UNDP offers its global expertise of innovators, practitioners, and leaders to help Liberia navigate the challenges and take advantage of all the opportunities that lie ahead for people and prosperity, and ensure that no one is left behind.





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