



UNITED NATIONS  
LIBERIA



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# ANNUAL REPORT 2022

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## Foreword by the outgoing Coordinator

Liberia is a country of unique beauty and promise, boasting some of the continent's most vast and diverse tropical rainforests and natural resources, and home to a young population poised to be the country's future. This exceptionally resilient nation has come a long way in rebuilding from a painful past and sustaining peace, taking impressive strides forward despite many lingering struggles.

However, the past year represents a convergence of challenges to Liberia and to the United Nations Country Team's endeavours to support the country's push for development.

While the COVID-19 pandemic lifted, its socioeconomic consequences are being revealed, adding to the country's standing needs for development and social cohesion, thwarting peacebuilding efforts, and threatening progress on achieving Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals. Only two months into 2022, the war in Ukraine sent a new wave of global challenges that reached Liberia as well. Coupled with the looming threats of climate change, to which Liberia is especially vulnerable with a long coastline and reliance on climate-sensitive activities, this changing world requires robust, collaborative action for the advancement of Liberia's people.

Together, the United Nations Country Team in Liberia and the Government of Liberia are rising to the challenge, along with development partners and civil society organizations. Throughout 2022, we have emerged stronger and more determined to implement new ways of working for the future, establish a robust normative framework for development, build capacities where most needed and, above all, achieve tangible impact in communities across the country.

The Government of Liberia has shown phenomenal leadership in mitigating the immediate impact of COVID-19. The collaborative effort through joint interventions has addressed critical developmental issues-- livelihoods and food insecurity challenges,

unemployment, youth at risk, healthcare, climate change, human rights, including sexual and gender-based violence, education, nutrition, women empowerment, and gender equity and increased access to justice and security services.

The United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF, or 'Cooperation Framework') 2022-2024, which guides the UN's collective contribution to the Agenda 2030 and Sustainable Development Goals, is closely aligned with the Government of Liberia's national development priorities, as reflected in the Government's flagship Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (PAPD).

We are now at the mid-term of implementing the four-year UNSDCF established with the Government of Liberia in 2020, and I am honoured to present this Liberia Country Results Reports as I conclude my tenure. This report reflects the collective efforts of the United Nations Country Team (UNCT), in partnership with the Government of Liberia, development partners and civil society organizations throughout 2022, and highlights the achievements – and challenges – towards supporting Liberia's national priorities and the PAPD. It serves as a strong testament to the power of Delivering as One.

I have learned so much during my stay in Liberia. The warmth of the staff and people I have met is forever etched in my mind, and I am grateful to the UN team and partners for this memorable phase of my life. I am excited to welcome and wish continued success to Mrs. Christine N. Umutoni, who is bringing her many years of expertise to take the helm of the UNCT in Liberia as Resident Coordinator.

We remain committed to stronger partnerships with the Government of Liberia to achieve progress with available resources and capacities and share bold, transformative, innovative approaches to catalyse Liberians' development growth. We are committed to ensuring a positive change in Liberians' lives, including those in the country's most remote areas.

Niels Scott  
Resident Coordinator  
United Nations

# UN Country Team

The UN Country Team (UNCT) in Liberia comprises of 18 resident UN agencies, funds and programmes and 2 non-resident ones. It is headed by the Resident Coordinator, who coordinates the implementation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF, or 'Cooperation Framework'), the core planning instrument guiding all development activities at country level. The UNCT's joint steering committee includes the UN, development partners and government agencies, and is co-chaired by the Resident Coordinator and Liberia's Minister of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP).

The UNSDCF 2020-2024 is fully aligned with the Liberia's national development plan – the Pro-poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (PAPD), aimed towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Agenda 2030 while Leaving No One Behind.

The UNCT collectively and coherently continues to support the Government of Liberia to mitigate the COVID-19 impacts effectively on the Liberian economy, society, livelihoods, healthcare, employment, and other binding constraints, including climate change that continues to push back millions of Liberians into poverty and other social deprivations.

The UNCT continues to strengthen the capacity of the government to ensure a "reconciled, transformed and prosperous Liberia, anchored on accountable institutions and equitable, inclusive and sustainable development" by 2030. It supports the government, through the UNSDCF, to fulfil its promise enshrined in the PAPD of providing higher income and health security for all Liberians by reducing absolute or extreme poverty. The UNCT focuses on building more capable and trusted state institutions to lead a stable, resilient, and inclusive nation through sustained investments in agriculture, human capital development, infrastructure, and social protection.



## Resident UN Agencies



## Non-resident Agencies



## Key development partners of the UN development system in the country

The Government of Liberia is the primary partner of the UN. The UNCT works with development partners, international financial institutions (IFIs), the private sector, civil society, community-based organizations (CBOs), the media, and academia in building strong institutions for improved service delivery and national ownership. The UN plays a strategic policy advisory and coordination role in convening development and government partners to support the implementation of the PAPD.

The UN-Government (UN/GOL) Joint Steering Committee, co-chaired by the UN Resident Coordinator and Minister of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP), provides policy direction for successful policy coherence and development coordination.

**Key Government/National Implementing Partners:** The Ministry of Finance and Development Planning; Ministry of Health; Ministry of Justice; Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection; Ministry of Agriculture; Ministry of Commerce and Industry; Ministry of Education; Ministry of Youth and Sports; Ministry of Internal Affairs; Environmental Protection Agency of Liberia; Liberia Anti-corruption Commission; National Elections Commission; Governance Commission; National Fisheries and Aquaculture Authority; National Commission on Disability;

Independent National Commission on Human Rights; and others.

**Key Development/Donor Partners:** The UN acknowledges and thanks all Development Partners for their support in 2022 despite the challenges occasioned by COVID-19 and the Russian-Ukraine war:

- Government of Canada
- Government of Iceland
- Government of Ireland
- Government of Germany
- Government of Japan
- Government of Norway
- Government of the People's Republic of China
- Government of the United Kingdom
- Government of Sweden
- Government of the United Arab Emirates
- African Development Bank
- Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance
- German Agency for International Cooperation
- Global Environment Facility
- Global Fund for Fighting AIDs, Tuberculosis and Malaria
- Global Partnership for Education
- Green Climate Fund
- Mastercard Foundation
- The European Union
- The World Bank
- UN Secretary-General Peacebuilding Fund
- UN Human Security Trust Fund

# 1 Key Developments in Liberia and Regional Contexts



## Macro-Economic Overview

The Liberian economy is resilient. It is recovering from multiple exogenous shocks, including the COVID-19 pandemic, a drop in prices of its primary exports (iron ore, rubber, and timber) and the effects of the Ukrainian crisis, as well as the earlier departure of the UN Peacekeeping Mission in Liberia in 2018, and Ebola.

Real GDP growth stood at 3.7% in 2022, marking a decline from 4.2% in 2021 and reflecting increased global uncertainties and commodity price shocks. Subsequently, the national poverty rate has risen to 51.9%, with high prevalence in rural counties compared to urban areas and startling regional disparities. However, GDP growth is expected to improve and is estimated to reach an average of 5.2% between 2023 and 2024.

Inflation is projected to remain low and stable, averaging 7.2% between 2022 and 2024. Sustaining low inflation levels will help Liberian households retain their purchasing power, which will in turn help decrease poverty rates across the country in 2024. Although the fiscal deficit rose to 4.3% in 2022, it is expected to improve in the medium term

with reforms to strengthen domestic resource mobilization and consolidate expenditures. In addition, the Government's recent strong fiscal policy reform and tight expenditure management will help narrow the fiscal deficit and maintain it at below 5%.

The COVID-19 pandemic affected the delivery of essential social and economic services, especially among more vulnerable households, pushing 2.3 million people back into extreme poverty due to high consumption costs and out-of-pocket health expenditures.<sup>1</sup> The COVID-19 Socio-Economic Impact Assessment shows that people working in the self-employed services sector or vulnerable employed (46.2%) were affected the most, with the poverty rate increasing by 2.5% for vulnerable workers compared to 1.9% for the more stably employed. Growth in the private sector stagnated with low imports of goods to service the economy. The informal sector continued to decline due to reduced domestic production, mainly in the agriculture, fisheries, and mining sectors. Women experienced lower income earnings and were more affected by poverty.

### Vaccinating Liberia's vulnerable communities against COVID-19

*Liberia made headway with its COVID-19 vaccination push, successfully fully vaccinating 81% of the total eligible population (by December 2022) since launching the vaccination programme in March 2021. Robust coordination between the Government and its partners, an effective COVID-19 steering committee, and multiple mass vaccination campaigns have contributed to the country's success.*

*Now Liberia is ensuring that its most vulnerable people are protected from severe illness, hospitalization, and death from the virus.*

*"Our target is to ensure that more community people get vaccinated. That way, we will all be safe," says Oretha Vanwen, a community health worker who administers COVID-19 vaccines to refugees and their host community.*

*Standing in line to register for COVID-19 vaccination is Bernard Manhan, a 57-year-old father of eight who resides in the Bahn refugee camp. Along with his wife and children, he fled to Liberia in 2011. Manhan was a member of an opposition party during Côte d'Ivoire's parliamentary elections in 2011. He said that he lost most of his family members in the violence that followed the elections.*

*"Rebels were hunting me," he says, recounting a scary experience fleeing to neighbouring Liberia for safety. "I still fear for my life, and thus, I have not made any efforts to go back home," he says firmly. Nevertheless, coming to Liberia greatly relieved Manhan and his family, who now have access to essential health services, including COVID-19 vaccination.*



## Population



Total: **5,180,000**<sup>ii</sup>



Urban: **50.2%**



Rural: **49.8%**



Under 15 years: **43.4%**

Youth (15-35 years): **33.3%**

Under 64 years: **76%**



## HEALTHCARE



Male life expectancy: **63 years**



Female life expectancy: **66 years**



**53%** of health expenditures are out-of-pocket



Only **one out of two** health facilities have achieved the WHO-recommended Health Service Availability and Readiness Assessment (SARA) benchmark



Essential medicines for children are available in only **one out of two** health facilities

## EDUCATION AND HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT

Liberia presents some of the worst human capital outcomes in the world, with a Human Capital Index of only **0.32**, meaning a child born in Liberia today can expect to be only **32%** as productive when they grow up as they could have been with access to complete education and full health, according to the World Bank.



Liberia is currently experiencing a regression in primary school enrolment and completion rates, with boys representing **33%** and girls representing **36%**.



Only **13%** of children aged 0-4 years attend early education programmes (Urban **19%**, Rural **9.8%**)



**44.3%** of primary school-aged children attend school



**44.4%** survival to the last grade of primary



**81.4%** effective transition rate from primary to lower secondary general education

## AGRICULTURE, FOOD SYSTEMS AND SECURITY

Liberia continues to suffer from food insecurity, which affects most of the country's households:



Nearly **half (47%)** of households are food insecure, **39%** are moderately food insecure, and **8%** are severely food insecure.

A recent food security and market assessment conducted by the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) showed that:



Rural households are more likely to have unacceptable food consumption patterns (**61%**) than urban ones (**44%**)



Expenditure on food is high, with **60%** of household spending approximately **65%** of their income on food purchase and consumption, increasing their vulnerability to food insecurity and extreme poverty.



The assessment also found that **28%** of Liberians have low dietary diversity (consuming less than **four of the seven** food groups) and **86%** of households rely heavily on cash to purchase food.



Agriculture remains the economic engine and employs nearly **80%** of the labour force, significantly contributing to the GDP.



The COVID-19 pandemic impacted the agriculture sector, and especially female-headed households, **85.3%** of which<sup>iii</sup> experience moderate to severe food insecurity.



Furthermore, **70%** of Liberia's staple food, rice, is imported to meet the country's needs, costing Liberia an estimated **US\$ 80 million** annually. The reliance on imports to meet food needs is a growing risk to achieving Agenda 2030 and in particular SDGs 1, 2, and 8.

Key drivers of food insecurity in Liberia are unsustainable livelihoods, infrastructure, low agricultural production and productivity, land constraints, gender inequalities, and inflation. Liberia's rich and vast forests informally augment livelihood and food security for many families, with the formal forest sector constituting the fourth largest contributor to Liberia's economy and contributing **10%** of the GDP. The informal sector share is estimated to be larger and a key source of resilience at the household level. Leveraging Liberia's significant 'natural capital' sustainably will be critical for continued recovery from COVID-19 and sustaining progress on SDGs. Reducing high food costs, with a focus on production, will be essential for progress on Agenda 2030.

## Food Security



**50.4%** of households are food insecure – approximately **2.3 million** people



**21.9%** of the population are chronically hungry

## Nutrition



**29.8%** of children under 5 are stunted



**3%** of children under 5 are acutely malnourished



**11%** of children under 5 are underweight

## Maternal and infant mortality



**37/1000** babies die in their first month of life



**25/1000** babies survive their first month of life but die before their first birthday



**63/1000** babies die during their first year of life




**93/1000** babies die before their fifth year of life




**661/100,000** women having live births die due to complications during pregnancy or childbirth

## CLIMATE CHANGE, RESILIENCE AND ADAPTATION

 Liberia is home to **44.9%** of the forest areas in the Upper Guinea Rainforest Region in West Africa, a highly biodiverse, carbon-dense, tropical rainforest with an equatorial climatic and spanning diverse topographical regions.


 Forests make up more than **two-thirds** of Liberia's land area and half the country's population lives within **2.5 km** of a forest, which provides a significant portion of their subsistence, food, and income. However, Liberia remains fragile and highly vulnerable to climate change impacts. High reliance on climate-sensitive activities makes it vulnerable to climate variability, which manifests in higher temperatures, extreme weather events such as heavy rains, rising sea levels, and abrupt elevation changes in low mountains and plateaus. Despite progress towards promoting adaptation and climate resilience and urban and coastal defence interventions to mitigate rising sea levels, Liberia remains highly vulnerable to environmental instability due to its extreme poverty and high dependence on climate sensitive sectors such as agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, and mining.<sup>iv</sup>

The rural economy in particular depends on rain-fed subsistence farming, forest produce, and fishing.


 In 2021, Liberia's annual deforestation rate was **0.31%**, translating to the loss of **128,000 hectares** of natural forest and highlighting the impact of forest cover loss on extreme poverty as people heavily rely on wood and charcoal for primary cooking fuel. Nearly **98%** of the country's population use one of the two, with **43.8%** of households using charcoal (overwhelmingly in urban areas) and **54%** using wood (overwhelmingly in rural areas). The average annual charcoal expenditure per household is estimated at **US\$ 171** – i.e., **22%**.

 To mitigate Liberia's vulnerability to climate change and to build climate resilience, the UN supported the Government in revising its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC). As a result, the Government has committed to reducing economy-wide greenhouse gas emissions by 64% below the projected business-as-usual level by 2030 by implementing climate-sensitive agriculture, fishery, and coastal defence initiatives critical to mitigating climate change and its impacts.


## WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE (WASH)<sup>v</sup>

 **84.5%** of the population has access to improved drinking water

**15.4%** of the population has access only to unimproved drinking water


 **74.3%** of the population has access to basic drinking water services

**10.3%** of the population has limited access to drinking water services

 **47.6%** of residences have improved sanitation facilities

**17.6%** of residences have unimproved sanitation facilities

**34.8%** practise open defecation

 **23.8%** of the population have basic sanitation services


**23.0%** of the population have limited sanitation services


## GOVERNANCE, SOCIAL COHESION AND RECONCILIATION


Liberia has made tremendous progress in sustaining peace and maintaining development gains. However, the root causes of the civil war – including land disputes, corruption, political violence, inter/intra-community and ethnic tensions and political tribalism – have remained insufficiently addressed by the Government.<sup>vi</sup> The 2021 Social Cohesion and Reconciliation (SCORE) study revealed that from 2016 to 2021, Liberians have not perceived real change in their social and economic situations or realised an actual peace dividend. The SCORE assessed progress on enhancing good governance and sustaining peace, livelihood security and gender equality since the departure of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) peacekeepers in 2018.

The SCORE 2021 findings identified rivalry and inter-group tensions among and between several communities and tribal groups undermining effective reconciliation, social cohesion, and peacebuilding efforts across communities in Liberia. The peace-development nexus suggests that peaceful, democratic, and accountable institutions promote growth, employment and prosperity and address the people's vulnerability to structural threats and insecurity.

## GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE<sup>vii</sup>

 The prevalence of FGM varies with age; as many as **60%** of women aged 45-49 have undergone FGM, and **28%** of women aged 15-17. It also varies between counties, ranging from **2%** of women aged 15-49 having undergone FGM in River Gee County to **78%** in Gbarpolu (DHS 2019-20)

 Rape remains one of the highest reported crimes in Liberia

 **78%** of reported cases of GBV were sexual in nature; of these, **70%** were child survivors

## 2023 PRESIDENTIAL AND LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS

The Presidential and Legislative elections scheduled for 10 October 2023 are planned amid a complex context and narrative. These will be the first elections since the end of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) in 2018. The last elections, held in 2017, were one of three elections held during the 15-year UNMIL mandate, and represented a milestone achievement towards deepening political stability, reflecting Liberians' strong expectations for peace dividends.

The UN and development partners support the Government's efforts to promote peacebuilding and social cohesion and strengthen peace infrastructures at all levels for peaceful co-existence and unity. Specifically in this context, the UN provided technical and strategic policy advice to the National Elections Commission and political stakeholders in order to strengthen institutional capacity, support the inclusion of women and vulnerable groups, and promote peaceful, credible, inclusive, and transparent elections.

## SDGs FINANCIAL LANDSCAPE



The current financing context, characterized by a decline in the volume of public and private resources, presents several challenges and constraints towards total financing and implementation of the SDGs, PAPD and Agenda 2030. While Liberia's fiscal space is showing relative expansion, according to World Bank estimates,<sup>viii</sup> the commercial sectors remain nascent. The informal sector, which accounts for a large proportion of economic activity and provides employment for 70% of the population, remains underdeveloped, and investors' risk perceptions are high.

Attaining Agenda 2030 requires significant alignment of all resources and stakeholders, both internal and external, towards financing the SDGs. A recent Development Finance Assessment undertaken by the Government shows that 80% of public investment has been financed through external sources, including grants and concessional loans made outside the national budget. The remaining 20% of capital spending is domestically funded through the Public Sector Investment Plan (PSIP). The assessment recommended adopting an Integrated National Financing Framework (INFF) to provide the Government with a

structural platform for implementing more holistic and coherent approaches to planning and to finance the SDGs.

Coupled with dwindling foreign development aid (FDA) flow, the limited capacity for domestic revenue collection and strategic development investments, particularly in infrastructure, are inadequate, due to high recurrent costs and off-the-budget spending. This in turns creates repeated problems in fiscal consolidation, thereby increasing contingent liabilities.

The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated the situation, further challenging the country's ability to increase revenue collection and resource mobilization to meet its development targets. While domestic resource mobilization remains a challenge for the Government, the UN in Liberia continues to support SDGs achievement through the UNSDCF and other transformational joint programmes aimed at leaving no one behind. In this context, the UN conducted a Rapid Food Security, Livelihood, Nutrition and Market Assessment in 2022, with support from the SDG Fund.



# 2 UN Development System Support to National Development Priorities through the Cooperation Framework



## 2.1. Overview of Cooperation Framework Results

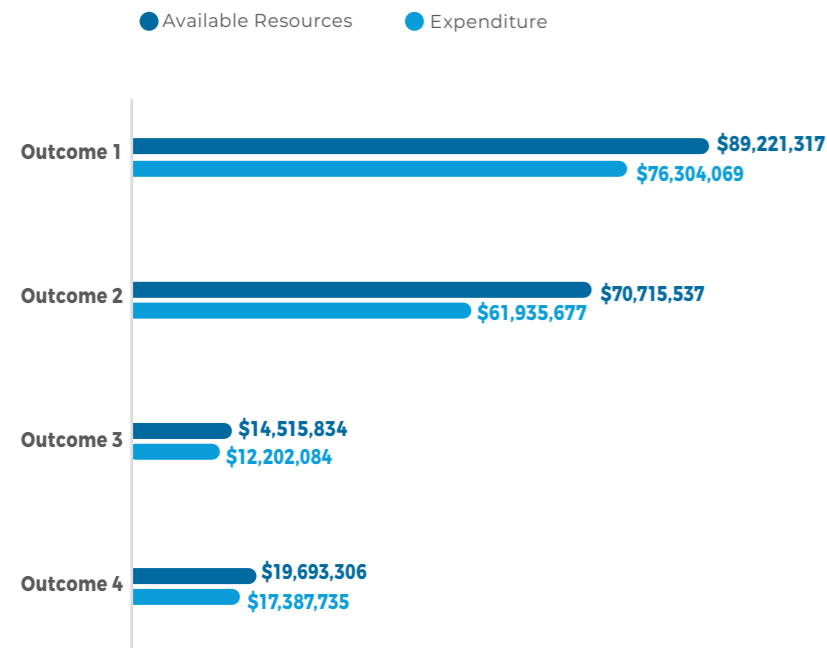
The United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2020- 2024 (UNSDCF, or Cooperation Framework) is aligned with Liberia’s national development plan – the Pro-poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (PAPD) – and calls for “building more capable and trusted state institutions that will lead to a stable, resilient, and inclusive nation through sustained and inclusive economic growth driven by scaled-up investments in agriculture, infrastructure, human resource development, and social protection.”<sup>ix</sup>

The Cooperation Framework represents UN Liberia’s collective offer of support to the Government of Liberia in implementing the SDGs. The framework guides the UN Country Team’s work and its collaboration to support the Government in transforming Liberia and sustaining peace and national reconciliation by addressing the root causes of the conflict and other fragilities.

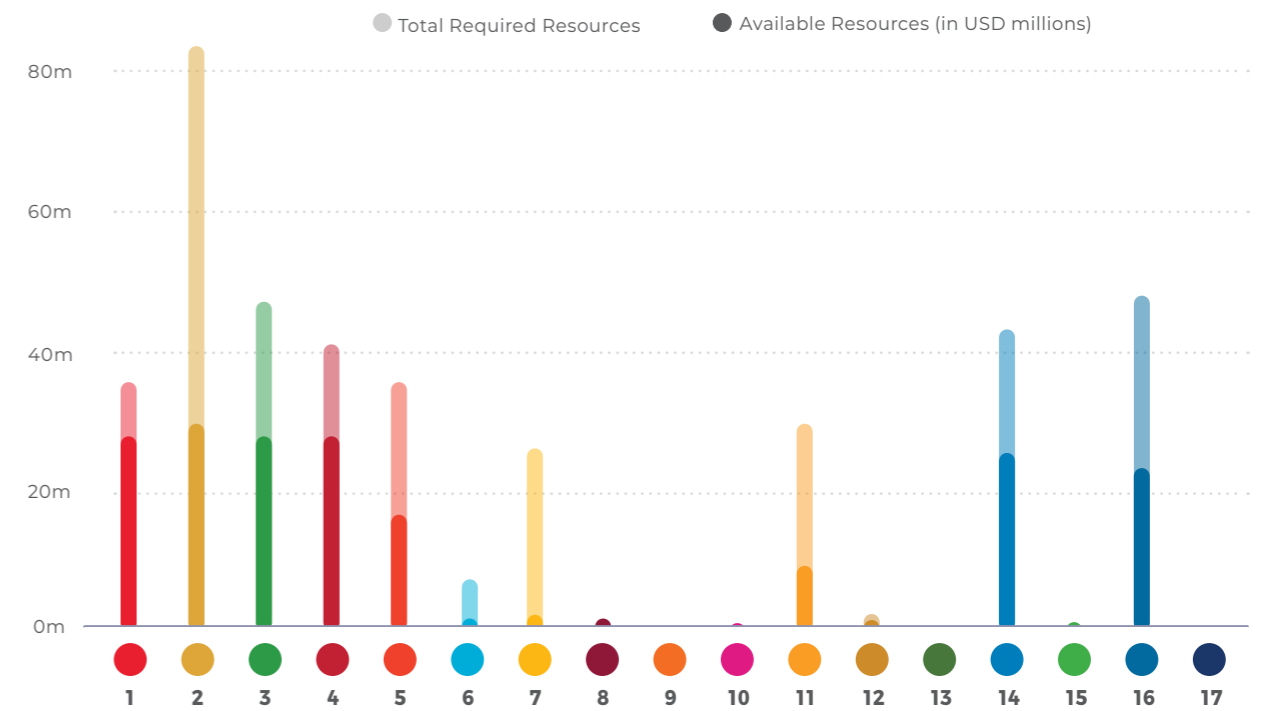
The UNSDCF has four strategic priority/outcome areas that correspond with the four pillars of the PAPD, linking each to specific SGD goals.

| UNSDCF Outcomes  | PAPD Pillars Links  | SDGs links |
|--|---|------------|
| <p><b>Outcome 1. Human Development and Essential Social Services:</b></p> <p>By 2024, the most vulnerable and excluded groups have improved quality of life with rights-based, gender-sensitive, inclusive, equitable access and utilization of essential social services in an environment free of discrimination and violence, including in humanitarian situations.</p> | <p><b>Power to the People:</b></p> <p>To empower Liberians with the tools to gain control of their lives, reaching the furthest first and leaving no one behind.</p>                    |            |
| <p><b>Outcome 2. Sustainable Economic Development:</b></p> <p>By 2024, Liberia has sustained, diversified and inclusive economic growth driven by investments in agriculture, food security and job creation and is resilient to climate change and natural disasters.</p>   | <p><b>The Economy and Jobs:</b></p> <p>A stable macroeconomic environment enabling private sector-led economic growth, greater competitiveness, and diversification of the economy.</p> |            |
| <p><b>Outcome 3. Sustaining Peace and Security:</b></p> <p>By 2024, Liberia consolidates, sustains peace, and enhances social cohesion, have strengthened formal and informal institutions capable of providing access to inclusive, effective, equitable justice and security services, capable of promoting and protecting the human rights of all.</p>                  | <p><b>Sustaining the Peace:</b></p> <p>A more peaceful and unified society that enables economic transformation and sustainable development.</p>  |            |
| <p><b>Outcome 4. Governance and Transparency:</b></p> <p>By 2024, people in Liberia especially the vulnerable and disadvantaged, will benefit from strengthened institutions that are more effective, accountable, transparent, inclusive and gender-responsive in delivering essential services at the national and sub-national levels.</p>                              | <p><b>Governance &amp; Transparency:</b></p> <p>An inclusive and accountable public sector for shared prosperity and sustainable development.</p>                                       |            |

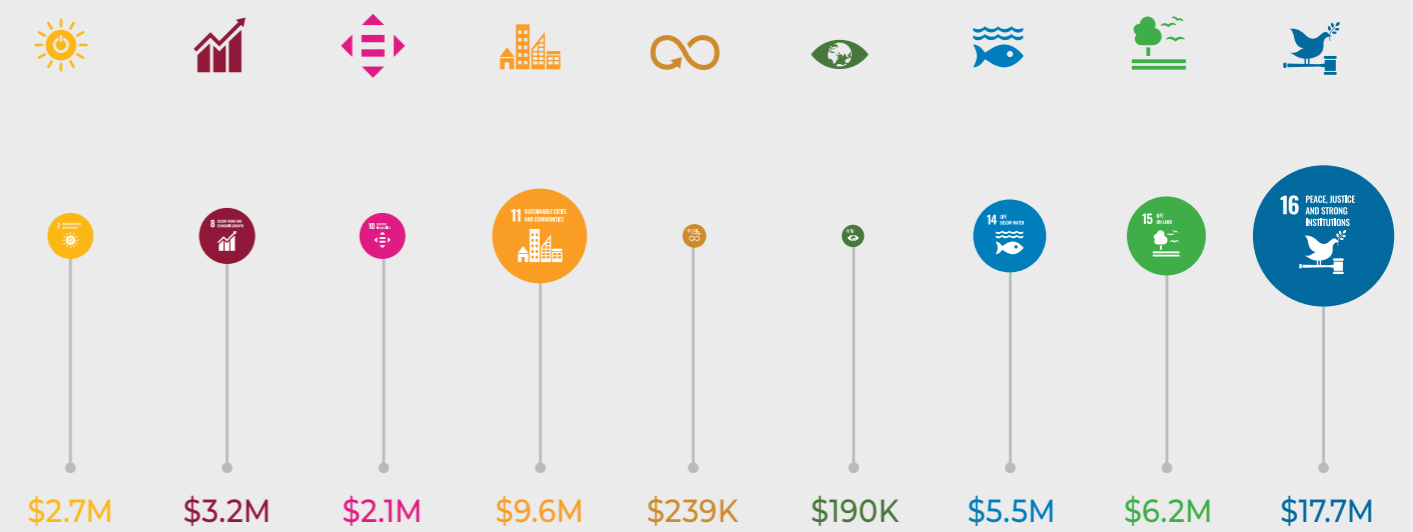
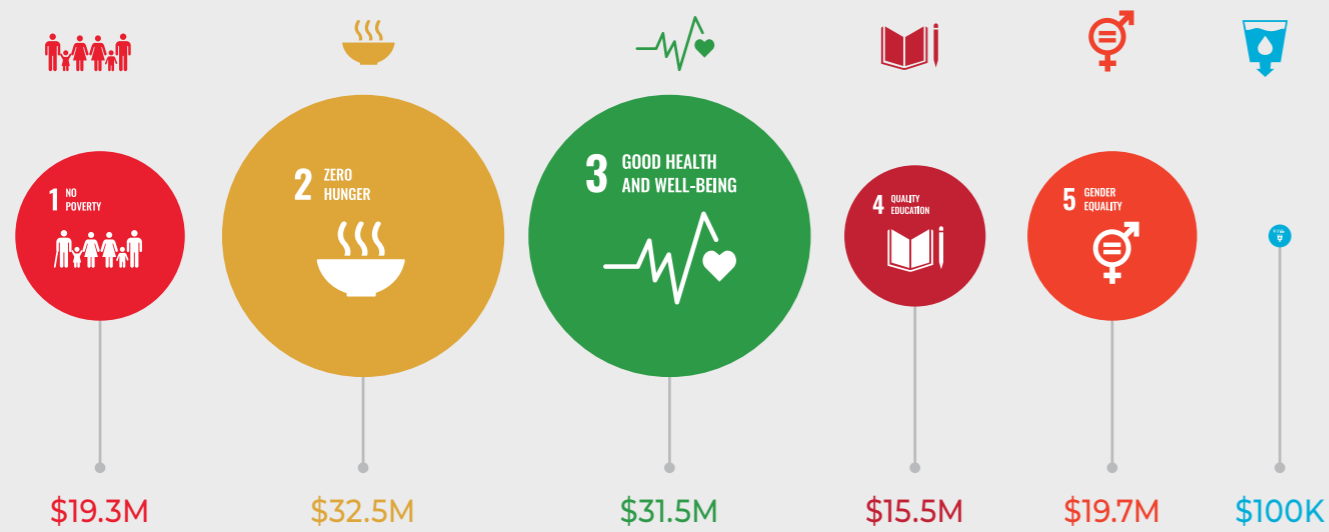
### Share of financial contributions per Pillars



### How Much We Need vs. How We Have: Funding Gaps by SDGs



### Expenditure by SDG



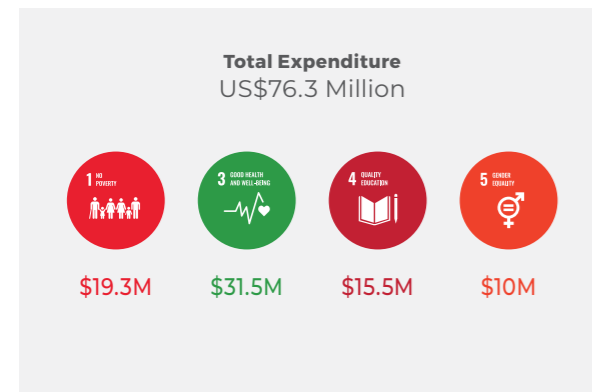
## 2.2. Cooperation Framework Priorities, Outcomes, and Outputs

### OUTCOME 1

#### Human Development and Essential Social Services

*By 2024, the most vulnerable and excluded groups have improved quality of life with rights-based, gender-sensitive, inclusive, equitable access and utilization of essential social services in an environment free of discrimination and violence, including humanitarian situations.*

In 2022, the UN made significant contributions towards gender-responsive legal and policy reforms, and strengthened the institutional capacity of key government institutions and civil society organization (CSO) actors to promote and protect human rights and women's leadership and political participation. Additionally, it has contributed to increasing access to essential social services, including effective and affordable justice and legal aid services, food security and livelihoods, essential health, and educational services for vulnerable groups, including people living with disabilities and HIV-AIDS.



#### Output 1.1. Institutions are strengthened to develop and implement policies, laws, and strategies that promote human rights and equitable social services and norms.

The UN support improved the policy and regulatory environment and increased access to essential health, education, protection, justice and social services, especially for vulnerable populations. In addition, the UN improved Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) governance and policy in order to deliver demand-driven and industry-responsive TVET education for the youthful population of Liberia.

- UNESCO strengthened the capacity of the Ministries of Education and Youth and Sports and the Inter-ministerial Taskforce on TVET education, which helped develop the National TVET Policy and its operational plan. The UN advocated for the TVET Bill to improve policy and regulation to ensure quality education, among others by establishing mechanisms such as the Liberia TVET Commission, National TVET Qualification Framework 2022, ICT in TVET Strategy 2022, and the revised Education Sector Plan (2022/23-2026/27).



Youth Empowerment through TVET

- UNIDO provided scholarships for TVET teachers undergoing advanced technical and continuous training by the Ministries of Education and Youth and Sports.
- UN Women supported the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection in implementing the Revised National Gender Policy to increase women's economic security and social empowerment, including the livelihoods of smallholder farmers and entrepreneurs.
- UN Women strengthened the capacity of the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, and other line ministries, agencies and commissions to develop gender-responsive macroeconomic, fiscal, and monetary policies to address challenges to women's economic empowerment.
- ILO worked with relevant government institutions to ratify and domesticate International Labor Standards conventions to promote the protection of workers' rights and improve labour practices, especially for vulnerable people in the mining and agriculture sectors. ILO, together with the Ministry of Labor, revised the 2015 Decent Work Act in line with ILO recommendations, and submitted it to the National Legislature for passage into law to protect workers in the private and public sectors.
- UNFPA and WHO, together with the Ministries of Youth and Sports and Education, mapped the at-risk youth population to develop a joint national empowerment programme for equipping at-risk youth, including drug users, with marketable skills and employment opportunities.
- WHO, UNICEF and UNFPA supported the Ministry of Health in revising and developing a series of national plans and policies to improve the quality and provision of healthcare services delivery throughout the country, including the National Health Policy, National Health Strategy, Essential Package of Health Services (EPHS), Comprehensive Abortion Care Guidelines, and Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child, and Adolescent Health (RMNCAH).
- The National Multisectoral Costed Plan of Action for Nutrition was developed to reduce stunting sustainably, improve dietary diversity, and promote exclusive breastfeeding. This strategy has enhanced the integration of nutrition into Sexual Reproduction Health Rights (SRHR) services, such as adolescent pregnancy prevention, antenatal care (ANC), and stunting. In 2022, these packages were used by 21,632 young pregnant women.



**Output 1.2.**

**The capacity of national and sub-national institutions to provide quality, equitable, inclusive, and decentralized social services is enhanced.**

The UN system in Liberia supported the Government in improving health systems, livelihoods, and reproductive health rights, as well as increasing and decentralizing service delivery and access to basic social services.

- UNFPA and partners provided integrated SRHR and GBV information and services, reaching 217,350 adolescents and youth.
- 223 adolescents received economic livelihood skills training in Grand Cape Mount and Bomi Counties, and around 74,890 students and non-students received comprehensive sexuality education. The

UN helped establish four school health facilities in five counties to serve as adolescent-friendly spaces for discussion, sexuality education, and interaction with peers.

- UNFPA and WFP supported production of communication and behavioral change materials used in multimedia campaigns and 156 healthcare facilities, reaching 96,522 community members. These interventions resulted in a change in behavior and attitudes and significantly reduced maternal and neonatal mortality rates from 1,072 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2020 to 742 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2022.
- With support of WHO and UNICEF, Liberia became the first country in West Africa to reach and surpass the original 70% target of COVID-19 vaccination coverage, fully vaccinating 81% of the population by December 2022, more than 3,732,954 people.

**Sergeant Patience Dorsla, Deputy Chief Officer responsible for combatting domestic violence in the Women and Children Protection Section of Liberia's National Police, shares her experience on the importance of gender training**

*"As a woman police officer serving at the national headquarters, I have experienced significant levels of discrimination from fellow male officers during my career. This is because when women initially joined the police, it was primarily as secretaries or performing administrative duties. Furthermore, when they started being recruited as police officers, most of them were school dropouts. As a result, policewomen were generally looked down upon, as finding one with a university degree was rare. This, coupled with traditional perceptions that policing is combative and therefore better suited for men, resulted in most promotions and other strategic assignments being usually given to men.*

*After I attended the gender equity training, my career progression dramatically changed in more ways than I would ever have imagined. It was my first time attending a gathering about policing in Liberia where women outnumbered men. Out of 50 participants, 29 were women who actively participated in the sessions.*

*The training also broke hierarchical protocols. Both senior and junior officers were seated side by side to learn and acquire knowledge on addressing gender disparities within the police force. The training brought officers of all cadres together, men and women, creating opportunities for us to interact and discuss various topics, freely sharing views.*

*After the training, I suddenly got promoted from the third in command to the second in command in the Women and Children Protection Section of the Liberia National Police, with added leadership responsibility. In my new role, I am now the first point of reference on matters relating to domestic violence before they can be escalated to the Head of the Section for further direction.*

*The training served as an eye opener and has increased my knowledge and confidence such that today I can boldly and courageously stand up to take on any task that my male counterparts are assigned."*



- WHO and partners commissioned two oxygen plants to produce and deliver medical oxygen to approximately 2.3 million people in five counties. The UN supported the Government in delivering an essential package of health services at community and health facilities, benefiting 3.5 million people.
- The severe acute malnutrition programme was scaled up to 60 new health facilities in 14 counties that trained 180 health workers in nutrition. UNICEF, WHO, WFP and UNFPA, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health (MoH), provided preventive nutrition services in 514 health facilities (up from 228 in 2020), covering 244,273 caregivers of children aged 0–23 months who received infant and young child feeding counselling, 140,676 pregnant women received iron-folic acid supplementation in ANC visits, and 171,616 children aged 6–23 months who received micronutrient powder supplementation. The adolescent nutrition programme also benefited 124 schools through weekly nutrition education and yearly deworming, which reached 30,077 adolescent girls.
- Strengthened justice and security services and the capacity of key institutions to provide integrated case management services for survivors of SGBV and other domestic violence cases. UNDP, UN Women, UNICEF, UNFPA, and OHCHR supported this programme, which directly benefited 293,431 children, adolescents and their parents/caregivers, as well as 15,979 women and adolescent girls who accessed safe spaces and benefitted from life skills and other empowerment initiatives.
- UNICEF supported the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection and two local universities by training 499 social service workers. They provided case management services to 714 (all female) child survivors of rape, and 7,884 girls benefited from multisectoral child protection interventions tailored to address child marriage.
- The UN accelerated decentralized and integrated HIV testing and treatment services through innovative models in counties with the highest unmet need for HIV-related services. Procurement of GeneXpert cartridges for early infant diagnosis



Empowering women in Agriculture

- reached 540 children and 11,000 adults with a viral load test. UNAIDS, WHO and partners established drop-in-centres targeting key populations with pre-exposure prophylaxis. The rate of HIV self-testing, index testing, and community ART has increased through the supply of test kits and treatment services. ILO provided technical and financial support to its partners, including the Ministry of Labor and the National AIDS Commission to revise the National HIV-AIDS Workplace Policy to reduce and prevent transmission through workplace-friendly reproductive health programmes.
- Elimination of mother-to-child transmission and early infant diagnosis were scaled-up at subnational and national levels, and 184,736 (98%) of HIV-positive patients received ARVs to increase coverage for early infant diagnosis.
- WHO helped the Liberia Coordinating Mechanism for the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria mobilize more than US\$ 77.7 million for health systems. Through UN support, Global Fund approved more than US\$ 15.54 million within the COVID-19 Response Mechanism and an additional



US\$ 3.9 million to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on HIV, TB and malaria services, reinforce the national COVID-19 response and recovery, and strengthen community health systems. UN technical and financial support to the Ministry of Health and National AIDS Control Programme has helped move Liberia closer to the 90-90-90 target, achieving 66% for HIV testing, 93% for treatment, and 76% for viral suppression in patients on ART.

- WFP's school feeding programme, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, improved food security and nutrition in two counties with chronic malnutrition and food insecurity (Maryland and Nimba). WFP's alternative in-kind (food) take-home programme reached 55,000 schoolchildren, and cash take-home ration through mobile money benefited another 14,797. Around 65,410 schoolchildren continue to receive on-site school meals and take-home rations in-kind. The programme has empowered 15,944 vulnerable households in Montserrado and Nimba counties with cash transfers improving their nutrition, reducing poverty, and retaining children in schools.

- With funding provided by the Global Fund, WFP supported the Ministry of Health in improving the distribution of health products throughout the country. As a result, 1,498 cubic meters of medical supplies, equivalent to US\$7.9 million, were delivered to 165 health facilities.

- UN Women supported the Government's social protection measures and provided direct social safety cash transfers and psychosocial support to 150 vulnerable women, women-headed households, survivors of SGBV, and girls living with disabilities across 42 local communities. Around 100 women smallholder farmers and entrepreneurs were able to expand their business and community investments thanks to financial assistance and business skills received through 40 village savings and loan associations.

- UN Women, UNESCO, and UNICEF strengthened the Ministry of Education's capacity to effectively implement its National Girls' Education Policy through life skills and literacy programmes that benefited over 700 women (ages 21-47) in seven counties.

### Output 1.3.

**Community leaders and members, including vulnerable and marginalized group members, can demand and utilize quality, equitable, decentralized, and age- and gender-responsive essential social services.**

- In collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Youth and Sports, UNIDO renovated and equipped seven TVET institutions with modern training equipment to increase employment opportunities for Liberia's young population through practical and industry-relevant education. Additionally, 61 TVET teachers were trained in Kenya, Zambia, and South African-based colleges, and 167 teachers in ten TVET institutions were trained on inclusive education measures to improve the participation of learners with disabilities, girls, and out-of-school youth.
- WFP and FAO supported food security, livelihoods and market surveys, and food safety and disease surveillance through capacity building of Environmental Health Technicians (EHTs) from three selected counties (Montserrado, Bong, and Grand Bassa).

### Output 1.4.

**Timely collection, analysis, and use of disaggregated data to inform programme and policy development for equity-focused and evidence-based planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation**

In 2022, UN agencies supported various line ministries, agencies, and commissions to generate rich empirical data on a wide range of social sectors, including a population and housing census, agriculture, education, health, nutrition, social protection, youth, HIV/AIDS, SGBV, and people with disabilities. This data serves to inform development planning, joint programming, and resource mobilization.

- UN Women provided technical and institutional capacity support to the Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection to develop a GBV

information management system (GBV/IMS) to capture gender/sex and age disaggregated data on GBV survivors/perpetrators and the available services in order to inform strategic planning and gender interventions.

- WHO provided technical and financial support to the Ministry of Health to conduct the STEPS Survey to determine risk factors for non-communicable diseases such as diabetes and hypertension. The report is now available.
- UNFPA supported the Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-information Services in digitizing the 2022 Population and Housing Census.
- UNICEF and UNESCO supported the Ministry of Education in conducting the Education Census (2021-2022) using digital systems, and trained personnel on Education Information Management Systems (EMIS), DHIS2, and other electronic data collection and analysis systems. Among others, EMIS enables tracking school enrolment, attendance and performance of students and schools, and real-time reporting.



## OUTCOME 2

### Sustainable Economic Development

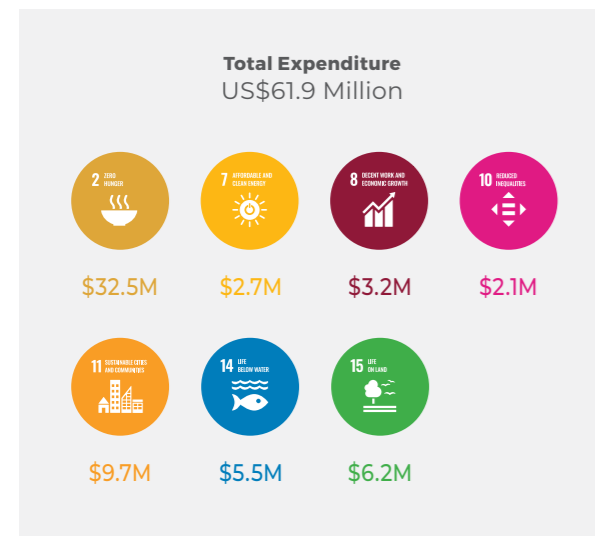
By 2024, Liberia has sustained, diversified and inclusive economic growth driven by investments in agriculture, food security and job creation and is resilient to climate change and natural disasters.

**Output 2.1.** By 2024, targeted national institutions can develop an evidence-based, cross-sectoral and gender-responsive policy framework and accountability mechanisms that promote sustainable livelihoods, food security and resilience to climate change.

The UN support enabled the Government to carry out strategic policy reforms that promote sustainable climate-resilient agriculture to enhance food production and access to sustainable livelihoods for vulnerable populations and rural farmers. While most of the population is still food insecure, the UN empowered relevant institutions and rural smallholder farmers, including women farmers, to increase food, vegetable, and fishery production.

An additional UN focus has been on rehabilitating farms-to-market roads in order to promote high-value chain systems, as well as improving the management of natural resources to reduce the impact of climate change and vulnerability on agriculture and vulnerable communities.

- WFP supported the Food Security and Post-Harvest Assessment, which revealed the dire extent of food insecurity: an estimated 2.4 million people (45% of the population) are moderately or severely food insecure, reflecting a 50% increase since September 2020. The livelihood assessment conducted in four concession counties (Grand Cape Mount, Nimba, Sinoe and Maryland) showed that more than two-thirds (69%) of people in these areas have limited access to formal employment and depend on food and tree crop production for income generation.
- WFP, in partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture, and the WFP Center of Excellence in Cote D'Ivoire, conducted a Post-Harvest Loss assessment covering four counties in Liberia (Montserrado, Bong, Lofa and Nimba).



Empowering women smallholders farmers

- WFP, FAO, UNICEF, and WHO conducted a nationwide Rapid Food Security, Nutrition, Livelihoods and Markets Assessment, surveying 4,160 households from all 15 counties (including Monrovia). The assessment, which found 47% of the population to be food insecure, informed key policymakers and called attention to the need to develop a flagship programme to improve agricultural productivity and food security, food value chain and supply, and dietary diversification.
- UN Women empowered 13 women-based farming cooperatives (comprising a total of 700 women) on climate-smart and nutrition-sensitive agriculture techniques, enabling them to farming methods and diversify vegetable crops. Another 3,600 rural women have benefited from the lowland cultivation of 720 hectares of improved rice varieties.
- WFP distributed 63 metric tons of various commodities to 450 smallholder farmers that enhanced productive community assets such as lowland development/rehabilitation and construction of a community bridge and storage facilities. These enabled the communities to increase production and build resilience, directly market their products to schools and supermarkets, and provide a reliable source of fresh quality food products for school canteens and other buyers.
- ILO empowered more than 100 youths and 108 vulnerable women with entrepreneurial skills and financial assistance to start and grow their businesses for self-sufficiency and independence.
- FAO supported the Food Security and Nutrition Division and the Scaling Up Nutrition Movement Secretariat to develop Liberia's first nutrition strategy—the Liberia Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Cost Strategic Plan (2023-2027) — to reduce all forms of stunting and malnutrition in children 0-3 years.
- Improved capacity in the fisheries and aquaculture sector by training 314 fishmongers and key government officials on packaging/labelling value-added products. Additionally, the National Tree Crops Policy has been developed to improve value chain development, ensure food security and inclusive livelihoods, and create employment opportunities in the agricultural sector.

- Implementing integrated coastal management and conservation of mangrove forest ecosystems has helped mitigate climate change impacts. In collaboration with the Ministry of Mines and Energy and Liberia's Environmental Protection Agency, UNDP constructed 1,200 meters of revetments and coastal defence structures in New Kru Town and other coastal communities, protecting the lives, livelihoods and property of 100,000 inhabitants. Additionally, the Monrovia Metropolitan Coastal Resilience Project implemented through UNDP protects slums and fragile coastal communities from the impacts of sea erosion, aiming to reach 250,000 people directly and to benefit 1 million indirectly through the adoption of an integrated coastal zone management approach for Liberia. Further installation of 5,000 meters of coastal defense walls has strengthened the National Early Warning and Emergency Operation Center's capacity to better prevent and respond to climate-induced disasters.

- FAO improved the management and governance of natural resources and biodiversity conservation by supporting several non-timber forest producers, forest-and-farm producer organizations, and community forest management actors that promoted sustainable livelihoods cultivation in rural communities.
- The Government developed the Private Sector Strategy to promote private engagement and investments, improve alternative livelihoods for people living near the Grebo-Krahn National Park, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- UNICEF supported cross-border hygiene and WASH mechanisms by installing 22 hand-washing facilities at 22 border crossing points and communities in Nimba and Grand Gedeh to reinforce COVID-19 prevention. Additionally, IOM supported cross-border COVID-19 testing and screening services at ten ports of entry and trained 24 community health workers to enforce

the use of hand-washing facilities at official border crossings between Guinea, Sierra Leone, and Liberia.

- Refugees and other vulnerable groups and communities benefited from improved water facilities/WASH facilities in local communities and refugee camps. Some 91,895 people in 161 communities have improved knowledge of clean handwashing and hygiene practices, and 11,763 persons from 1,234 vulnerable homes received basic family hygiene kits in communities hosting refugees in Nimba, Grand Gedeh, River Gee and Maryland counties. UNICEF and partners also provided menstrual kits and promoted menstrual hygiene and services among 7,217 girls and women.

- UNDP supported setting up a regional WASH office at the County Service Center in Buchanan, Grand Bassa County to enhance regional coordination and accelerate access to effective WASH and sanitation services in local communities. Additionally, solar power was installed in several markets, health, and school facilities to ensure a stable electricity supply for business, healthcare, and an improved learning environment.



to improve management of natural resources and biodiversity conservation and promote community forest management for enhancing sustainable livelihoods at the community level.

- UNDP empowered 400 smallholder farmers on alternative livelihoods and agriculture, promoting climate-resilient extension services and mitigating deforestation caused by charcoal production. Additionally, training of 40 women on eco-stoves that use less wood and produce less harmful smoke has promoted an efficient alternative energy source and led to the production of 400 such eco-stoves so far and reducing of greenhouse gases.

- UNDP supported two community initiatives in Buchanan and Sinoe, working with 120 youth to set up a community eco-brigade in the city of Robertspport, in order to implement community-based interventions that promote environmental adaptation, sustainability and protection.

- UNDP enhanced the capacity of artisanal miners and has improved artisanal mining practices at the community level by establishing mining cooperatives. Over 50 miners from Gbarpolu, Lofa and Grand Cape Mount Counties were trained in participatory environmental monitoring and supported the setting up of environmental monitoring committees.

### Liberia President George Weah Launches National Action Plan for Reducing Climate Change Impacts

In October 2022, the President of Liberia, H.E. George Weah, launched the Implementation Plan for the country's revised ambitious National Determined Contributions (NDCs) towards reducing greenhouse gases in order to accelerate the Government's actions on the climate change emergency.

The Implementation Plan, also known as the Road Map, outlines how Liberia will reduce greenhouse gases in nine key sectors of the economy – agriculture, coastal zones, fisheries, health, forests, transport, industry, energy, and waste.

"No country is immune to the impacts of climate change. In Liberia, climate change is disrupting agriculture, coastal erosion, and perennial flooding, critically impacting the agriculture, energy, and fisheries sectors," President Weah said in remarks read on his behalf by Foreign Affairs Minister H. E. Dee-Maxwell Saah Kemayah Sr.

UNDP Liberia's Resident Representative Stephen Rodriques described the launch of the NDC Implementation Plan as "a clear commitment of the Government of Liberia to take ownership and lead the national drive to combat climate change".

The President urged all government officials to ensure that the NDC Implementation Plan was implemented to its fullest, as the country's development and prosperity hinge on adaptation ability and mitigating the effects of climate change. In addition, he asked the development partners to help the Government mobilize about US\$ 491 million required to implement the plan between 2021 and 2025.

Source: [undp.org/liberia/news/liberia-president-george-weah-launches-national-action-plan-reducing-climate-change-impacts](https://undp.org/liberia/news/liberia-president-george-weah-launches-national-action-plan-reducing-climate-change-impacts)



### Output 2.2.

**By 2024, national and subnational capacity to deliver sustainable natural resource management and climate-aware initiatives are strengthened.**

The UN strengthened key government institutions' technical and institutional capacity to manage natural resources effectively and promoted climate-resilient agriculture and livelihood initiatives, including disaster management.

- With partners, UNDP developed county disaster management plans for all 15 counties to strengthen early warning and disaster risk management, and developed forest conservation vulnerability maps to improve land use and value change development.

- UNDP supported the Government in developing its first Forest Reference Emissions Level Policy



Women smallholders farmers

- The National Tourism Policy improved the eco-tourism sector as a viable source of economic growth and diversity, through UNDP support.
- FAO, in partnership with the Central Agriculture Research Institute, the University of Liberia, and the Ministry of Agriculture, has established an interactive digital soil information system\* for improving access to soil information.

**Output 2.3.**

**By 2024, access, awareness and sustainable use of appropriate resources, assets, services and Markets by poor and rural producers, households, value-chain actors, and communities, including women and youth improved.**

The UN contributions increased access to finance, resources, and markets for poor and rural farmers, particularly women smallholder farmers and vulnerable populations and increased value chain development. Rural farmers and communities

were empowered with improved knowledge and skills to hold duty-bearers accountable for natural resource management and use at the sub-national and national levels.

- IFAD trained 3,500 cocoa farmers in Lofa under the Tree Crops Extension Projects and supported 4,678 farmers in Nimba by providing improved hybrid and high-yielding cocoa seeds. The training held in Farmers Field Schools educated farmers about climate-smart agricultural practices and provided 1,476 solar dryers. This digressive support to cocoa cooperatives has significantly increased the volume and quality of cocoa produced and traded, thereby increasing the incomes of farmers and households at the local level.
- Additionally, IFAD used the Rural Poor Stimulus Facility intervention, developed to address the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, to provide various equipment benefiting 5,267 farmers in Nimba and Lofa.

- Under the Smallholder Rural Transformation and Business Revitalization Project, IFAD and the World Bank supported 2,500 farmers in the rice, horticultural, and palm oil value chain through matching grants to increase food production and improve processing techniques in rural communities.
- UN Women strengthened the capacity of 2,625 women smallholder farmers from 15 women-based farming cooperatives that are demanding and advocating for their rights in community management of land for agriculture and participation in the management of other natural resources. Additionally, UN Women have supported both government and civil society to increase awareness of women's land rights for agriculture in Margibi, Grand Bassa, Lofa, Bong, and Nimba Counties, reaching over 700 rural women in protected areas in Lake Piso (Grand Cape Mount) and Kpatawee (Bong).
- UNHCR, in partnership with the Catholic Relief Services and under the Small Enterprise Development Project, provided cash grants to 216 beneficiaries, among them 159 host Liberians and 57 persons of concern.
- FAO worked with the Farmer Union Network and the National Charcoal Union of Liberia to raise awareness on climate change and established woodlot and kiln ovens for Forest and Farm Producers Organizations (FFPOs) in three counties (Grand Bassa, Gbarpolu, and Lofa). This led to the transformation of FFPOs into legal associations for effective governance and management of forest resources, with the entrepreneurship and incubation capacity to transform forest resources into food value chains and viable market products.
- WFP trained 853 communities and government staff on managing and controlling productive assets, value chain analysis, severe acute malnutrition, livelihoods depletion, and post-harvest loss.
- IFAD provided 4,402 rural people with increased access to financial resources through support to rural community financial institutions within the Rural Community Finance Project.

- To further production and productivity, FAO procured and distributed 66 sets of agro-machinery to 20 groups of farmers. The equipment included 22 sets of power tillers, 22 sets of rice harvesters, and 22 sets of rice threshers.
- WFP has supported 90 village savings and loans association (VSLA) groups in Grand Bassa and Maryland counties to improve their access to finance in six counties in order to invest in climate-smart agriculture and agri-business, enabling the groups to make an additional 1 million Liberian Dollars in profits. This has encouraged other women entrepreneurs, rural smallholder farmers and VSLA members to become changemakers in their local communities and inspire other emerging agripreneurs.
- UNDP supported women and youth-led small and micro-enterprises to build sustainable livelihoods and employment for vulnerable youths and communities by providing grants to 300 people in seven counties to start businesses and create livelihoods.





**Output 2.4.**

**By 2024, public and private sector players have strengthened their capacity to increase economic participation and productivity and, in an inclusive manner, enable employment, job creation and enterprise development.**

The UN established strategic partnerships with private sector institutions and other actors that supported agri-business and entrepreneurship development, empowering rural smallholder farmers and providing employment opportunities for vulnerable households, youths, people with disabilities and other highly vulnerable groups.

- UN Women supported more than 1,000 rural women smallholder farmers to create self-employment opportunities through small business start-ups and live-stock farming that increased their incomes and financial self-sufficiency.

- WFP and partners improved the capacity of 1,002 smallholder farmers in Grand Bassa, Margibi, Bong, Lofa, Nimba, Sinoe, River Gee, Maryland, and Cape Mount Counties on food production skills, including cassava value chain development and agri-business practices, which increased productivity in vegetables and lowland rice varieties.

- 175 young agri-preneurs received training on organizational development and an inclusive business model to foster responsible investments in agriculture and food systems. In addition, FAO partnered with the Central Agriculture Research Institute to provide technical support for establishing five demonstration plots that serve as innovation platforms for 2,000 smallholder farmers in four counties. The innovation platforms promote public-private partnerships of selected value chain actors to support the



linkages between research and extension and boost production, processing, packaging, and marketing through technology and innovation.

- UNHCR distributed vegetable seeds and tools to 138 farmers in Nimba, Grand Gedeh and Maryland Counties to boost agricultural production among former refugee farmers and increase food security within host communities. Of the 138 farmers, 60 were former refugees, and 78 were vulnerable host community members. Additionally, UNHCR and partners supported small enterprise development for former refugees and vulnerable host community households to build sustainable livelihoods and employment through entrepreneurship and life skills training and business grants to 216 beneficiaries.
- UNDP supported the development of the National Oil Palm strategy and National Eco-tourism Policy to promote an alternative source of revenue generation for national development. Additionally, UNDP supported 13 micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) with a grant of US\$40,000 each to scale up their businesses and create jobs for over 400 youths.

**Output 2.5.**

**By 2024, relevant institutions have strengthened their capacity to increase economic activity and connectivity through energy, air and seaports, water, and sanitation infrastructure improvement.**

The UN accelerated access to solar-powered irrigation systems for increased agricultural productivity, energy and sanitation infrastructure and services at rural health facilities, markets, and communities to spur local economic activities. The UN supported the Government and relevant institutions to improve the artisanal fisheries sector and rehabilitated 88.6 km of feeder roads to increase productivity and market access in Lofa and Nimba counties.

- FAO has empowered 11 private agri-businesses with improved irrigation systems and installed submersible pumps in nine counties, benefiting more than 500 smallholder farmers.



- UN Women procured and installed a solar system in the health facility and market in Gbah, Bomi County, providing sustainable electricity to over 500 market women. Additionally, 13 solar suitcases were provided to rural women farming cooperatives for electricity at night for the literacy classes as well as connecting them to potential buyers through an ICT and digital centre established in rural communities.

- Health facilities and schools in Nimba and Grand Gedeh also benefited from solar energy for continued healthcare and educational service delivery, received through UNHCR.

- FAO constructed improved fish processing facilities in collaboration with the National Fisheries and Aquaculture Authority, with beneficiaries including 300 women fish processors. The intervention has enhanced the capacity of fishmongers, fishing communities and women fish processors to promote value addition, environmental sustainability, reduction in tree cutting, and smoke emission reduction.

- IFAD invested in developing rural infrastructure by rehabilitating 88.6 km of rural feeder roads in Nimba county.

## OUTCOME 3

### Sustaining Peace and Security

*By 2024, Liberia consolidates and sustains peace, enhance social cohesion, and has strengthened formal and informal institutions capable of providing access to inclusive, effective, equitable justice and security services capable of promoting and protecting the human rights of all.*

Total Expenditure  
US\$12.2 Million



\$4.7M



\$7.5M



#### Output 3.1.

**Peace infrastructure at national and sub-national levels is strengthened and coordinated to address conflict, sustain peace, and enhance social cohesion more effectively and inclusively.**

Liberia has made significant progress sustaining peace, promoting social cohesion and reconciliation, and addressing some of the root causes of conflict by strengthening peace infrastructures at the grassroots and national levels. While the drivers of conflict are visible, the UN supported establishing and maintaining early warning and early response mechanisms, including peace huts and district and county peace committees that carry out peacebuilding and conflict negotiation and promote peaceful coexistence interventions. Importantly, this has increased the participation of women and youth in peacebuilding processes.

- UNDP constructed four memorials on mass graves and massacre sites in Grand Bassa, Rivercess, Gbarpolu, and Lofa counties. This has ensured the progressive implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's call for collectively honouring the memory of the Liberian civil war victims to appease their families and communities by bringing closure to their hurt and as a reminder to the present and future generations of the futility of violence and war.
- UNDP and INCHR conducted five-session Palava Hut hearings in Sanoyea in Bong county. Fifty-two cases involving a total of 52 victims (35 males and 17 females) and 45 perpetrators (all male) were heard in the sessions. Of these, 51 cases were amicably resolved, and one case was dismissed because the accused perpetrator denied the accusation.
- In partnership with the Liberia Land Authority, National Bureau of Concession, County Land Authority Offices and Peace huts/Palava huts residents, UN Women increased local community members' knowledge on women's land rights, gender-responsive conflict resolution, and



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peacebuilding and conflict prevention. Around 280 women in women's peace huts were empowered to serve as agents of change in their local communities, supporting peacebuilding, conflict resolution and social cohesion to prevent and respond to conflict in a gender-responsive manner.

- UNFPA enhanced the institutional capacity of nine peace mechanisms, operationalized them in line with human rights and gender principles, and trained 45 peace hut members on gender-responsive conflict prevention and mediation.
- ILO strengthened the capacity of 1,200 young men and women on conflict resolution mechanisms that have reduced violent tendencies in their communities. This has increased the involvement of youth in resolving community conflicts, promoting social cohesion and peaceful coexistence. A recent assessment on youth, gender, and land-related conflicts in local communities showed a reduction in

barriers to the inclusion of youth and women in peacebuilding and conflict prevention and resolution.

- OHCHR, and the Liberia Peacebuilding Office, jointly conducted two one-day trainings on the human rights-based approach to the electoral process for existing community peace structures. The peace structures include youth representatives (County Peace Committees), Community-based Organisations (CBOs), women groups, and traditional and religious leaders. The trainings were held on 29 and 30 December 2022 in Tubmanburg and Bomi Counties. Following the training, the participants developed a schedule to hold bi-monthly regular meetings to discuss early warning issues and collaboratively address them using human rights lenses. 46 participants, including 21 women, benefited from the training.
- OHCHR conducted a stakeholders' engagement with the Justice and Security sector for the promotion and protection of human rights. The

security sector's capacities were enhanced to expeditiously respond to early warning issues for the prevention of human rights violations, training 41 participants, among them 21 women.

· OHCHR, in collaboration with the Press Union of Liberia, the National Elections Commission, the Independent National Commission on Human Rights and CSOs, conducted four one-day trainings on reporting on conflict-sensitive issues, elections and human rights for media practitioners and community radios across the country. These activities took place between 6 and 9 December 2022 in Bomi, Buchanan, Ganta and Zwedru. At the end of the trainings, participants were able to formulate elections-related radio programmes that will promote human rights and a peaceful electoral environment and how to verify conflict-sensitive information before reporting. The training brought together 141 participants, including 51 women.

**Output 3.2.**  
**Capacities of national and sub-national actors strengthened to develop, amend, and implement legislation and policies in compliance with human rights standards.**

In 2022, the UN made remarkable contributions to strengthen the capacity of the legislative drafting committees, justice and human rights institutions and CSOs to develop and implement key laws, policies, and regulatory frameworks focusing on gender inclusion and meeting human rights standards. These have increased access to affordable justice and protection services for children, women and girls, and other vulnerable groups.

· OHCHR developed a human rights and gender checklist for Liberia's legislature. The Justice Ministry's Human Rights Protection and CSOs were trained in drafting policies and laws that promote human rights, which led to the

Government developing policy on the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in both public and private sectors.

· UNICEF strengthened relevant policy environment and regulatory frameworks for gender-responsive child justice for children in conflict or contact with the law through strategic engagement, and developed a national action plan and programmatic interventions to address human rights issues affecting children significantly. Implementing the National Child Justice Strategy and Action Plan benefited 293,431 children, adolescents, and their parents/caregivers with multifaceted child protection services, as well as 4,979 women and adolescent girls accessing safe spaces where they could receive life skills and other empowerment initiatives. Additionally, at least 10,767 GBV survivors received adequate legal representation and protection services, and 499 social service workers were trained in service delivery for children in conflict or contact with the law.

· OHCHR provided technical, institutional, and financial support to the Ministry of Justice's Human Rights Protection Division on the National Mechanism for Reporting and Follow-Up (NMRF), enabling consultation and data collection for tracking engagement with human rights treaties and the Universal Periodic Review, monitoring implementation, and preparing related reports.

· Anti-human trafficking policies and mechanisms were established in six counties at the local community level (Montserrado, Margibi, Bong, Nimba, Lofa, and Grand Bassa). IOM supported the Trafficking in Persons Secretariat comprised of the Ministry of Labor, the Liberia Immigration Services, the Ministry of Youth and Sports, and other civil society and youth organizations to train journalists, CSO actors, and local community leaders and members on the prevention of human trafficking and Liberia's new Anti-Human Trafficking Law.

· With support from IOM, the Government of Liberia identified 50 victims of trafficking. It reintegrated them with their local communities



and families with sustained psychosocial and mental health support through the Ministry of Health's Mental Health Department.

· UN Women accelerated the sustainable implementation of the National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) and strengthened the capacity of the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning on innovative financing, effective resource mobilization, and integration of WPS in the national budget. The WPS innovative financing strategy has enabled the Government to institute and strengthen accountability mechanisms to advance the WPS agenda and implement its National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security (2019-2023). UN Women further supported the Ministry of Justice, Liberia National Fire Service, and Ministry of Defense/Armed Forces of Liberia to develop their gender policies and 5-year action plans to increase women's participation in leadership positions.

· UN Women, WFP and FAO ensured the financial and technical sustainability of women's peace huts and peace infrastructures to facilitate their continued work in peacebuilding and conflict resolution initiatives. Logistics and financial support were provided to three local peace

**Liberia's Palava Hut mechanism delivering quick wins on long, winding road to justice**

The Palava Hut hearings are a traditional restorative justice and accountability mechanism recommended by Liberia's erstwhile Truth and Reconciliation Commission. This serves as a complementary mechanism to recommendations to establish a war crimes court to render justice for war crimes, including genocide and crimes against humanity committed during the civil war.

The National Palava Hut hearing kicked off in Sanoyea in August 2022 with remarks from the Independent Commission on Human Rights Chairman, Councillor T. Dempster Brown, who called for justice for all crimes committed during the war.

"There must be justice for all the heinous crimes committed during the war for Liberia to sustain the peace and stability we are enjoying now," said Dempster Brown, promising that the Commission will not rest until the war crimes court is established.

Bong County Superintendent Esther Walker said Liberians must sustain peace, and appealed to the youth to embrace forgiveness and reconciliation in resolving their differences in order to rebuild Liberia. "The Liberia we want, only Liberians can make it," she said.

To date, the Palava Hut mechanism has resolved 277 war-related cases of human rights violations involving more than 500 people - 275 victims and 244 perpetrators.

In the long winding road to justice, the Palava Hut mechanism has provided a safe environment for victims to face their attackers to demand accountability and restitution. In addition, it has helped people across Liberia to find closure to the hurt, bitterness and hard feelings between community members.

Source: <https://www.undp.org/liberia/news/liberias-palava-hut-mechanism-delivering-quick-wins-long-winding-road-justice#:~:text=The%20Palava%20Hut%20hearings%20are,incluing%20genocide%20and%20crimes%20against>



Women in peace-building effort



structures (Lofa Peace Council, Women in Peace and the County Office of LLA) in Bong and Lofa Counties, enabling them to resolve a long-standing land/boundary dispute between two of these communities.

- Under the Cross-Border Project, IOM trained 40 joint border security officers on identifying and protecting victims with human rights observation focusing on human trafficking, SGBV, and illegal drug trade.

**Output 3.3.**  
**Relevant government authorities and security and justice institutions at national and sub-national levels have better knowledge and capacity to enhance access to justice, including vulnerable groups, women, and girl survivors of SGBV, and especially those facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination.**

The UN supported relevant justice and security institutions and actors to deliver quality and affordable services to SGBV survivors and other vulnerable groups at national and sub-national levels. The UN contributions both enabled duty-bearers to uphold and protect the rights of ordinary citizens to win public trust in justice and security institutions as well as holding duty-bearers accountable.

- UN Women, OHCHR and UNDP supported drafting a gender and human rights-sensitive Legal Aid Bill and Policy through the Association of Female Lawyers and the SGBV Crimes Unit of the Ministry of Justice. The Legal Aid Bill seeks to increase access to justice, legal aid, and legal representation for indigents (children, persons with disabilities) in criminal, civil, and administrative cases. UN Women helped establish two local legal aid clinics with hotlines for reporting SGBV incidents in Grand Bassa and Margibi Counties. The clinics provide adequate legal representation to in vulnerable people and groups in all matters, particularly domestic violence, land disputes and SGBV cases.

- Through the UN Joint Rule of Law Programme, UNDP supports CSOs providing legal aid services to 624 persons, including 271 GBV survivors (all women) and 353 inmates.

- The UN provided sustained technical and institutional capacity support to the Judiciary, the Ministry of Justice’s Prosecution Department and Programme Planning and Management Unit, the Liberia National Police, the Bureau of Corrections and Rehabilitation, the Law Reform Commission and Liberia Immigration Services to provide effective justice and security/protection services to the public, particularly women, children, and other vulnerable groups. The institutional capacity provided to these key justice and security sector institutions accelerated the adjudication of cases, reduced case backlogs and pre-trial detention and prevented docket overcrowding.

- UNDP further supported the construction of new magisterial courts and specialized Court E (a specialized court for prosecuting rape cases) equipped with digital in-camera hearing equipment and an online case management information system improving service delivery and overall performance.

- OHCHR strengthened the human resources and technical capacity of the Independent National Commission on Human Rights (INCHR) to carry out its human rights protection and promotion mandate by deploying 18 INCHR Human Rights Monitors. This effort has increased the

Commission’s reach and presence in the 15 counties to timely monitor, document, and report cases of human rights violations, including child rights situations.

- OHCHR enhanced the capacity of the military new recruits and staff officers of the Armed Forces of Liberia through training on human rights and accountability, and general human rights principles to ensure their compliance on human rights and security.

**Output 3.4.**  
**Right holders’ capacity strengthened to demand /claim their rights and actively demand and engage in justice, reconciliation, and peacebuilding efforts.**

In 2022, the UN established strong partnerships with civil society and community-based organizations and networks that increased awareness and information campaigns at grassroots and national levels, enabling rights-holders to actively demand and claim their rights while holding the government accountable.

- UN Women capacitated many civil society institutions that accelerated the implementation of the National Gender Policy, the Domestic Violence Act and other gender-responsive policies. At the grassroots level, the National Peace Hut Women of Liberia was empowered to address issues affecting women and marginalized groups, such as women’s land rights and participation in peacebuilding and conflict management.

- UN Women supported the development of gender-responsive guidelines on the formalization of customary land. They developed relevant toolkits for Gender-responsive Dispute Resolution Mechanisms that increased awareness of rural women about their rights to land, gender roles and masculinities through community dialogues and radio messages. As a result, more than 300,000 people are informed about the rights of women to land and other property rights and more than 214,000 people have increased their knowledge about gender equality and women’s economic empowerment.

- UNDP and OHCHR helped develop the Alternative Disputes Resolution (ADR) Policy to guide ADR practices, reduce the workload of the formal courts, and improve traditional practices of dispute resolution. A gender-responsive early warning and response tool for land conflicts and a related ADR training manual and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) were developed to train ADR practitioners in the formal and informal sectors.

- Strengthened the capacity of early warning institutions, such as the National Centre for Coordination of Response Mechanisms, Liberia Peacebuilding Office, and other peace infrastructures to produce policy briefs on triggers of land disputes and other drivers of conflicts, thereby improving evidence-based policy and decision-making processes. UNDP also supported the relaunch of the early warning and response situation room on electoral violence.

- OHCHR provided technical advisory and stakeholder engagement support to the technical team (comprising of CSOs, Ministry of Justice, INCHR, Women’s HRDs) to develop a draft Human Rights Defenders (HRD) policy in 2022. The draft policy is currently undergoing review and regional engagements supported by OHCHR in support of developing an HRD Bill and a fully functional HRD national structure are ongoing.

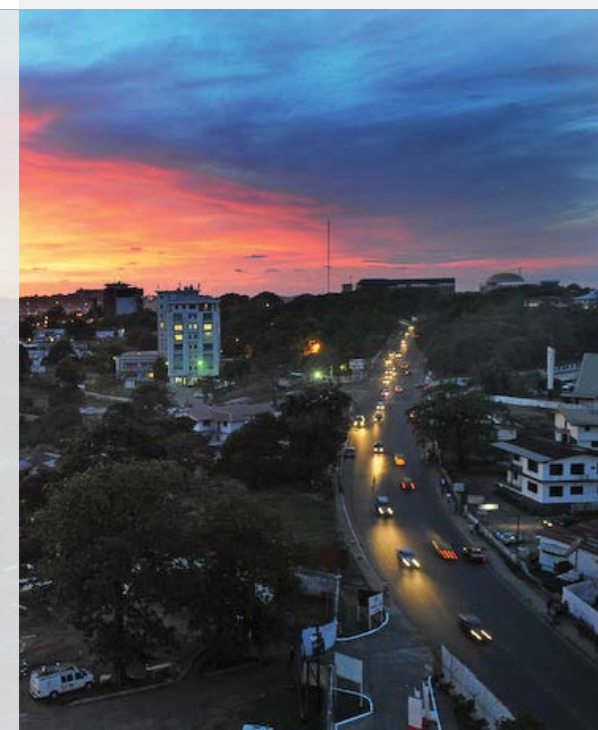


Peace-hut women promoting peace at community level

## OUTCOME 4

### Governance and Transparency

*By 2024, people in Liberia especially the vulnerable and disadvantaged, benefit from strengthened institutions that are more effective, accountable, transparent, inclusive and gender-responsive in delivering essential services at the national and sub-national levels.*



#### Output 4.1. Equal participation of men and women in the formulation of inclusive and responsive laws and policies strengthened at all levels.

Liberia has experienced increased access to and opportunity for women and vulnerable groups in politics and electoral processes through the concerted advocacy efforts of the UN and partners on electoral law and policy reforms. In 2022, the UN supported a wide range of women's groups and networks that increased women's participation in formulating inclusive and gender-responsive laws to increase their representation in all spheres of government.

- Technical and financial assistance was provided to the Women Legislative Caucus of Liberia (WLCL) in legislative drafting skills and mainstreaming human rights and gender in lawmaking processes that follow international human rights standards. UN Women and OHCHR helped develop the WLC's Strategic Plan (2022-2025) anchored around three key programmatic pillars aimed at championing gender-responsive lawmaking, including affirmative action for women in political parties and the legislature, increasing women's representation in the legislature, raising awareness on specific barriers that prevent women from entering politics, and generating public support for women's political participation.
- UN Women capacitated the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection and other ministries on gender-responsive budgeting and planning to increase budgetary allocations for women's economic empowerment interventions.
- Concerted advocacy and lobbying efforts by UN Women, UNDP and partners supported the amendments to the New Elections Law. They advocated passing the mandatory and enforceable 30% gender quota to increase women's participation in the 2023 general and presidential elections and all subsequent electoral cycles.



- The capacities of the National Elections Commission (NEC), the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MGCSP), and the WLC were enhanced to increase the enforceability of the political gender quota and implement it at all national and sub-national levels.
- The Liberia Electoral Support Project, supported by Sweden and Ireland, UNDP, and UN Women, strengthened the NEC to review and revise its gender policy and integrate gender and women empowerment in its activities. As a result, 29 of 33 registered political parties committed to supporting women's political participation and adopting gender-responsive policies and practices. Importantly, they also signed the Protocol and Action Plan to prevent Violence against Women in Elections and Politics.
- Enhancing the capacity of 46 elections magistrates and the NEC's Board of Commissioners has increased their commitment to preventing violence against women in election/ politics and better positioned the NEC to hold political parties

- accountable for their legal and policy obligations around women's participation.
- Enabling the environment for women to participate in elections as voters, candidates, and party agents was further enhanced through capacity building on gender-responsive electoral reporting. UNDP also trained 78 members of disabled people's organizations and women-led CSOs on proposal drafting. As a direct result, one of the organizations already secured a grant.
- UNDP trained 150 local government officials from the Ministries of Agriculture, Internal Affairs, Health, Education, and Gender, and Children and Social Protection on gender-responsive budgeting and planning, enabling them to mainstream gender in national development planning processes. This has increased inclusive economic development and women's inclusion in development programmes, improved local authorities' knowledge in financial management, planning and budgeting, and promoted accountability and efficient management of natural resources and revenues for improved service delivery at the municipal level.



Liberian National Bar Association Annual Convention

**Output 4.2.**  
**Integrity institutions are strengthened at national and subnational levels to advocate and assertively implement policies, legal and institutional frameworks and practices that promote transparency, accountability, and the rule of law.**

- In 2022, the UN supported the Government to reform laws, policies and institutional frameworks that promoted accountability, transparency, and the rule of law. The capacity of integrity institutions and CSOs was improved to combat corruption and promote transparency and accountability in governance process. The UN also successfully advocated for the amendment of the anti-corruption law to grant prosecutorial power to the Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission (LACC) to investigate and prosecute government officials. As a result, a new LACC Act was introduced into the House of Representatives.
- OHCHR enhanced the capacity of INCHR and CSOs to demand and advocate for accountability and justice for victims of the civil war and supported transitional justice initiatives leading to the draft bill for establishing the Economic and War Crimes Court. The Liberia National Bar

Association and Transitional Justice Working Group- a coalition of CSOs working on transitional justice issues- was empowered to sustainably advocate for accountability for war victims and transitional justice mechanisms in Liberia.

- OHCHR strengthened the capacity of the Independent National Human Rights Commission to ensure the protection of the rights of persons in detention facilities, including pre-trial detainees, resulting in the release of a detainee in Margibi County in August 2022, who had fully served his sentence but continued to be detained because of a lack of coordination between the prison and the court.
- UNDP support accelerated the fight against corruption in the public sector and at grassroots level by strengthening the capacity of CSOs and media institutions to serve as watchdogs and whistle-blowers on corruption issues, conduct investigative journalism, and report acts of corruption at all levels in the public and private sectors. Additionally, UNDP helped develop an electronic platform enhancing LACC's capacity to track, investigate, report, and monitor corruption cases anonymously.

**Output 4.3.**  
**Capacities of relevant institutions are strengthened to ensure legal identity for all (civil registration and vital statistics), including for free, fair and transparent elections.**

During the year, the UN accelerated its interventions to strengthen NEC's capacity in transparent elections management and processes by promoting transparency in voters' registration, strengthening outreach, education and communications on the process leading to the 2023 general and presidential elections. Further, the electoral disputes resolution mechanism and internal capacity of the NEC Board of Commissioners were strengthened to timely resolve electoral disputes that will increase the integrity of the outcomes of the ensuing elections in October 2023.

- With UNDP support, NEC set up a Civic and Voter Education cell in each of the 73 electoral districts to ensure all Liberians have access to gender-sensitive and continuous election information. Overall, 245 representatives (116 female, 129 male) from the NEC-recruited 81 CBOs benefited from the short but comprehensive training using up-to-date civic voter education materials.
- UNDP improved electoral security by procuring and installing CCTV cameras and solar panel systems in and around the NEC office.
- UNDP supported the NEC in its Strategic Plan Review and trained 150 NEC staff in Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections (BRIDGE) modules to promote transparency, inclusion, and accountability in elections management, including voter registration and civil and voter education. Campaign Finance Regulations, which are critical to ensure a level playing field in elections, were reviewed and validated by representatives of political parties.
- During the Lofa by-election in June 2022, UN Women supported resolving two female candidates' electoral disputes through legal representation. Subsequently, through UNDP's Liberia Electoral Support Project in collaboration

with a national partner, UN Women developed a legal aid concept to provide pro-bono legal aid and information in 2023 and enhance accountability and access to justice for women and vulnerable aspirants and candidates.

- In preparation for the elections in 2023, UN Women supported journalists and media institutions to hold talk shows on women's leadership and political participation that allowed citizens to engage female candidates during the by-election. UNDP and UN Women supported the development of an MoU between political parties and the NEC to increase women's political participation, reaffirming their commitment to address issues regarding women's political participation
- OHCHR strengthened the capacity of CSOs at county level on conflict sensitive issues and human rights-based approaches to elections monitoring and reporting. The monitors trained have been reporting on issues of ritual killings associated with politics.



DSRSG for West Central Africa and the Sahel touring voters registration center in Monrovia

**Output 4.4.**

**National decentralization policy and regulatory framework developed, adopted, and implemented, and national and subnational institutions strengthened to provide higher quality, inclusive, and gender-responsive services to local populations.**

Liberia has made significant progress in achieving fiscal decentralization of basic social services from the capital of Monrovia to county capitals by creating and strengthening county service centres that have increased access to essential services for rural people. The UN supported the Government in reforming key laws and strengthening the policy environment, including the draft Revenue Sharing Bill and Public Financial Management (PFM) Amendment Act to enhance the local government's capacity to generate revenues and resources for economic development and deliver essential social services at the County level.

- The county services centres were equipped with solar systems as an alternative energy source through UNDP to enhance service delivery and promote citizens' feedback mechanisms. UNDP procured specialized equipment to increase

citizens' access to documentation services (e.g., driver's licenses and marriage certificates) without travelling to Monrovia and to increase revenue generation at the local level.

- UNDP supported the construction of ramps at four county service centres to increase access to these centres for physically challenged citizens or people with disabilities, in the spirit of "leaving no one behind".
- More than 1,567 staff were trained on the Local Government Act to build national ownership, accelerate the Government's decentralization plan, and improve service delivery at the local level.
- UNDP supported drafting the Revenue Sharing Bill and PFM amendment bill to facilitate the implementation of fiscal decentralization and revenue sharing to enable sub-national authorities or county leaders to generate and utilize local revenues for development purposes.
- UNESCO and UNICEF supported the Ministry of Education in developing its Girls' Education Strategy (2022-2023) in line with the National Education Policy and its strategy.

**Why the new Revenue Sharing Act is a Step in the Right Direction**

On 14 July 2022, the House of Representatives concurred with the Senate and passed the Revenue Sharing Bill, allowing sub-national structures to collect and retain portions of revenues generated at the county level. This is a key milestone for Liberia as the country's path to sustained development must include improved delivery of services to people at the local district and community level.

Another key element of the Law is that it will create an Equalization Fund. This means that some resources will be set aside to invest in the country's poorest regions and lagging furthest behind. Additionally, the Law will provide an incentive for local governments and County Service Centres to actively work to increase services to citizens, as greater access to services will result in more revenue generation.

Liberia has taken a significant step forward in decentralization, and progress to date has been good.

Source: <https://www.undp.org/liberia/blog/why-new-revenue-sharing-act-step-right-direction>



**2.3. Support to Partnerships and Financing the 2030 Agenda**

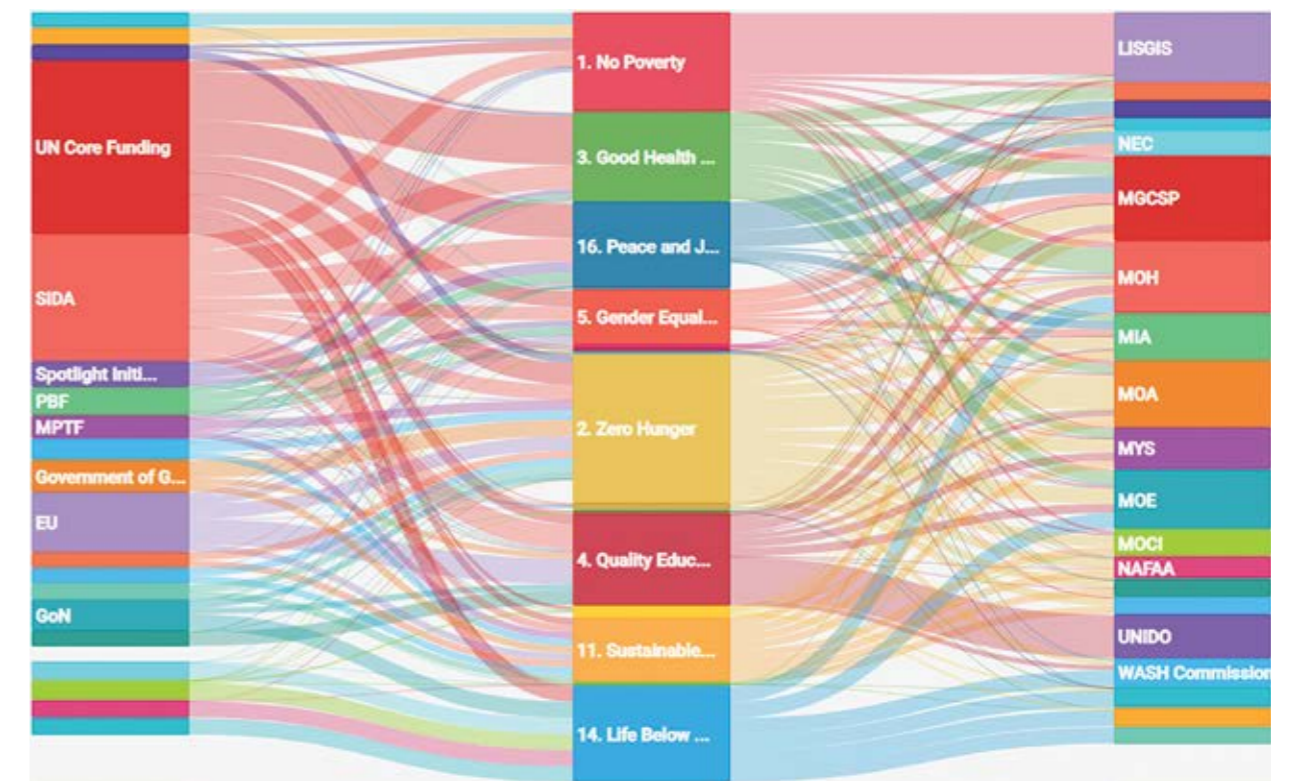
UNCT Liberia forged strategic and innovative partnership mechanisms with private sector actors, the Government of Liberia, CSOs, enterprises and development partners to advance financing and achieving the Agenda 2030.

To foster private sector engagement and resource mobilization to finance the SDGs, the UN, in collaboration with the Liberia Chambers of Commerce, organized a one-day private sector dialogue to discuss private engagement with and contributions towards achieving the Agenda 2030

through joint interventions and partnerships. As a result, an UN-Private Sector Working Group was established – a first for Liberia – which will deepen future partnerships between the UN and the private sector in the country.

The UNCT, in partnership with Presencing Institute, established an SDGs Leadership Team that identified transformative areas for SDGs acceleration in Liberia. The Team comprises representatives of the Government, UN, CSOs, INGOs, and the private sector.

**Linking Investments, Partners, and Sustainable Development Goals in Liberia**



Source: <https://liberia.un.org/en/sdgs>

## 2.4. Results of the UN Working More and Better Together: UN Coherence, Effectiveness and Efficiency

In 2022, the UN in Liberia established strategic partnerships with the private sector actors, government, and development partners to address the immediate impacts of COVID-19 affecting ordinary citizens, especially vulnerable groups.

Delivering 'as One', the UNCT continues to collectively support the Government of Liberia under the UNSDCF in a coherent, effective, and efficient manner across the four outcome or strategic results areas of UNSDCF. Under the leadership of the Resident Coordinator and Inter-Agency Programming Team (IAPT), the multi-year joint work plan (2021-2022) was updated to integrate COVID-19 response and recovery.

The UN Country Team in Liberia has accomplished several initiatives and flagship programmes in partnership with the Government of Liberia, development partners, civil society organizations, and a wide range of stakeholders. The programmes are aimed at accelerating rural development, decentralizing services, supporting Liberian at-risk youth, fighting violence against women and girls, improving community infrastructures, advancing the SGDs, and creating economic empowerment for women and youth through community-driven agriculture, food systems, and livelihoods services, education, and skills development. Among these transformative programmes are the Transforming Lives Through Decentralization Programme and the Accelerated Community Development Programme.

**The Liberia Spotlight Initiative** accelerated gender equality and women's empowerment interventions at grassroots and national levels. Since launching in Liberia in 2019, this global UN initiative funded by the European Union to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls has facilitated key reforms in Liberia, including the Domestic Relations Law and Domestic Violence Act. Importantly, the Initiative advocated with the Government to place a moratorium on the practice of FGM in Liberia, alongside engaging with zoes, traditional practitioners of FGM, to

provide them with knowledge and skills to engage in economic livelihood projects as an alternative to practicing FGM for income. Initiative activity led to a temporary ban on FGM and the closure of Sande society 'bush schools', where girls and women undergo various rituals including FGM, in Montserrado and other parts of Liberia. Finally, the Spotlight Initiative was also part of the successful advocacy effort for amending the new Elections Law to include a mandatory 30% gender quota.

**The Inter-Agency Programming Team (IAPT)** effectively coordinated the development of the flagship Transforming Lives through Decentralization Programme, which will create regional hubs in regions and counties of Liberia lagging behind in terms of national development. The IAPT brought together all UN agencies to review key social and economic indicators that informed the decision to establish three hubs in Gbarpolu, River Gee, and Bong counties to cover auxiliary counties within the three hub regions. IAPT also organized and held the first Results Groups annual retreat, during which progress towards implementing the UNSDCF was reviewed and a roadmap developed for effective implementation, monitoring and reporting implementation during the remaining two years of the framework. The outcomes of the flagship programme development and annual work planning and reporting demonstrate the way in which the UN in Liberia is working together to achieve the SDGs by supporting national partners to achieve the country's national development plan.

**The Operations Management Team (OMT)** successfully strengthened strategic efficiency, coordination, and cost-effectiveness in its business operations and common premises agenda, saving the UNCT an estimated US\$5.8 million. The OMT conducted an annual review in which 11 UN agencies collaborate in common premises, including common vehicle rental services, printing, travel, HR, procurement, and financial management services, amounting to 69% of overall cost avoidance or reduction in common services.



### Partnerships Working Group

UNCT fostered partnerships and joint efforts with private sector actors, government and development partners that have strengthened relationships and effective dialogue towards achieving the Agenda 2030, UNSDCF, and national development priorities. To sustainably foster partnership, the UNCT established a Partnership Working Group consisting of representatives from all agencies, funds, and programmes to enable effective dialogues and collaboration to support the implementation of the UNSDCF and SDGs. The Partnership Working Group has developed its ToR and Workplan for the coming two years.

In 2022, this group organized a one-day UN-private sector dialogue to fortify relationships between the UN and private sector actors and explore possible collaboration areas. The dialogue led to establishing the UN-Private Sector Working Group to increase joint programming and resource mobilization efforts to implement the UNSDCF and fully achieve the SDGs.

### Inter-Agency Disability Inclusion Group

In 2022, the Disability Inclusion Group (DIG) conducted an internal assessment on disability in UN programming and interventions that increased UN support to the National Commission on Disabilities, the National Union of Disabled, and other Disabled People's Organizations in Liberia. UNDP and WHO supported revising the National Action Plan for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities and provided institutional and livelihood empowerment for persons with disabilities.

In collaboration with the Clinton Health Access Initiative (CHAI) and the Ministry of Health, the UN increased access to assistive technology for persons with disability and the ageing population. This initiative has increased the availability of devices and human resource capacity and shifted the market in Liberia. The DIG has increased advocacy for including persons with disability in national programmes, including livelihoods and economic empowerment, education, and other areas of national development.



**UNSDCF Result Groups**

The four Results Groups under UNSDCF reviewed their joint work plans and made significant progress towards implementing the UNSDCF. In November 2022, the Results Groups organized their annual retreat to discuss progress, challenges and lessons learned during the first two years of the Cooperation Framework implementation. As a result, they developed a strategic roadmap to accelerate implementing and achieving the UNSDCF and Agenda 2030.

**Inter-Agency Monitoring and Evaluation Working Group**

provided technical support to results groups and agencies while developing and revising the UNSDCF joint work plan and reporting results in UN INFO, the online platform for UN Country Teams. The Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Working Group trained agency focal points on UN INFO and coordinated the UNCT Annual Results reporting process by collecting, collating, and reporting on agency achievements under their respective UNSDCF Result Groups.



Women/girls political participation and empowerment

**UN Communication Group (UNCG)** completed its Joint Strategy and Workplan and coordinated several events and advocacy campaigns organized by the UN in Liberia. The UNCG organized and moderated the International Day of Women and hosted a workshop with local reporters on “Women and climate change in Liberia.” UNCG also coordinated the hosting of the UN Day commemoration with a “county tour” set up to highlight UN contributions towards sustainable development throughout Liberia’s 15 counties from the perspective of local county officials. During the 16 days of activism, UNCG collected and shared success stories of survivors of SGBV, harmful traditional practices and other forms of violence against women and girls on social media and other channels in order to raise awareness.

**UN Gender Thematic Group** produced the 2022 UNCT SWAP Scorecard – the UN’s standardized assessment of gender mainstreaming and performance at country level – and developed a strategy to support mainstreaming gender equality and women’s empowerment. During 2022, the Group held its annual retreat and set its strategic roadmap to advance gender mainstreaming and equality in all UN programmes and agency workplans in Liberia.

**Human Rights Working Group** strengthened the capacity of legislative drafting committees, WLC, and committees on judiciary and elections on mainstreaming human rights and gender in law-making in keeping with international human. The Group developed checklists on human rights and gender mainstreaming in law-making processes and trained relevant legislative committees and human rights institutions on gender-responsive legislative drafting, including the INCHR and the Ministry of Justice’s Human Rights Protection Department. In addition, it supported the Government in addressing key recommendations of its third-cycle Universal Periodic Review to meet its international human rights obligations.



Land boundary harmonization for local communities

**Inter-Agency Youth Task Group** facilitated the launch of the At-Risk Youth Empowerment Programme, a joint UN programme with the Government of Liberia seeking to rehabilitate, empower and re-integrate at-risk youth,

including narcotics and substance users, into their communities as healthy, productive, and engaged citizens. This 10-year programme, which reflects the strong commitment of the UN and Government of Liberia to the country’s young generation, will provide 40,000 at-risk youths with vocational and technical education and training, livelihood security and employment opportunities in their communities so they may return to society safely and contribute to Liberia’s growth and development.

On International Youth Day (IYD) 2022, the Group supported the Ministry of Youth and Sports in organizing a one-day dialogue session on the year’s global theme, “Intergenerational Solidarity: Creating a World for All Ages”. The same year’s National Youth Day was themed “Accelerating Peaceful Co-existence among Youth in Liberia ahead of the 2023 General and Presidential elections”. The event brought together 300 youth from all 15 counties for a roundtable discussion focusing on fostering peace amongst young people during elections and developing solutions to the challenges facing young Liberians.

**On WHO Liberia Country Office Walks the Talk - 4.2km walking challenge conquered**

The WHO Liberia Country Office joined the rest of the world in the Walk the Talk: Health For All challenge- covering 4.2 km as their team target. The country office took on the challenge ahead of the 75th World Health Assembly.

“It felt good taking time away as a team from our busy schedules and just focusing on reviving our energies through a fitness exercise- we will be having more of these events, which will be scaled up for broader participation beyond the Country Office,” said Dr. Musu Duworko, Team lead for the programme of the Communicable and Non-Communicable disease at the Country Office.

The staff members joined the challenge as a group through a dedicated tracking application called “Walk The Talk,” created by WHO global, making it simple for people worldwide to walk, run, and jog for health as they take part in the Health for All Challenge.

The Walk the Talk exercise highlights the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle. Non-communicable diseases such as hypertension, diabetes, and chronic kidney diseases, among others, are a reminder for Liberia and the rest of the world to focus on cost-effective preventive measures, which include maintaining healthy lifestyles and regular physical exercise.

Source: <https://www.afro.who.int/countries/liberia/news/who-liberia-country-office-walks-talk-42km-walking-challenge-conquered>



## 2.5. Evaluations and Lessons Learned

While enormous challenges remained affecting the effective implementation of key development interventions, Liberia made significant progress towards achieving national development priorities and UNSDCF. The UN improved coordination mechanisms and joint interventions to effectively combat COVID-19 and address its consequential socio-economic impacts on people's livelihoods and health outcomes, which made Liberia the first country in the region to reach the 70% target of vaccine coverage of the total population.

The UN also improved coordination through the UNCT and IAPT, bringing together all agencies to develop the One UN Flagship Programme through regional hubs aimed at expanding the reach and support of the UN at all levels through various initiatives. The UNCT promotes human-centred and life-transforming joint programmes through the 'Smart Village Project' funded by the Human Security Trust Fund to increase connectivity in rural communities and improve learning outcomes, agriculture productivity and farm-to-market roads for sustainable development.

However, challenges remain, including working silos by agencies coupled with external shocks, including continued COVID-19 and measles outbreak, shrinking fiscal space and limited resources mobilization affected the slow implementation of transformative interventions.

Improving coordination and collaboration within UN agencies and amongst government and development partners through coherent policy and advisory approaches will enable the UN to deliver transformational development that increases the UN's collective visibility and impact at the grassroots and national levels. This requires strengthening coordination and communications mechanisms to assess and communicate joint programmes' successes and impacts at all levels.

The UNCT will continue to focus on achieving greater impacts through building synergies and strengthening coordination and accountability mechanisms to work with all partners, particularly the government, to deliver effectively.

## 2.6. Financial Overview and Resource Mobilization

### 2022 Financial Delivery per Pillars

| Outcomes           | Required Resources     | Available Resources    | Expenditure            | % Delivery Rate |
|--------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| Outcome 1          | US\$126,201,129        | US\$89,221,317         | US\$76,304,069         | 85.52           |
| Outcome 2          | US\$132,483,192        | US\$70,715,537         | US\$61,935,677         | 87.58           |
| Outcome 3          | US\$18,107,928         | US\$14,515,834         | US\$12,202,084         | 84.06           |
| Outcome 4          | US\$52,133,395         | US\$19,693,306         | US\$17,387,735         | 88.29           |
| <b>Grand Total</b> | <b>US\$328,925,644</b> | <b>US\$194,145,994</b> | <b>US\$167,829,565</b> | <b>86.45</b>    |

The UN developed its UNSDCF (2021-2022) joint work plan in 2021 and updated it in 2022 to incorporate new joint programs and other agencies' interventions. The total required resources budgeted amounted to US\$328.9 million, of which US\$194 million was mobilized in 2022. Out of the resources mobilized, total expenditure reached US\$167.8 million, or 86.5%, reflecting a strong delivery rate achieved by all agencies towards implementing the UNSDCF. Outcome 1 has the most considerable resource requirements (US\$126.2 million), resources mobilized (US\$89.2 million) and the highest financial delivery rate (85.5%). Outcome 2 has the second largest resource requirement of US\$132.5 million and of resources mobilized (US\$70.7 million), and a financial delivery rate of 87.6%.

UNCT accelerated its efforts to develop joint programmes that resulted in additional funding from the UN Human Security Trust Fund for "Building Resilience of Youth, Women, and Vulnerable Groups through Social Protection Floor in Liberia using ICT" to address the COVID-19 impact and empower local communities through smart agriculture. Furthermore, the UN and Government developed a joint At-risk Youth programme with a budget of US\$10 million to rehabilitate and reintegrate drug and substance users and provide them with skills training for economic empowerment and contributions to society. In addition, the UN Secretary-General Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) Country portfolio also increased considerably with three additional joint programmes on inclusive women's political participation and violence against women in politics, legal identity for all people in Liberia, and peacebuilding, social cohesion, and reconciliation.

### Joint Programmes and Resources Mobilized (2021-2022)

| Funding Source                             | Programme Title   | Implementing Partners                   | Approved Funding (US\$) |
|--|---|---|-------------------------|
| Secretary-General Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) | Promoting Inclusive Political Participation and Elimination of Violence against Women in Politics   | UNIDO, UN Women                         | 2,000,000               |
| Secretary-General Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) | Sustaining Peace and Reconciliation through Strengthening Land Governance and Dispute Resolution Mechanisms   | UN Women, UNDP, WFP                     | 3,996,522.48            |
| Secretary-General Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) | Advancing Reconciliation through Legislative Reforms and Civic Engagement   | OHCHR, UNDP, UN Women                   | 1,600,000               |
| Secretary-General Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) | Advancing implementation of UNSCRs on Women Peace and Security (WPS) through strengthening accountability frameworks, innovative financing, and Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) | UN Women, OHCHR                         | 1,500,000               |
| UN Human Security Trust Fund (UNHSTF)      | Building Resilience of Youth, Women, and Vulnerable Groups through Social Protection Floor in Liberia using ICT   | FAO, ILO, WFP                           | 1,000,000               |
| Multi-donor (GFATM)                        | Joint UN Programme on HIV/AIDS  | UNAIDS, UNFPA, ILO, UNICEF, WHO, UNDP   | 4,382,500               |
| Secretary-General Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) | Towards Legal Identity for All in Liberia by 2030   | UN Women, OHCHR, UNHCR, UNFPA, IOM, WHO | 150,000                 |
| Joint SDG Fund                             | Rapid Food Security, Livelihoods, Nutrition and Market Assessment   | WFP, FAO, UNICEF, WHO                   | 201,390                 |
| European Union                             | Liberia Spotlight Initiative  | UNDP, UN Women, UNFPA, OHCHR, UNICEF    | 26,220,923              |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                               |   |   | <b>40,999,945.48</b>    |

# 3 Looking Ahead by the new Resident Coordinator Christine Umutoni



I am grateful and privileged to take over the Resident Coordinator's role from Niels Scott, whose leadership has ensured a collaborative and impactful work environment crucial to supporting Liberia's development vision and continuing to make inroads towards realizing the Sustainable Development Goals. I am excited about carrying forward his journey, hand-in-hand with the Government and people of Liberia.

The year ahead is an important one for Liberia, among other reasons for the Presidential and Legislative elections scheduled for October 2023. As always, the United Nations will stand with Liberia to support peaceful elections and the country's commitment to peace.

In 2023 and beyond, we look forward to building on our previous success by implementing the Cooperation Framework in close partnership with the Government of Liberia, emphasizing transformative change that leaves no one behind in the development process.

There will be a need for transformative shifts, including a deliberate focus on community development - ensuring community voices are heard while developing and accelerating the provision of basic social services directly to communities if the development gains are to be realized.

Delivering stronger locally, consolidating our existing partnerships while building new ones, and stepping up our resource mobilization and joint analysis to continue helping to shape the peaceful, just and prosperous Liberia we all aspire to will remain our focus. We will continue to adopt a holistic, inclusive approach based on cross-sectoral collaboration to respond effectively to immediate and long-term development challenges.

Building on the longstanding special relationship between the United Nations and Liberia, we will continue to support this resilient nation on its development journey towards peace, social cohesion, gender equality, opportunities for youth, community development, and sustainability. The United Nations Country Team will support stronger private sector engagement in the development agenda and mainstream programmes that will yield development results for all people of Liberia.

The UN family is committed to addressing the country's critical social and environmental issues

through strategic partnerships, multi-sectoral engagements, and leveraging data and evidence to inform programmes and innovations. We will continue to be guided by the UN's philosophy of leaving no one behind and ensuring gender equality, equity, and human rights.

## 3.1. Looking Ahead in 2023 and Beyond

2023 is a significant year as Liberians will go to the polls to elect the next government or retain the incumbent. Despite the political context, the UN will support contingency/transitional planning while ensuring the implementation of the UNSDCF and PAPD.

The UN development system will continue strengthening peacebuilding, social cohesion, and conflict prevention to ensure peaceful presidential and legislative elections in October 2023. Further, the UN will continue to invest in impact-driven and transformational joint programming to decentralize social services and promote climate-smart agriculture and agri-business, food security, and human capital development to achieve the Agenda 2030, SDGs, and the national development plan.

## 3.2. SDGs Acceleration

Liberia committed to domesticating the SDGs in 2016 through a national launch aiming to mainstream and localize SDGs in the PAPD.

In 2022, the UN supported the Government in preparing and submitting its 2022 Voluntary National Report (VNR) and participation in the UN High-Level Political Forum in June 2022 to present key findings of VNR and localization of SDGs at the county level. The UNCT will develop a financing and partnerships strategy to reinforce its partnerships with IFIs, World Bank, IMF, and private sector institutions to mobilize needed resources for SDG acceleration.

In 2023, the UN will support the Government of Liberia to participate in the High-Level SDG summit in New York to take stock of progress and with determination to accelerate action.

# Acronyms

|                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| <b>ADR</b>      | Alternative Disputes Resolution                                 |
| <b>ANC</b>      | Ante Natal Care   |
| <b>CBO</b>      | Community-Based Organizations                                   |
| <b>COVID-19</b> | Coronavirus Disease 2019  |
| <b>CSO</b>      | Civil Society Organizations                                     |
| <b>EMIS</b>     | Education Information Management System                         |
| <b>EPHS</b>     | Essential Package of Health Services                            |
| <b>FFPO</b>     | Forest and Farm Producers Organizations                         |
| <b>GBV</b>      | Gender Based Violence   |
| <b>HIV-AIDS</b> | Human Immunodeficiency Virus-Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome |
| <b>IAPT</b>     | Inter-Agency Programming Team                                   |
| <b>IFI</b>      | International Financial Institutions                            |
| <b>INCHR</b>    | Independent National Commission on Human Rights                 |
| <b>INFF</b>     | Integrated National Financing Framework                         |
| <b>LACC</b>     | Liberia Anti Corruption Commission                              |
| <b>M&amp;E</b>  | Monitoring and Evaluation                                       |
| <b>MFDP</b>     | Minister of Finance and Development Planning                    |
| <b>MoA</b>      | Ministry of Agriculture   |
| <b>MoE</b>      | Ministry of Education   |
| <b>MoH</b>      | Ministry of Health  |
| <b>MoJ</b>      | Ministry of Justice   |
| <b>MSMEs</b>    | Micro Small and Medium Enterprises                              |

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
| <b>NDC</b>    | Nationally Determined Contributions                           |
| <b>NEC</b>    | National Elections Commission                                 |
| <b>OMT</b>    | Operations Management Team                                    |
| <b>PADP</b>   | Pro-poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development                |
| <b>PSIP</b>   | Public Sector Investment Plan                                 |
| <b>PWD</b>    | People With Disabilities                                      |
| <b>RC</b>     | Resident Coordinator  |
| <b>RMNCAH</b> | Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child, and Adolescent Health |
| <b>SDGs</b>   | Sustainable Development Goals                                 |
| <b>SGBV</b>   | Sexual Gender Based Violence                                  |
| <b>SRHR</b>   | Sexual Reproduction Health Rights                             |
| <b>TVET</b>   | Technical Vocational Education and Training                   |
| <b>UN</b>     | United Nations  |
| <b>UNCT</b>   | UN Country Team   |
| <b>UN/GOL</b> | UN-Government   |
| <b>UNMIL</b>  | United Nations Mission in Liberia                             |
| <b>UNSDCF</b> | United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework  |
| <b>VSLA</b>   | Village Savings and Loan Association                          |
| <b>WASH</b>   | Water, Sanitation and Hygiene                                 |
| <b>WLC</b>    | Women Legislative Caucus                                      |
| <b>WPS</b>    | Women, Peace, and Security                                    |



## Endnotes

<sup>i</sup> Common Country Analysis Update, 2021

<sup>ii</sup> Figures precede the preliminary results of the 2022 census.

<sup>iii</sup> FAO's Food Insecurity Experience Scale, 2021

<sup>iv</sup> Liberia Climate Risk Country Profile, 2021

<sup>v</sup> Source: Liberia, Demographic Health Survey, Key Indicator Report, 2019-20

<sup>vi</sup> Liberia SCORE Index, 2021

<sup>vii</sup> Liberia Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) 2019-20

<sup>viii</sup> Finding Fiscal Space, an Economic Update, World Bank, June 2021

<sup>ix</sup> Pro-poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development

<sup>x</sup> <https://lib-sis.org/>

## Credits

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