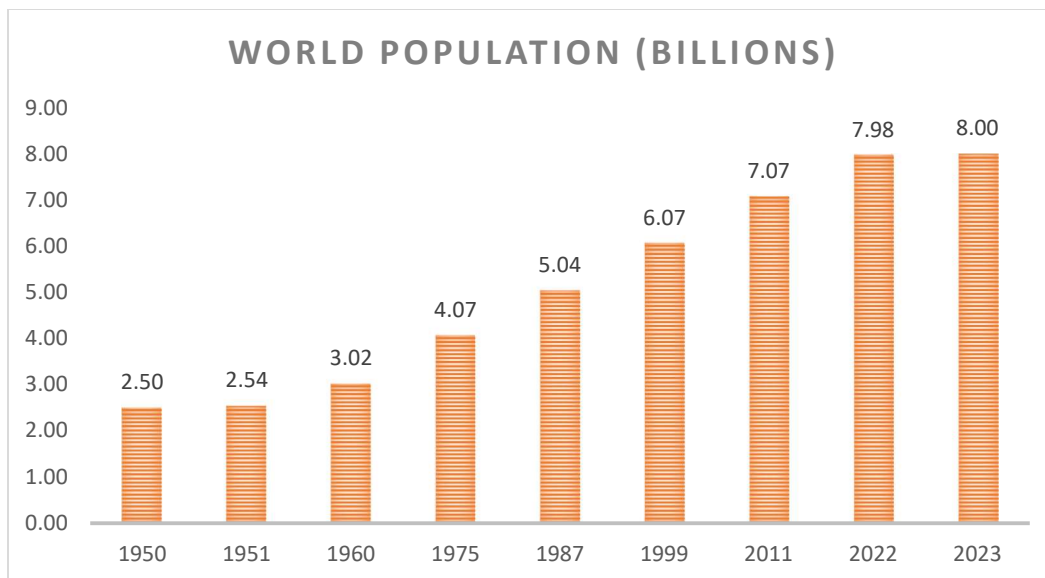


The new World Population benchmark, what it means for Liberia

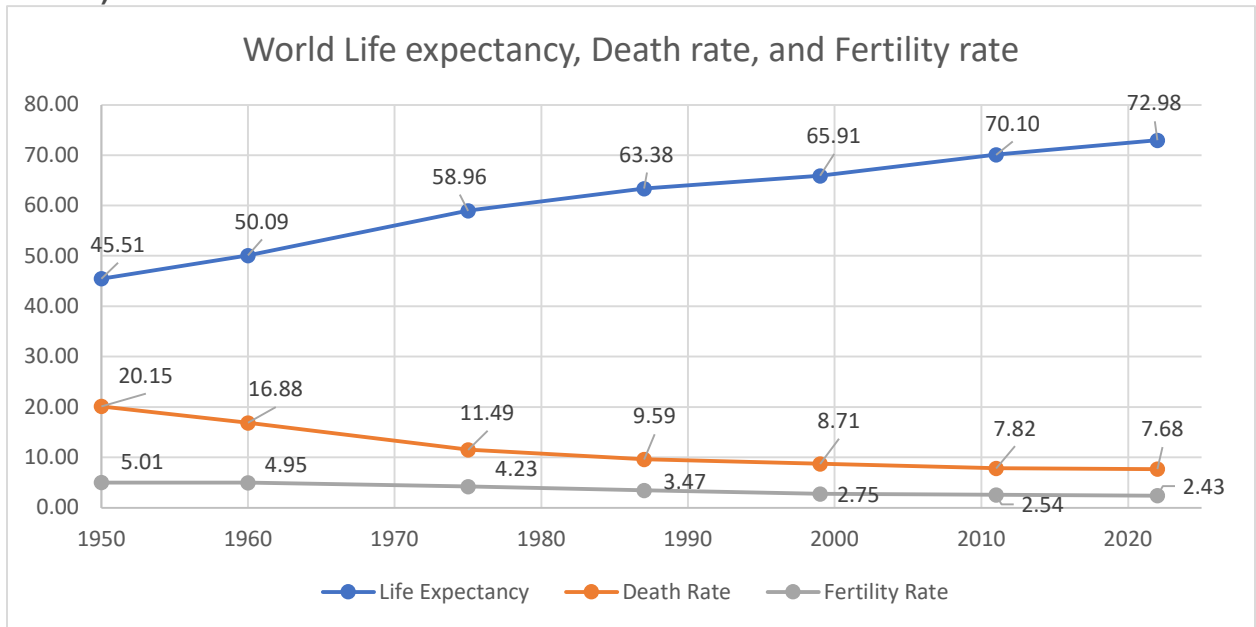
- The global population is growing fast. It reached the mark of *8 billion people* on *November 15th 2022*, (UNDESA 2022). This has been a remarkable turn around when one consider that it took 1800 years for the world population to reach 1 billion and only 222 years to add 7 billion and counting.
- **Figure 1 World Population since 1950**



Source: Global Population Prospects 2022).

- This population growth has been fueled by the increase in life expectancy at birth (it increased by 27.5 years since 1950 and it is about 73 years at the moment); the reduction in the death rate (death rate is now 7.68 per 1000 people a 61.9% percent reduction since 1950); and limited reduction in the fertility rate globally. The average fertility rate has been decreasing globally from 5 births per woman in 1950 to 2.428 births per woman in 2022. However, it stagnated there in the recent few years, and it's been much higher in the developing world. (UN Global Population Prospects 2022).
- Overpopulation could represent a challenge for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) achievements as more resources will be needed for caring a growing number of people, making it harder to assure that no one is left behind.

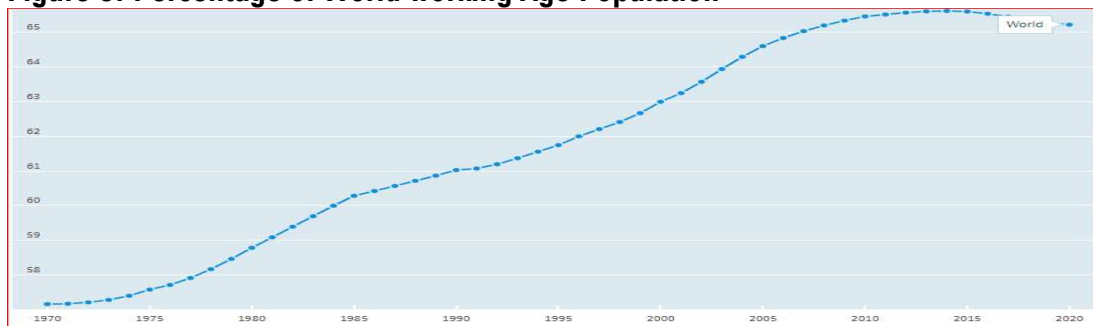
- **Fig 2 World Life expectancy(years), Death rate (units),and fertility rates (children per women)**



Source: Macrotrends.net 2022

- About 8 nations contribute with more than half of the projected population growth (by 2050). 5 of these countries are in Sub Sahara Africa, namely the Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Nigeria, and Tanzania. The other three are India, Pakistan, and the Philippines. India will become the most populated country in the world by 2023. (UN Global Population Prospects, 2022)
- This population growth has been driven by a population structure dominated by young people, mostly in the developing world, where the share of population at working ages (between 25 and 64 years) has been increasing, providing conditions for potential gains from demographic dividends.

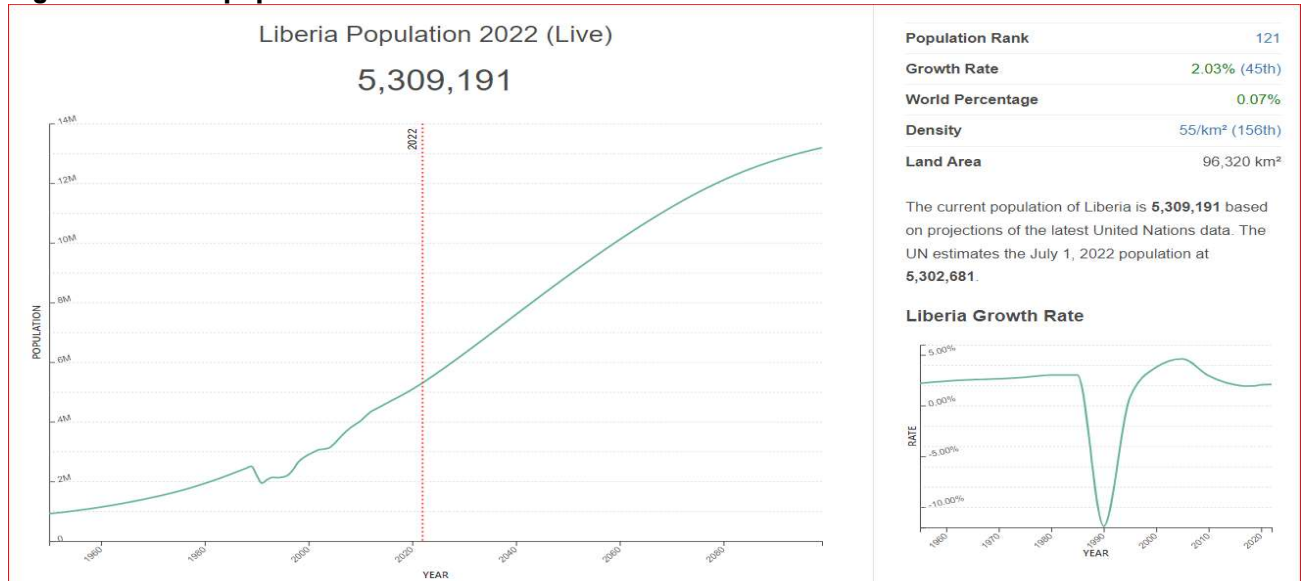
Figure 3. Percentage of World working Age Population



Source: World Bank 2022

- Liberian population is also in a growing trend. It was 2 million in 1950 and its 5.3 million in 2022 (a 165% increase). The population growth in Liberia is also driven by the high levels of fertility rate anchored on a youth population structure.

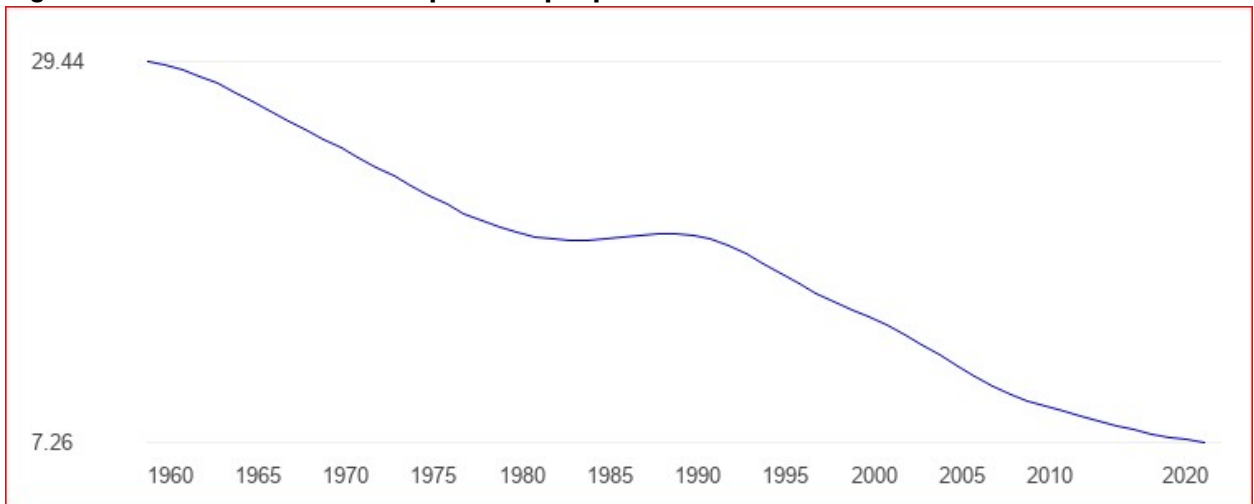
Figure 4 Liberia population and trend



Source: World Population review 2022

- The annual population growth has been as high as 4.6% in 2006 but has since fallen to 2.1% per year in 2022. The rapid population growth in Liberia is expected to continue over the next decade. (World population review 2022).
- The fertility rate in Liberia has declined from 6.7 children per woman in 1986 to 4.2 today. However, this figure is still high, it is almost double the world average, and it is even higher in the rural areas where the fertility rate is over 5 children per women. (DHS 2021). The death rate in Liberia has also been declining, It was 30.5 per1000 people in 1950 and has fallen to 7.18 in 2022.
- Other elements such as maternal mortality are relatively still high (maternal death is 742 per 100 000 live births DHS 2019), which is more than double than that of the Asian continent. Teenage pregnancy rate is 4% at 15 years old and 55% at 19 years old. In terms of migration the country has more people migrating out than in (about 3 people daily).
- The life expectancy for Liberians in 2022 is 64.72 years, an increase of 32.8 years since 1950 (a 50.6% increase).

Figure 5 Liberia trend of Deaths per 1000people



Source: The GlobalEconomy.com, 2022

With the GDP expected to growth at 3 to 5% in the next two years Liberia appears to be on the right track to a successful demographic management. However, this will require maintaining or improvement the current macroeconomic reforms; managing the youth bulge, and other demographic variants such as teenage pregnancy, gender-based violence, just to mention a few.

- In summary, Liberia has One birth every 16 minutes ; One death every 58 minutes; One net migrant every 480 minutes and a net gain of one person every 23 minutes.

Table 1 Liberia Daily population change balance 2022

Item	Balance Changes
Population Change Since January 1 st 2022	+19,220
Births per Day	+25
Migrations per Day	-3
Net Change per Day	+62

Source: World Population review 2022

Concluding remarks and implications for UN programming

- The combination of decreasing mortality rate, increasing life expectancy and a sustained high fertility rate continues fueling global population growth. On 15 November 2022 the population reached 8 billion people. Sub-Sahara Africa, and Asia are the significant contributors to the population bulge.
- The Liberian population has been growing at a relative rapid pace 2.1% annually. The fertility rate in Liberia has declined but it is still high (4.2 children per women). The death

rate in Liberia has also been declining, It was 30.5 per1000 people in 1950 and has fallen to 7.18 in 2022.

- The economy is expected to grow at 3 to 5 % in the next two years giving the country the potential to manage population pressure however the youth bulge presents its unique challenges that will have to be cared for, as well as opportunities for gain in demographic dividends.
- All these imply that the programming efforts going forward will more likely require more resources.
- When combining the population growth with the economic crisis the country (reduced fiscal space, inflation, etc.) the UN should expect to be dealing with a more demanding development context in Liberia.

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