

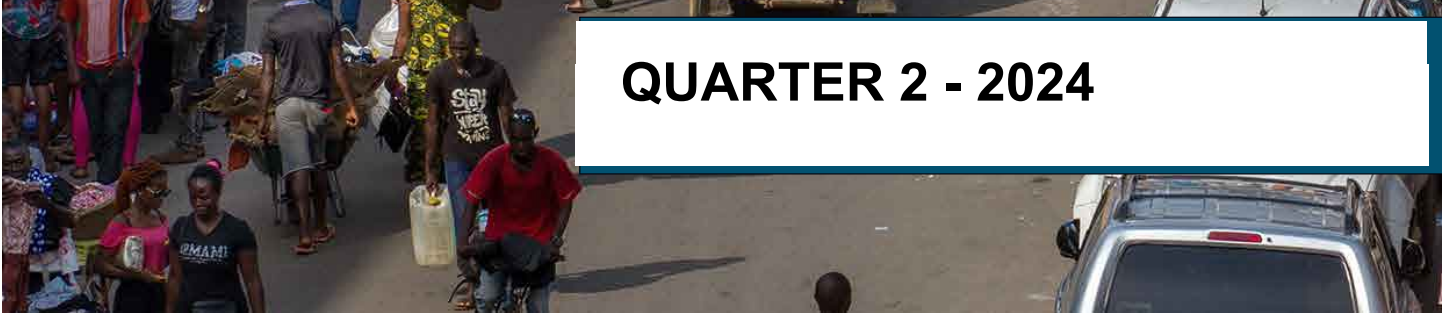


**UNITED
NATIONS
LIBERIA**



NEWSLETTER

QUARTER 2 - 2024





Contribution

This newsletter is the result of the collaborative efforts of the United Nations Communication Group in Liberia, which comprises representatives from various UN agencies, funds and programmes.

We would like to express our gratitude to all the contributors who shared their stories, insights and perspectives on the issues affecting Liberia and its people. We also thank our readers for their continued interest and support.

We hope you enjoy this edition of the newsletter and welcome your feedback and suggestions.

RCO
UNDP
UNWomen
WHO
FAO
UNICEF
UNFPA
UNIDO
OHCHR
IOM

WINDOLINE
REGULAR MOTOR OIL
SAE 50



Preface

Welcome to the latest edition of the United Nations Newsletter in Liberia, where we bring you stories on progress, resilience, and partnership in Liberia.

In this edition, we explore our various interventions in health, agriculture, human rights, youth education through TVET, community empowerment and many more.

From empowering forest and farm producers to supporting youth skills development, this edition is a testament to the multifaceted efforts toward sustainable development.

Join us as we celebrate achievements, confront challenges, and work together towards a brighter future for Liberia.



H6 Joint Mission Concludes Visit to Liberia, Calls for Urgent Action to Reduce Maternal and Newborn Mortality

Monrovia, Liberia - The United Nations (H6) joint mission has concluded its visit to Liberia, highlighting the urgent need for action to combat the high burden of increasing maternal and newborn deaths in the country. The delegation revealed that 1,100 women and 8,510 newborn die annually during childbirth in Liberia.

Dr. Anshu Banerjee, H6 Mission Team Lead -WHO's Director of the Department of Maternal, New-born, Child, and Adolescent Health and Ageing in Geneva, emphasized the gravity of the situation, stating, "Eleven hundred women die every year in Liberia giving birth, and of course, no woman should be dying giving birth."

The delegation expressed concerns over the increase in new-born mortality rates and the alarming number of stillbirths, attributing these tragedies to a lack of quality care during childbirth and antenatal care, among other factors.

Dr. Banerjee outlined specific targets to reduce maternal and new-born mortality, emphasizing the need to enhance access to healthcare services, reduce high out-of-pocket expenditure for health services, improve health infrastructure, and enact legal frameworks to address gender-based violence, female genital mutilation, child marriages, and teenage pregnancies, among other issues. Speaking during a briefing session at the Executive Mansion with the H6 team and Heads of UN agencies of

the H6 partnership, H.E. President Joseph Boakai, said the issues highlighted by the H6 Mission are of national importance in line with the ARREST agenda, "As a government, we are committed to making things turn around. We commit to being a responsible society that will look out for our women and children. It's our challenge, and we have the manpower, commitment, and goodwill to ensure that we make this a record of the past." Meanwhile, H.E. President Joseph Boakai has lauded the team for conducting such an important exercise.

In an earlier interaction, Liberian lawmakers acknowledged the severity of the crisis and pledged to collaborate with the executive branch of government to address it. Speaker of the House of Representatives, Honourable J. Fonati Koffa reaffirmed the Legislature's commitment to supporting the health sector, citing the recent substantial increase in the health budget as evidence of their dedication to building a resilient healthcare system.

Ms. Comfort Lamptey, UN RC ai, and UN Women Liberia Representative noted the need to ensure that the \$80 million dollars allocated to the health sector in the national budget prioritises investments to reduce the high rates of maternal mortality.

Dr. Clement Peter, WHO Liberia Representative, added, “We need to translate these recommendations into workable actions for implementation in the next 6 years and ensure that these numbers are reduced to acceptable levels- this is doable if we will work together.”

Mr. Andy Brookes, UNICEF Representative in Liberia, emphasized, “This is not just about data and numbers; it is about real people’s lives. We came with a message of urgency, and the consensus around the table speaks of commitment.”

UNFPA Representative Bidisha Pillai commended the First Lady, in her role as Maternal and Newborn Health Champion, the Minister of Health, and the legislators for their commitment to reducing maternal, newborn, and child mortality. She stressed that the UN H6 partners will continue to support Liberia’s efforts to save lives and achieve the health-related national agenda and Sustainable Development Goals.

The government of Liberia with support from partners is committed to accelerating the reduction of maternal, newborn, and child deaths in Liberia.

The mission also emphasized the importance of inter-sectoral coordination and the linkages to the ARREST agenda, which focuses on Agriculture, Roads, Rule of Law, Education, Sanitation, and Tourism. The mission commended the increased budget allocation for health; however, stressed the need for timely disbursement and effective expenditure tracking, increased access to free education up to high school for all, particularly making the link between girls dropping out and teenage pregnancy, empowerment and meaningful engagement of adolescents and youth in policy making and implementation of youth-friendly services, and improvement of living conditions and infrastructure.

The H6 partnership remains steadfast in its commitment to supporting Liberia in achieving its healthcare goals and ensuring that no woman dies while giving life and that children should be born and live healthy lives and achieve their fullest potential.





Lifesaving polio vaccines reach 927,673 children: Liberia's nationwide polio vaccination campaign

Monrovia: Liberia has reached an impressive milestone in its fight against polio, vaccinating 876,573 children under five in the first round and 927,673 in the second round of the nationwide polio campaign. This monumental effort, led by more than 7,647 trained frontline workers, involved going door-to-door, market-to-market, and school-to-school to ensure every eligible child received protection against the polio virus. In 2021, Liberia introduced the novel type 2 oral polio vaccine (nOPV2), becoming the second African country, after Nigeria, to do so under the WHO's emergency use listing license.

On February 23, 2024, Liberia's Ministry of Health declared an outbreak of the circulating variant type 2 poliovirus (cVDPV2) following confirmation from environmental surveillance. In response, Liberia conducted the first round of the immunization campaign from May 10th to 13th, 2024, targeting approximately 857,768 children across all 15 counties. This round exceeded expectations, vaccinating 876,573 children and achieving an impressive 102% administrative coverage.

Launch of the campaign

The national vaccination campaign was part of a larger regional cooperation initiative conducted concurrently with neighboring countries including Sierra Leone, Mali, Burkina Faso, Guinea, and Ivory Coast.

This cross-border approach aimed to immunize all eligible children, showcasing an exemplary model of regional collaboration in public health.

During the national launch of the first round of the polio campaign in Montserrado on May 10th, 2024, the Deputy Minister of Health/Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Catherine Cooper, emphasized the urgency of the situation. "Polio is a public health emergency, and the outbreak in Liberia requires us to ensure all children are protected," she said, thanking all partners for their support and the MOH officers for their dedication. Representatives from UNICEF, WHO, and other partners continued to offer their support throughout the campaign. "Our goal is clear - to ensure that every child under the age of five is vaccinated and protected from this debilitating disease," said Andy Brooks, UNICEF Representative in Liberia. Dr. Clement Peter, WHO Representative, highlighted the dangers of polio and the importance of vaccination, encouraging parents to ensure their children received the vaccine.

Extensive Preparations for the Vaccination Campaign

Ahead of the second round, extensive preparations were undertaken, drawing lessons from the first round. The Ministry of Health, in collaboration with its various partners, held reflection sessions to address challenges and ensure the second round's success. Hundreds of healthcare workers and mobile vaccination teams were deployed across the country, aiming to reach every child, regardless of their location or socio-economic status.

Coordination and Logistical Support

The success of this polio vaccination campaign hinged on the coordination of various players at all levels. The Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI) partners, including WHO, UNICEF, and other key organizations, worked together to address challenges and streamline operations. A National Emergency Operations Center (EOC) was operational throughout the campaign for technical coordination, led by an Incident Manager. Daily progress reviews ensured smooth operations and effective communication.

Frontline Workers in Action

Thanks to the support of GPEI partners, vaccination teams took the vaccines to the people, reaching every eligible child to control the spread of cVDPV2 in Liberia. Verification features, such as marking children's fingers and their homes, ensured thorough coverage. At the end of Round 2, 86% of the 98 districts surveyed had 90% vaccination coverage or more.

Community Engagement and Social Mobilisation

The success of the campaign greatly depended on the dedication of the frontline workers involved in community mobilization and vaccine administration. Football legend Michael Essien and his wife Akosua Puni Essien visited Liberia to learn about immunization efforts and engaged with families and healthcare workers. "Through unity and determination, most of the world has overcome the shadow of polio. Let its eradication be a beacon of hope," said Michael Essien.

Real Time Monitoring

The use of the Open Data Kit (ODK) platform for real-time data updates was instrumental in mapping coverage areas. Despite challenges, teams traveled extensively across Liberia using various modes of transportation to ensure that eligible children received the protection they need for a polio-free Liberia.

Ongoing polio surveillance, routine immunization activities, and community engagement remain essential components of the broader effort to eradicate polio in Liberia. During the two rounds of the campaign, a total of 19 suspected cases of Acute Flaccid Paralysis (AFP) were identified and reported for further investigation.

The dedication and hard work of Liberia's healthcare workers, supported by international partners and local communities, have brought the country closer to eradicating polio. This comprehensive and coordinated effort demonstrates the power of partnership, dedication, and commitment to eradicating polio as a public health emergency.





Liberia Bolsters its Efforts Against Malaria: Launches RTS,S Vaccine in Rivercess County on World Malaria Day

Rivercess, Liberia, April 25, 2024 - Liberia marks a monumental milestone in its battle against malaria as it launches the highly anticipated RTS,S malaria vaccine today, coinciding with World Malaria Day, commemorated under the theme: Health Equity, Gender, and Human Rights: Accelerating the Fight Against Malaria for a More Equitable World. The launch ceremony, held in Rivercess County, signals a significant step forward in the nation's commitment to safeguarding the health of its children and communities.

In January of this year, Liberia received a shipment of 112,000 doses of the RTS,S malaria vaccine, a groundbreaking intervention expected to reach 45,000 children across the six counties of the south-east in Liberia. With malaria prevalence among children under five years estimated at 10 percent in Liberia, the vaccine holds the promise of saving countless lives and reducing the burden of this deadly disease.

The administration of the vaccine will focus on the six counties identified as having high malaria prevalence according to the 2022 Malaria Indicators Survey, namely Rivercess, Sinoe, Grand Gedeh, Grand Kru, Maryland and Rivergee in the southeast region of Liberia. These targeted efforts align with the country's strategy to prioritize areas most affected by malaria and ensure equitable access to life-saving interventions.

The RTS,S malaria vaccine has undergone successful pilot programs in Ghana, Malawi, and Kenya whose results indicate a 22% reduction in hospitalisation for severe clinical malaria in children eligible for the vaccine, demonstrating its safety and efficacy. Now, Liberia joins these nations in integrating the vaccine into its Expanded Program on Immunization, marking a significant advancement in preventive healthcare.

Crucial to the preparation and execution of this landmark initiative are the collaborative efforts of key partners including GAVI, the Global Vaccine Alliance, UNICEF, the World Health Organization (WHO), USAID, Jhpiego, and other stakeholders. Their unwavering support has been instrumental in navigating the complexities of vaccine introduction and ensuring its successful rollout.

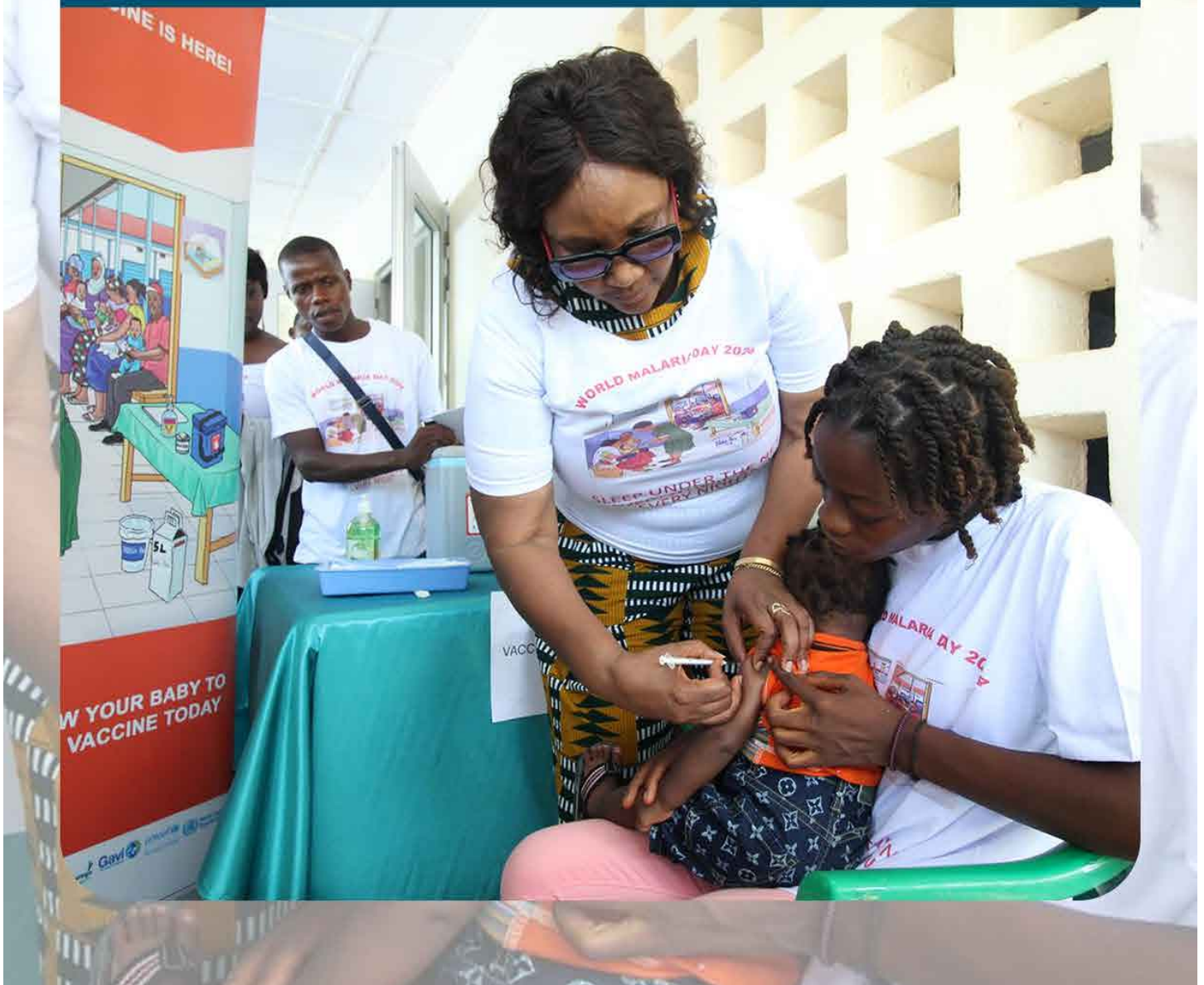
Speaking during the malaria vaccine launch at Rivercess District Hospital, the Honourable Minister of Health thanked partners for the strong collaboration in taking steps towards ensuring a malaria free future for Liberian children. "for a healthy and malaria free future in Liberia."

"Today marks an historic moment in Liberia's public health journey," remarked Andy Brooks, UNICEF Representative in Liberia. "The introduction of the RTS,S malaria vaccine represents a game-changer in our fight against this deadly disease, and we commend the government's commitment to prioritizing the health and well-being of its children."

Echoing these sentiments, The WHO Liberia OIC Dr. Musu Duworko emphasized, "The World Health Organization stands in solidarity with Liberia as it embarks on this transformative journey."

The RTS,S malaria vaccine holds immense potential to reduce the burden of malaria and accelerate progress towards achieving our shared goal of a malaria-free world."

As Liberia joins Benin and Sierra Leone in this simultaneous launch, the collective efforts of African nations to accelerate malaria vaccine introduction and rollout are poised to drive significant impact in the global fight against malaria, reaffirming our commitment to advancing health equity, gender equality, and human rights for a more equitable and resilient world.





UNDP and Partners Handover iVerify Platform to Local Voices Liberia

Monrovia – The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on Monday, April 8, handed over the iVerify Platform to Local Voices Liberia with a strong call to ensure national ownership and sustainability. The tool is designed for quick fact-checking and verification of published information. “iVerify effectively helped address the challenges of misinformation and disinformation during the 2023 elections using the iVerify platform,” said Lenka Homolkova, UNDP Chief Technical Advisor of the Liberia Electoral Support Project (LESP). Homolkova noted that debunking fake news and misinformation contributes to increasing accountability and trust in the media and contributes to the democratic processes. “It is a tool which is getting more and more attention in elections. In Sierra Leone and Liberia, it is acknowledged and seen as contributing to election integrity. When content was flagged as false by Local voices, it was taken down from social media. I saw these instances during the elections. And iVerify is a good tool because nobody wants to be seen as lying or spreading false information. So, flagging false content helped during the 2023 general elections,” CTA Homolkova said. The iVerify system, supported by UNDP and partners- Sweden, Ireland, and the European Union supported national stakeholders in identifying and mitigating issues relating to hate speech and mis/disinformation in the 2023 general elections in Liberia.

Citizens and external partners used the platform utilizing available tip lines to identify and report disinformation, misinformation, and hatespeech. The system then analyses or fact-checks the content through a 3-step verification process. CTA Homolkova recounted that UNDP and partners also supported Local Voices in training fact-checkers, spreading awareness about the tool, and how people can report issues of misinformation/disinformation and refer them to local voices for fact-checking. She called for enhanced collaboration between Local Voices and national and international actors, including the National Elections Commission and the media to combat misinformation and disinformation. Homolkova extolled UNDP partners Sweden, Ireland, the EU, and Internews for the support to the iVerify initiative. Lien Bach, Chief of Party of Internews, said the introduction of iVerify in Liberia was grounded in the idea of promoting responsible and factual dissemination of information. “iVerify effectively provided the tool for robust verification and clarification of information during the elections. Combating dis/misinformation and hate speech should be a continuous campaign,” she demanded.

Representing the Chairperson of the National Elections Commission (NEC), the Deputy Executive Director for Administration Samuel Cole thanked UNDP and its partners for initiating and supporting iVerify, and recalled how the tool helped the commission and other stakeholders to combat misinformation and disinformation during the 2023 General Elections.

“iVerify provided a platform for the speedy and accurate verification of information during the elections. The tool was very indispensable to NEC as attempts to deliberately misinform the public and discredit the commission and the electoral process were effectively fact-checked by Local Voices and the findings disseminated thus promoting public confidence in NEC and the process,” Mr. Cole noted.

Reinforcing the impact of the iVerify tool, Anna Brzozowskwa, Governance Team Lead of the European Union delegation, appreciated the efforts, cooperation, and coordination of all election stakeholders and encouraged increased collaboration between newspapers, fact-checkers, NEC, and other stakeholders. “Elections are essential moments and countering disinformation, and misinformation is very critical. The threats related to false information, misinformation, and disinformation are common. It is not a unique feature to Liberia,” Brzozowskwa noted.

The EU, she said, is quite impressed with the implementation of iVerify and extolled the government for the level of freedom which ensured the amicable operation of the platform. Ms. Brzozowskwa also urged reinforcement of the campaign to combat disinformation against women’s participation in elections, which she observed was also an element in the 2023 elections.

Nikolina Stalhand, Program Officer, Democracy and Human Rights of the Embassy of Sweden said the iVerify platform contributed to the integrity of the election.

“Countries around the world are applauding Liberia for a successful election last year. And I think it is important to remember that this didn’t just happen as an accident. Many people were involved in achieving this and the success of the elections was of course linked to combating misinformation and disinformation,” Ms. Stalhand said.

Although the elections are over, she urged Local Voices to sustain the platform, noting that there were still other issues of misinformation and disinformation that could be flagged, and fact-checked.

Michael Johannes, Elections Team Lead of USAID Liberia thank UNDP and partners and local voices for the credible work during the elections.

“It was a great team effort, and we were impressed. We want to thank you all. We look forward to continuing the work with local voices. Now the hard work begins. The country needs to make policy changes. They need to make reforms, and the work of iVerify and local voices would be of utmost importance,” Mr. Johannes said.

Making a presentation on the iVerify platform and its contribution to peace during the 2023 general elections, Alpha Daffae Senkpeni, Executive Director of Local Voices, said the iVerify tool revolutionized fact-checking by ensuring speed and accuracy.

“Before iVerify, we relied on normal media monitoring, which was challenging. We had to manually follow all the different Facebook pages and newspapers,” he said. Senkpeni appealed for continuous support to keep the platform operational.

“We need funding to keep this work going. We cannot just have fact-checking in elections here. Elections are periodic events. We need to continue fast-checking even after the elections. We are happy that we have this platform. We have built the foundation. We need support to consistently sustain these efforts or else all the gains will be reversed,” he added.

During the elections, iVerify tracked 219 claims of disinformation, misinformation, and hate speech using the system (WhatsApp tipline) and other claims tracking mechanisms. Local Voices fact-checked and published 51 fact-check reports and conducted training for journalists and mobile fact-checkers on the use of the iVerify tool. Local Voices also produced a weekly radio program on OK FM to promote the iVerify system and counter election disinformation.



“Leh Go Green” Project successfully launched

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in partnership with the Forestry Development Authority (FDA) launched the “LEH GO GREEN” project on May 15, 2024, on a national level and subsequently, at the project level on May 17 and 24 in Grand Gedeh and Grand Cape Mount Counties respectively.

The project funded by the European Union will directly engage the communities. Its launch marks a significant milestone in Liberia’s journey towards sustainable forestry and biodiversity conservation as the European Union (EU) proudly announced its support.

Speaking at the launch, the EU Ambassador Nona Deprez reiterated the EU mission support for the forest and biodiversity to Liberia.

The Ambassador noted the dramatic levels of forests, biodiversity and the consequences it has on climate change, people’s wellbeing, and the economy. “We need to see conservation as natural heritage and natural capital from a social and economic perspective and the importance of having the communities represented” said Deprez. Stating the role and commitment of UNDP in this project, the Resident Representative a.i, Mr. Louis Kuukpen noted that UNDP is poised in connecting the dots to internalize forestry governance in Liberia by working with national

institutions civil society organizations, communities and partners to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

“Without sustainability which talks about forest and environment, we will not be able to achieve them. The nexus between the SGDs and the forest is very critical and a project of this kind will help us achieve the SDGs”, Kuukpen emphasized.

The FDA Managing Director Mr. Rudolph J. Mereb noted that to maintain sustainable forest management, there are resources needed to help protect it and those available to help change the lives of the people. He emphasized that these interventions must be substantive and sustainable. Mereb said if such are not substantive, people will fall back, and the project will not have substantive impacts in the communities. He therefore pledged the FDA unwavering support to implement the project working in partnership with UNDP. “LEH GO GREEN” is a European Union-funded project which is valued at (4.9 million USD). The Launch in Monrovia brought together high-level stakeholders from the Government of Liberia, the donor community, civil society organizations and partners.




UNDP Conducts Workshop on Reusable ICT Building Blocks

The Human Security project was designed to enhance the resilience of vulnerable communities and individuals by giving them a more sustainable and dignified livelihood. Held from June 19-21, 2024, the workshop brought together over 50 participants from various regions, including Yeala, Zorzor, and Salayea in Lofa County; Zuluyee and Gbanquoi in Nimba County; and Totota and Botota in Bong County. Among the attendees were commissioners, city mayors, youth and women leaders, and leaders representing people with special needs. In her opening remarks at the opening ceremony, the Commissioner of Panta District Darkeh Paye, emphasized the critical need for enhanced collaboration among local authorities in the targeted project communities, adding that fostering a spirit of teamwork and shared responsibility among local stakeholders is vital for the success of the project. “Local authorities working together can leverage collective expertise and resources to identify pressing issues and develop tailored strategies to effectively meet the diverse challenges faced by communities,” Commissioner Paye noted. She said such a cooperative approach encourages the pooling of knowledge, skills, and resources, thereby enhancing the overall effectiveness of the interventions aimed at improving the quality of life for all residents and ensuring that the initiatives are not only relevant and impactful but also sustainable in the long term. Robert Dorliae, UNDP Human Security Project Manager, urged beneficiaries to harness the value

of creativity and the need to develop local solutions tailored to local challenges as part of efforts to leverage ICT building blocks for a unified service delivery platform within project catchment communities. Dorliae explained that the Smart Village is not merely defined by its digital connectivity but also encompasses essential infrastructure and services, including access to clean water, decent housing, efficient waste disposal mechanisms, reliable electricity, and an overall improved standard of living.

He further encouraged them to integrate principles into the project that will ensure that the benefits of development are shared equitably among all members of the community.

“This holistic approach ensures that technological advancements go hand-in-hand with enhancing the quality of life in these communities,” he added. Moreover, Dorliae emphasized the importance of mainstreaming gender issues and human rights as fundamental components in the journey towards creating a more equal and inclusive society. “Addressing these critical areas, the initiative aims to foster an environment where all individuals, regardless of gender or background, can thrive and contribute to developing their communities,”



Also making remarks, the Executive Director of Capacity for Youth, a prominent local NGO in Liberia, underscored the significant role of the Human Security Forum and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in the ongoing project.

Daniel Folly emphasized that the Human Security Forum is a pivotal platform for advocating and raising awareness about various Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), designed to serve not only as a watchdog for communities but also as a crucial bridge connecting local stakeholders with potential investors.

Folly elaborated on the dual function of the forum and CSOs, noting that they act as advocates, ensuring that the voices and concerns of the communities are heard and addressed in line with the SDGs.

“As watchdogs, we monitor the implementation of SDG-related initiatives and scrutinize the progress and impact of these projects to ensure transparency, accountability, and effectiveness and help maintain high standards and push for continued improvement,” he intimated. Folly also mentioned that awareness campaigns and educational programs, help inform and empower community

members about their rights and the resources available to them, to foster a more informed and proactive populace. He sees the forum as a networking platform for local stakeholders and investors, facilitating dialogue and collaboration and helping to attract and secure investment for community projects. He wants community leaders, government officials, and international partners, to support and engage with the Human Security Forum, stressing that such collaboration is essential for creating a robust and responsive system that can effectively address local challenges and promote sustainable, inclusive development.

In an overview of the project, the Focal Point at the Ministry of Internal Affairs Ministry Czars M. Palay stressed continued support by local stakeholders urging them to remain committed to the project's success and called on newly appointed government officials to align themselves with these efforts.

Palay also encouraged communities reaping the benefits of the training to initiate and undertake innovative projects aimed at improving the quality of life for their citizens and serving as change agents.



Joint Peace Dividends Project Launched

On April 24th, 2024, a historic event unfolded at the Bella Casa Hotel in Sinkor, Monrovia, as the Peace Chocolate, also known as Wologizi Chocolate, was officially launched. This significant milestone is the culmination of a collaborative effort between the Peace Dividend Initiative (PDI), a key partner of the Peace Dividends Project, and the Komassa Vornambah Women's Group in Bolahun, Lofa County, alongside the Liberia Cocoa Corporation (LCC) as a technical partner.

This initiative is supported by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and funded by the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund United Nations Peacebuilding through a joint project involving UNDP Liberia and the Center for Humanitarian Dialogue. The project aims at economically empowering rural community women and facilitating increased income generation. More than just generating economic opportunities, this effort is a testament to the value addition of local Liberian communities, promoting social cohesion and peace within their communities and the broader region. The launch of Peace Chocolate was led by Madam Ng'ong'a-Margaret Gulavic, Head of the United Nations Resident Coordinator Office in Liberia, showcasing the UN's unwavering commitment to fostering sustainable development and peace-building in the country.

Making remarks, Mr. John R Dennis, Programme Coordinator of the Peace-building Fund Secretariat, emphasized the significance of this initiative in advancing peace and prosperity in Liberia. "As Peace Chocolate makes its debut, it represents more than just a product. It embodies the resilience and unity of the communities involved, serving as a beacon of hope for a brighter future," Dennis noted.



Growth Accelerator Liberia Hosts Forest-Based Enterprises Workshop

Implemented in partnership with the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and Accountability Lab (iCampus), last week the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Growth Accelerator Liberia support by the European Union in Liberia and the government of Sweden, held a three-day Forest-Based Enterprises workshop in Ganta, Nimba County. Amongst others, the workshop focused on insights and practical skills to empower participants with knowledge in their various respective fields while allowing them to explore the world of arts and crafts, learning intricate designs and techniques to enhance their craft, as well as covering practical sessions on honey production, post-harvest handling, innovative bamboo product design, and marketing techniques for non-timber products. Speaking to participants on the first day of the workshop, Deputy Minister for Small Business Administration at the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Benedict Dolo encouraged participants to pursue collaboration instead of competition, stating, "We are the only ones that can build Liberia." He also stressed the importance of prioritizing Liberian products to boost the local economy and foster national pride. Echoing his views, the UNDP Programme Coordinator, Abraham Tumbey stated the goal of the cohort, which is to support non-timber forest products as a sustainable livelihood alternative while protecting our forests. Tumbey emphasized the importance of participants using the funds wisely to ensure they do not revert to their previous circumstances.

Generally, the workshop covered various key topics, including forest conservation and responsible forest management practices. A crucial Business Plan Development session equipped attendees with the knowledge and tools to create effective and strategic business plans and set a solid foundation for future growth. Participants also explored alternative livelihood development within forest enterprises and learned best practices in bamboo production. Additionally, sessions on business crafting and innovation provided practical insights and strategies for success. This workshop has provided a wealth of knowledge and inspiration from Investment Partners (Bloom Bank Africa - Liberia, United Bank for Africa - Liberia, and Ecobank - Liberia) assisting participants in gaining the knowledge and utilizing the tools to succeed and drive sustainable growth in their communities.



Liberia: EU Hands Over to GOL Another Modern TVET Training Center in Zwedru, Grand Gedeh County

ZWEDRU, Grand Gedeh County- The European Union (EU) delegation in Liberia, along with its implementing partner, UNIDO, as part of its Youth Rising project, on Monday, handed over another modern TVET Workshops including Dormitory to the Zwedru Multilateral High School in Zwedru, Grand Gedeh County.

The initiative, including the Cape Palmas High School TVET Annex which was handed over last week, is part of the Youth Rising Project across six of Liberia's 15 counties in nine schools, amounting to EUR 25.3 million under the EU's support for technical vocational education and training for young Liberians.

Madam Lorpu Scott, speaking on behalf of the European Union Delegations to Liberia on Monday, May 6 at the Zwedru Multilateral High School handover ceremony, emphasized the European Union's commitment to invest in the young people of Liberia which they believe are key actors for change in the process of rebuilding Liberia through the empowerment of youth in Liberia as the road for economic growth, prosperity, opportunity, and dignity.

According to Madam Scott, the European Union is together with the EU Member States Germany, France, and Sweden, as TEAM EUROPE "We are the major actor in revamping and building a modern TVET ecosystem in Liberia."

"Liberia sees the youth at the center of its future development and recognizes that the transition towards inclusive growth will not happen unless human capabilities are enhanced and the quality of education and vocational training is improved to match the demands of the labor market," Madam Scott asserted. For his part, Mr. Stavros Papastavrou, Officer in Charge of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)- implementing partner of the project, said the endeavor is a true testament to the power of collaboration involving the Government of Liberia, through the Ministry of Education and Youth and Sports and the European Union and its member states.

He said the Zwedru rehabilitated TVET workshops comprising carpentry, electrical, automotive, ICT, and welding/metal fabrication to be used by students of the Zwedru Multilateral High School. He further said: "Today's ceremony represents progress and a shared commitment to enhancing vocational education in Liberia, an initiative made possible through the generous support of the European Union, which invested 25.3 million Euro to strengthen nine TVET institutions across six counties, including this facility. Young Liberians will be able to find similar access in terms of facilities and technology across 9 TVET institutions in six counties. "The workshops we dedicate today are a demonstration of what can be achieved through international cooperation and

national partnerships. With support from the EU, this institution is outfitted with equipment and tools from Austria, the Netherlands, Poland, Germany, and the Czech Republic. We are also proud to incorporate Liberian-made workbenches, showcasing the craftsmanship of local artisans,” Stavros Papastavrou added. Also speaking, Alex Grant, Superintendent of Grand Gedeh expressed gratitude and explicit confidence in the EU for such a huge investment, adding that there is no gift better than teaching someone how to earn a living. Grant noted that the TVET Center at the school will build up a massive stepping stone for students after high school to be self-sufficient.

The turnover ceremony held on Monday, May 6, 2024, in Zwedru, Grand Gedeh County, saw representatives from the European Union delegation in Liberia, UNIDO, the Superintendent of Grand Gedeh, County education officials, assistant Ministers of TVET from both the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Youth and Sports, and religious groups come together. This marked a significant moment for investment in Liberia’s educational system.





OHCHR Supports Cabinet final review and approval of Business and Human Rights National Action Plan

On 23 May, OHCHR Representative delivered a statement at the National Steering Committee on Business and Human Rights meeting held at the Ministry of Justice. The meeting constitutes the last review and approval of the National Action Plan (NAP) on Business and Human Rights by the Cabinet. In his remarks, he elaborated the importance of cabinet Validation of the NAP, the role businesses can play to protect human rights while contributing to the development of the country, and the support OHCHR provided to the process. The OHCHR Country Representative reiterated OHCHR's commitment to supporting the government of Liberia in fully implementing strategies and actions proposed in the NAP and called upon the Legislators present in the room to stand ready to uphold the policy into a Bil when the time comes. Six Senators (out of Liberia's 30 senators) led by the Chairperson of the Senate Concession and Investment Committee, three members of the House of Representatives including the Chairperson of the House human rights committee, Directors General, Directors, and Legal advisors of Ministries attended this final discussion on the NAP and approval of the document for the Minister of Justice's signature and final validation session.





OHCHR Country Representative continues country wide engagement and human rights monitoring visits

OHCHR Country Representative, Christian Mukosa, continues field mission across Liberia to gather information on human rights situation including on access to justice, business and human rights, Gender-based violence, children rights, detention conditions and issues related to drug abuse mainly among the youth. On 21- 24 April, Mr. Mukosa visited Grand Cape Mount and Bomi counties, respectively, where he engaged with officials from the judiciary, the Liberia National Police (LNP), the Liberia Drug Enforcement Agency (LDEA), and Liberia Immigration Services (LIS), as well as representatives of civil society organizations, including women, persons with disabilities, youth-led groups, and the Independent National Commission on Human Rights (INCHR). Additionally, the OHCHR Rep. visited both Counties central prisons and three LNP detention facilities within the 2 Counties where he also engaged corrections officers and LNP commanders on various human rights issues including long periods of pretrial detention, beyond the legally required duration and detention for civil-related matters. He also visited the One-Stop centre and the safe home for the victims of GBV in Robertsport, Grand Cape Mount. On 4 July, while attending the official launch of the European Union Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) project at the Robertsport Central Prison also attended by the Minister for Justice and Attorney General of the Republic of Liberia, the assigned Circuit Judge to Grand Cape Mount County, the EU Ambassador, Directors from the Ministry of Justice and the Bureau of Corrections, and representatives from CSOs, the OHCHR Representative also presented dignity kits which included sleeping mats, blankets, mosquito nets, and other items to the Bureau of Corrections for use by the inmates. The items to be distributed to all 16 prisons across Liberia were donated by the UNHCR to the Liberia corrections services following OHCHR intervention.



OHCHR sponsored exchange visit between Liberia's Independent National Commission on Human Rights (INCHR) and the Liberia Anti-corruption Commission (LACC), and their counterparts in Sierra Leone – the Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone (HRCSL) and the Anti-Corruption Commission of Sierra Leone (ACC)

Cllr. T. Dempster Brown and Cllr. Alexandra Zoe, Chairperson and Executive Chairperson of the Independent National Commission on Human Rights (INCHR) and Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission (LACC) respectively, accompanied by the OHCHR Country Representative, led a four-day, May 26-30th 2024, experience sharing visit to Freetown, Sierra Leone. During their mission to Freetown, both Commissions had meetings with UN entities including the Resident Coordinator and the UNDP Resident Representative and held two separate half-day workshops with their respective counterparts. The Freetown engagement included a hybrid deep session between the four Commissions and meetings with the Sierra Leone Human Rights Working Group, UN agencies, and Diplomatic mission dedicated to human rights advocacy that culminated with an agreement on key action points. They also met with the Sierra Leone Minister of Justice and Attorney General, the Deputy Minister of Justice, and the Solicitor General and had the opportunity to visit the site of the Residual Special Court for Sierra Leone and the Peace Museum. where they were briefed about the work of the former Special Court and archives at the Museum. The visit was climaxed with an agreement that a dialogue be held in Monrovia, Liberia, in September 2024 to further discuss and elaborate agreed strategy for stronger national regional collaboration for enhanced human rights advocacy and anti-corruption fight within Sierra Leone and Liberia. This initiative benefited from OHCHR financial and technical support and is part of OHCHR RPTC project aiming at facilitating complementarity between fight against corruption and human rights and cross-border initiatives approach between Liberia and Sierra Leone human rights and anti-corruption institutions.





Digital Champions for Peacebuilding: Empowering Youth in Liberia

Three UN agencies – UN Women, UN Human Rights, and UNFPA – in early May 2024 partnered with Orange Foundation Liberia and Liberian government ministries to launch the Youth Promotion Initiative project titled, "Accelerating Digital Opportunities for Youth Civic Participation as a Lever for Building and Sustaining Peace in Liberia." Funded by the UN Peacebuilding Fund, this initiative aims to empower over 2,000 young people in Lofa and Montserrado Counties with digital skills and tools to promote peacebuilding.

The innovative project will equip young people with digital skills to strengthen peacebuilding efforts, promote human rights, and increase their participation in development and civic decision-making as a basis for sustainable peacebuilding and mutual co-existence. It focuses on digitalizing youth-led atayee centers (roadside booths for social interactions by young people) and women-led peace huts, fostering collaboration for inclusive and accessible civic spaces.

Over 30 young people from diverse groups participated in the inception training at the Orange Digital Club on the Campus of the Cuttington University in Bong County. During the training, there were valuable interactions among the youth who were eager to learn new skills and advocate for the project's expansion to other counties.

The Mano River Union Youth Parliament, Liberia National Students Union (LINSU), and the Ministry of Youth and Sports see the project as a crucial step towards youth empowerment, peacebuilding, and development beginning at community level.

"We are very hopeful that this YPI pilot will help address some issues of empowerment after training us youth in digital, peacebuilding, human rights, and youth-driven advocacy skills, said Evangeline Sirlleaf of LINSU.

Seawon S. Lawaiyee, First Deputy Speaker of the Mano River Union Youth Parliament Liberia Chapter, called for the expansion of the project to other counties after the pilot phase. "We have immensely benefited from this inception training. For the fact that it has to do with peace and with Liberia's experience of 14 years of conflict crisis which affected youth of the country, we will recommend that this project should be decentralized so all young people get this message of peace."

Joan M. Mulbah, who represented the Independent National Commission on Human Rights sees the project as a key cornerstone to ending youth-related conflicts including mob violence. She lauded UN Women and partners for bringing young people together to learn, to network, connect and feedback to society.

Director of Youth Development at the Ministry of Youth and Sports, Sando Jusu James, believes that the Youth Promotion Initiative project properly aligns with government's objectives for youth capacity development. He said the notion of working with atayee and peace huts to spread peace and human rights directly buttresses government's programmes at the national level and are in line with the national youth policy. Speaking earlier, UN Women Liberia's Policy Inclusion Analyst, Ms. Fatima Gebi, motivated the young people to return home after the inception training and share the knowledge. . "We want you as representatives of your organizations to acquire this knowledge and when you go back ensure that you share the knowledge gained in order to strengthen your organizations in peacebuilding, and most importantly using a gender and disability lens in peacebuilding."

In early 2024, UN Women began implementing a joint program together with UNFPA and OHCHR called the "Youth Promotion Initiative - Accelerating Digital Opportunities for Youth Civic Participation as a lever for Building and Sustaining Peace in Liberia". The project's goal is to increase opportunities for youth participation in decision making processes through the digitalization of existing youth and women-led informal platforms, networks, and organizations. This will be achieved by transforming the youth-led "Atayee centers" and women-led Peace Huts into spaces where youth can meaningfully participate in political and intergenerational dialogues, interact with political actors, women leaders, mentors, traditional and religious leaders, and other state actors, and connect to formal civic platforms using a digital interface.





Women's Legislative Caucus of the 55th Legislature Launches Its Five-Year Strategic

Members of the Women's Legislative Caucus (WLC) of the 55th Session of the Liberian Legislature in late May launched their Strategic Plan at an official ceremony at the Capitol Building in Monrovia. Speaking during the launching event, President Pro-Tempore of the Liberian Senate and Chairperson of the Caucus, Sen. Nyonblee Karnga-Lawrence, commended WLC's international partners for their support to the Caucus. "We are extremely grateful to UN Women Liberia, UNDP Liberia, the European Union as well as the Governments of Sweden and Ireland for the support toward achieving our objectives," said Senator Lawrence. The WLC's Strategic Plan, which includes an annual work plan, provides the strategic direction and guidance of the Caucus for the next five years. The Strategic Plan is built around three key programmatic pillars which correspond to the three cardinal functions of elected representatives (legislative, oversight, and representative functions) and which aim at 1) bringing a gender perspective to a wide range of legislation and to draft and advocate for laws promoting gender equality and women's empowerment; 2) strengthening gender-responsive budgeting and holding relevant authorities accountable for addressing women's rights and gender disparities in government policies, programs, and the provision of public goods and services; 3) better represent the interests, concerns, and values of their constituents,

and promote women's participation in politics, public leadership, and elections. Encouraging an inclusive, accountable, and participatory democracy remain the essential targets of WLC's operational activities. The WLC was established in 2006 for the primary aims of increasing the participation and representation of women in decision making, enhancing more gender-responsive legislation as well as fostering networking and capacity-building to mainstream a gender perspective into national legislation and budgeting. The Caucus has contributed to the passage of the Domestic Violence Law and has advocated for affirmative action for women in politics, and other issues affecting women and girls. In late April 2024, the WLC, led by its Chairperson and President Pro-Tempore of the Liberian Senate, Senator Nyonblee Karnga-Lawrence, held a two-day retreat in Margibi County to revise their Strategic Plan for the next five years (2024-2028) together with an annual plan for 2024. The WLC's Strategic Plan will be implemented with the support of the Liberia Electoral Support Project Plus (LESP+) project (2023 – 2026). LESP+ is a post-election programme implemented by National Elections Commission (NEC), UNDP, UN Women, and Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (NIMD) and funded by the European Union, and Governments of Sweden and Ireland. Members of the Women's Legislative Caucus and other legislators from both the Senate and House of Representatives,

national and international partners as well as the media are expected to grace the occasion where they pledged their support to the Caucus.

The WLC includes 11 female lawmakers including Senator Nyonblee Karnga-Lawrence, President Pro-Tempore of the Liberian Senate, who is also the Chairperson of the Caucus; Senator Botoe Kanneh, Gbarpolu County; Senator Dabah Varpilah, Grand Cape Mount County; Representative Moima Briggs-Mensah, District Number 6, Bong County; Representative Julie Wiah, District Number 2, Lofa County; Representative Rugie Barry, District Number 1, Montserrado County;

Representative Prescilla Cooper, District Number 5, Montserrado County; Representative Gbessie Sonii-Feika, District Number 3, Grand Cape Mount County; Representative Marie Johnson, District Number 2, Grand Gedeh County and Representative Bintu Massalay, District Number 1, Grand Cape Mount County, attended the strategic planning retreat.





Solar-powered prefab Facilities Commissioned for Vegetable Sellers

In a significant boost to the local agriculture sector, the Liberia Vegetable Seller Association (LVSA) celebrated the commissioning of a new solar powered prefab container and solar freezer storage facilities at the omega market on Wednesday 29 May. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) through its Livelihood & Employment Creation Project procured two forty-foot solar-powered prefab facilities and 8 solar freezers. The solar-powered prefab container and solar freezers are an innovative and sustainable solution to boost the income of vegetable sellers and fisherfolks and foster food security. These initiatives harness renewable energy from solar panels to power prefab container units and freezers at much lower rates than grid-based electricity.

Solar energy is clean and renewable; thus, these setups help to reduce carbon emissions. The solar-powered prefab container and solar freezers are particularly advantageous to vegetable sellers and women fishers in areas with limited and irregular power supply. These systems allow vegetable sellers and women fishers to store their goods for extended periods without spoilage, helping them access more markets to secure better prices for their produce. The event was attended by government officials from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, representatives from UNDP, United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), Liberian Marketing Association (LMA), and LVSA.

This initiative is expected to reduce post-harvest losses, ensure better quality produce, reach consumers and ultimately improve the livelihoods of local farmers and sellers. In his remarks, the Deputy Minister of Trade and Commerce, Wilmot A. Reeves, emphasized the government's commitment to empowering small businesses and improving the agricultural value chain. Mr. Reeves said he will work with the UNDP and other partners to have the facility replicated in all parts of Liberia. He also encouraged farmers to grow more rice. On behalf of UNDP, Dorsla Farcathy Team Leader for the Inclusive Green Growth Portfolio, reassured the government of Liberia of UNDP's continued support and reliable partnership to the government and people of Liberia. He also thanked the government for the cordial working relationship that has manifested into such huge investment. He further urged that they sustain and prioritize the protection of the facility. The President of the Liberia Vegetable Seller Association Sumo Mulbah expressed appreciation to UNDP and the government for such an innovative project and the new facilities, highlighting the challenges they faced in the past. Mr. Mulbah pledged his commitment to ensuring that the facility is used by farmers, vegetable sellers and women fishers to store their goods. He further appealed to the government to rehabilitate the road leading to the storage facility because it is in a terrible condition.

“For years, we have struggled with lack of proper storage, which often leads to significant losses. These facilities will help us keep our produce fresh for longer periods and allow us to serve our customers better,” Sumo noted.

The state-of-the-art storage units are equipped with modern cooling systems and are strategically located to serve various markets close to Monrovia. This initiative is part of a broader strategy to enhance agricultural productivity and market access.

As the ribbon was cut, signaling the official opening of the facilities, there was a palpable sense of optimism among the attendees.

With these new facilities, the LVSA, with support from UNDP through the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, is poised to make significant strides in enhancing the vegetable supply chain, ensuring that fresh, locally grown produce remains primarily available on the markets and in Liberian households. The commissioning of these storage facilities represents a forward step in addressing some of the systemic challenges faced by small-scale farmers, fisherfolks and vegetable sellers, especially women, and fostering a more resilient and sustainable market atmosphere for them.





FAO leads the way in transforming Liberia's agriculture sector

Monrovia - In a groundbreaking initiative, the Ministry of Agriculture launched the National Agriculture Development Plan (NADP) in Monrovia on Wednesday, July 10, 2024, with crucial support from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). This strategic partnership underscores FAO's commitment to advancing agriculture and fostering economic growth in Liberia. During the launch event, His Excellency President Joseph Nyumah Boakai praised FAO and its partners for their instrumental role in developing the NADP, highlighting its potential to drive economic progress and reshape Liberia's agricultural sector. The NADP, known as the Liberia Feed Yourselves Agenda, is set to revolutionize agriculture, playing a key role in boosting economic development and ensuring food security in the nation. FAO Representative in Liberia Bintia Stephen Tchicaya expressed deep appreciation to the Liberian government for the collaborative opportunity, emphasizing President Boakai's dedication to agricultural advancement. She said FAO hired four individuals as consultants from various institutions, including the Ministry of Agriculture, Central Agriculture Research Institute (CARI), University of Liberia, and a senior expert from FAO Investment Center to support in the crafting of the NADP. This effort she notes, underlines FAO's commitment to sustainable agricultural development in Liberia. The six-year plan not only focuses on enhancing agricultural productivity but also aims to address

key challenges faced by farmers and stakeholders. Agriculture Minister Dr. J. Alexander Nuetah commended the NADP for its comprehensive nature, particularly its strategic emphasis on rural infrastructure, technology adoption, and market access, which signifies a holistic approach to sustainable agriculture in Liberia. As Liberia embarks on this transformative journey, stakeholders are urged to rally behind the NADP and work collectively towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. FAO Liberia's unwavering commitment to supporting Liberia's agricultural growth through technical expertise and collaborative partnerships marks a significant step towards eradicating hunger and fostering economic prosperity through agri food system transformation to achieve better production, better nutrition, better environment and a better life – leaving no one behind in the country.



FAO handover Fish Processing Facility and Equipment to Grand Bassa County

Buchanan - The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations on Monday, June 10, 2024, handed over a state-of-the-art fish processing facility and equipment to local authorities in Grand Bassa County to be used by fish mongers and processors. The handover of the facility is part of the completion of the Livelihood Empowerment of Women in Small-Scale Fisheries project funded by the Government of Japan. The National Fisheries and Aquaculture Authority (NaFAA) jointly implemented the project. The project contributes to income diversification, food and nutrition security, resilience building, and sustainable livelihoods for 1,000 fishmongers and their surrounding communities. The handover ceremony was elaborate and well attended by top government officials such as the Pro-Tempore of the Liberian Senate Madam Nyonblee Karnga-Lawrance, Gender, Children and Social Protection Minister Gbeme Horace-Kollie, a Deputy Agriculture Minister, Grand Bassa Superintendent Julia Bono, Buchanan City Mayor George Gaybueh and other local authorities. The gathering was also marked with dramatising and cultural traditional dances. Speaking at the program, FAO Representative to Liberia Bintia Stephen Tchicaya noted that handing over the fish processing facility to fishmongers aligns with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. She said by investing in women's livelihoods in small-scale fisheries and promoting sustainable practices, the FAO is contributing to achieving these global goals.

key challenges faced by farmers and stakeholders. Agriculture Minister Dr. J. Alexander Nuetah commended the NADP for its comprehensive nature, particularly its strategic emphasis on rural infrastructure, technology adoption, and market access, which signifies a holistic approach to sustainable agriculture in Liberia. As Liberia embarks on this transformative journey, stakeholders are urged to rally behind the NADP and work collectively towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. FAO Liberia's unwavering commitment to supporting Liberia's agricultural growth through technical expertise and collaborative partnerships marks a significant step towards eradicating hunger and fostering economic prosperity through agri food system transformation to achieve better production, better nutrition, better environment and a better life – leaving no one behind in the country. Madam Tchicaya availed that fisheries are crucial to global concerns due to their essential contributions to food security, nutrition, livelihoods, employment, and poverty alleviation. She noted that Liberia, with its 579 km coastline rich in demersal and pelagic fisheries resources, is no exception. The FAO Representative signaled that the fisheries sector provides about 65% of the national animal protein needs, contributing approximately 12% of the agriculture GDP, and offers direct employment to over 33,000 full-time fishers, fishmongers, and processors along the coast, 60% of whom are women.

Despite this significant contribution, she said, small-scale fisheries face challenges such as weak safety measures at sea, low monitoring, control and surveillance, poor infrastructure and equipment, minimal value addition capacity, and fragile market access. She intimated “The second output of our project focused on scaling up previous post-harvest activities for female fish processors and disseminating best practices to selected fishing communities. Climate-smart, sustainable, and healthy fish processing infrastructure, like the one we inaugurate today, has been built, and renewable energy and durable fish processing equipment have been distributed to female fish processor groups in three fishing communities. Additionally, female-to-female knowledge exchanges and capacity development training have been organized to improve efficiency, productivity, and hygiene practices. This new fish processing infrastructure aims to ensure the sustainability of marine fisheries resources, improve livelihoods, and enhance food security for small-scale fish processors. It focuses on improving the quality of life and livelihoods for women fish processors, reducing fish loss, and enhancing fish product quality, thereby increasing access to nutritious food in rural areas.”

Madam Tchicaya furthered that the completed fish processing infrastructure includes a cleaning, cutting, gutting, and filleting area; a processing area with the new FAO FTT smoking technology; a cooling area; a packaging and storage room; an equipment and tools store; changing rooms with showers and toilets; and an office. She said women groups' collective use of these facilities will ensure that production follows a specific chain, adhering to necessary hygiene and quality standards. “This approach allows women to divide production work among themselves, freeing up time for other income-generating or social activities and ensuring adherence to hygiene and food quality measures through mutual support and control,” the FAO Representative added. The FTT technique, developed collaboratively by FAO and the National Training Centre for Fish and Aquaculture Technicians (CNFTPA) in Senegal, addresses the need to improve small-scale fish drying and smoking operations. Its benefits include:

- Health:** Eliminates smoke pollution and fire hazards, improving health and safety conditions for women and their communities.
- Market Access:** Eliminates carcinogenic toxins (PAHs), ensuring the fish meets international food safety standards and accesses better markets. It also extends the final product's shelf life, allowing leverage against price

- fluctuations.**
- Time Efficiency:** The FTT functions regardless of weather conditions and processes fish faster than traditional methods, freeing up time for other opportunities.
- Reduction of Post-Harvest Losses:** Extends product shelf life, reduces post-harvest losses, and allows additional revenue from by-products like fish fat.
- Environment:** Significantly reduces wood usage, decreasing environmental pressure and costs.

For her part, Senate Protempore Nyonblee Karnga-Lawrance thanked the FAO, the Government of Japan and NaFAA for the project implementation and called on fishmongers to take ownership of the fish processing facility. She said with such infrastructure built it is important for fishmongers, especially women in the county to work together by ensuring that the facility is operational so that their livelihoods can be improved. Also, NaFAA Director General Emma Matieh Glassco thanked the FAO for collaborating with her institution to have the project implemented and also extended commendation to the Government of Japan for providing the funding. She called on the beneficiaries to take charge of the facility and encouraged the local authorities to play a more supervisory role in protecting the facility and operations of the fishmongers and processors in the county. The NaFAA Director General said the FTT Technique is a new phenomenon which will boost the production capacity of fishers. Describing it as a game changer, she said the new technique enhances environmental sustainability and is designed to be environmentally friendly, using less wood for smoking and reducing carbon footprint. “Our traditional smoking methods often expose workers to harmful smoke and toxic compounds. The FTT system significantly reduces these health risks by providing a cleaner, safer working environment. This is not just an investment in technology but an investment in the well-being of the community dwellers,” she added. The turnover of the Fanti Town FTT-Fish processing facility in Buchanan City, Grand Bassa County is one of the three completed fisheries facilities to the Government of Liberia through NaFAA.



The High Commission of the Republic of Rwanda in Ghana with jurisdiction in Liberia in partnership with UN Liberia hosts the 30th commemoration program of the 1994 GENOCIDE against the Tutsi in Rwanda

This event took place at the Ministerial Complex, 540 Congo Town, Paynesville where the government, Second Lady of the Republic of Liberia, members of the diplomatic corps, students and the general public were gathered today to grace the occasion. During the program the United Nations Liberia Resident Coordinator Madame Christine Umutoni emphasized that “Africans should do away with hatred, division and focus on the of prosperity for the lives of children, our nations at large.” She expressed her deep believing feeling in the youths that they can uphold the peace of the future and that can only be done when they are positively nurtured and supported, care for and empowered, transformed and create a sincere room for them and stand as one. Madame Umutoni calls on all young folks including students to do away with violence, hatred and divisiveness in their various schools and preach the message of peace, together and prosperity that will positively and successfully define the future. The UN Liberia Resident Coordinator also expressed the organization’s commitment to supporting Liberia and the region in fostering a culture of peace, respect for human rights, and conflict resolution. In remarks by the Rwandan High Commissioner to Ghana, with jurisdiction in Liberia, she emphasized the importance of remembering the genocide and learning from the past to prevent such atrocities from happening again. She also highlighted the progress Rwanda has made in the years since the genocide, rebuilding the country and promoting reconciliation. The commemoration served as a somber reminder of the devastating consequences of hatred and the need for continued efforts to promote unity and prevent such tragedies. The event was a meaningful display of solidarity between Rwanda, Liberia, and the international community in honoring the victims of the 1994 genocide and reaffirming the collective determination to never again allow such heinous acts to occur.





UN Country Team holds Annual Retreat Highlights Collective Delivery and Support to National Development Planning

UN Resident Coordinator, Madame Christine Umutoni, led the UN Country Team, consisting of 21 agencies, on the three-day, which was held under the theme "Working Together Towards Liberia's Transformation" Speaking on the Liberian context, Madame Leymah Gbowee, Nobel Peace Laureate, highlighted that peace is not just the absence of war but the presence of conditions that give dignity to all. Government, development partners, CSOs, amongst others, attended and spoke at the event also. Respective government agencies delivered their vision and perspectives during panel discussions. Development partners spoke on strengthening collaboration with the United Nations while civil society delivered a message on how partnership with the UN could be enhanced. The retreat offered a moment for the UN Country Team to reflect on strategic and transformational priorities to define a collective offer of support to the new administration especially in the context of the development and implementation of the new National Development Plan and County Development Agendas. Liberia has a new government which is in the process of developing its National Development Plan (NDP) and County Development Agenda (CDA) which will be aligned with the Liberia Vision 2030, the SDGs, and Africa's Agenda 2063. The current United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) was extended for one year to December 2025. The UN will then develop a new UNSDCF which will align with the new NDP and CDA. The retreat offers a good opportunity to discuss and agree on the UN strategic directions and how best to accompany the country achieve its national aspirations. The United Nations and partners remain ready to accompany the government's national development plan and its implementation. The UN looks forward to continuing to deliver as one, leave none behind and delivering stronger at both national and subnational levels.



UN Staff in Liberia, along with Monrovia City Corporation and partners, commemorate World Environment Day & World Oceans Day

On Monday June 7, 2024, in commemoration of World Environment Day (June 5) and World Ocean Day (June 8), United Nations staff members, in collaboration with the Monrovia City Corporation (MCC) and the Environment Protection Authority (EPA), participated in a clean-up campaign. The event was led by the UN Resident Coordinator, Ms. Christine Umutoni, in the backyard of the UN House, which is also a beach site. The themes for this year—“Our Land, Our Future” for World Environment Day and “Action for Ocean and Climate” for World Ocean Day—highlight the urgent need for environmental conservation and climate action. This initiative is part of ongoing global efforts to protect and restore natural habitats, emphasizing the importance of maintaining clean and healthy environments for future generations. The clean-up campaign not only aimed to remove litter and debris from the beach but also to raise awareness about the critical issues facing our environment and oceans. By working together, the UN, MCC, and EPA demonstrated a commitment to sustainable practices and community engagement in environmental stewardship. Giving her remarks at the clean-up campaign, Ms. Umutoni delivered the UN Secretary General’s message for World Ocean Day highlighting that “Now is the time for governments, businesses, investors, scientists and communities to come together in defense of our ocean”. About the environment, she noted that the message of the UN Secretary General is that “Countries must deliver on all their commitments to restore degraded ecosystems and land...”. Ms. Umutoni emphasized the importance of collective action in addressing environmental challenges, urging individuals and organizations to contribute to the protection of the planet.





UN Liberia supports Multi-disciplinary Approach for

Hon. Tanneh G. Brunson, Liberia Deputy Minister for Budget and Development Planning joined the United Nations Resident Coordinator, Madam Christine N. Umutoni, to launch a robust multi-disciplinary technical support to the National Development Plan called the ARREST agenda. The Deputy Minister expressed appreciation to the UN for interest in supporting the national development planning and noted that the UN has always been a steadfast partner in the development planning of the country. "At today's meeting, we will work on identifying and agreeing on areas of support, ", she stated. She noted that the meeting was a culmination of several previous engagements held with the UN family, where the UN had reconfirmed commitment to support the national planning process. She noted, "I am happy to concretize these efforts." For her part, The UN Resident Coordinator, Christine Umutoni, noted that the meeting was an important step in highlighting the UN's commitment to the national development planning process. She stated, "we listened to the government- your asks – including for the tourism sector and sub- national development planning. The UN is exploring – and with great promise the support and experts from successful countries to come and support the sector dialogue and prioritization. Support towards national development planning in Liberia will include technical expertise including avenues for unlocking resources for realization of the public

transition of the SDGs and Leave No One Behind. The Resident Coordinator noted her appreciation that the process is government-led and emphasized that the UN is here to accompany the process.



First Lady Boakai leads advocacy to promote the International Conference on Population & Development agenda

Women leaders, led by the First Lady of Liberia, Mrs. Kartumu Y. Boakai, have resolved to use the power of their voices and inspire actions at local and national levels to reduce maternal and newborn deaths. Speaking on April 18, 2024, when she hosted some imminent women during a consultative forum, Mrs. Boakai said the initiative was in support of the implementation of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) plan of action. She said: "Despite our successes, the specter of maternal mortality hangs over us. Too many of our sisters, our daughters, and our friends continue to be snatched away by preventable childbirth-related complications. The grim arithmetic of 746 maternal deaths over the past three years haunts me – 20 mothers lost each month; a precious life extinguished every other day. This, my friends, is not a statistic, it is a clarion call to arms, not military arms, but the collective force of our voices." The First Lady of Liberia called for the community's collective support to address the pressing issue of maternal mortality, stressing that the loss of mothers impacts individual families and weakens the societal fabric. "Together, we can dismantle the social & structural barriers that prevent women & girls from achieving their potential,"

she added. Also speaking at the occasion, UN Resident Coordinator Christine N. Umutoni called for urgent attention to address Liberia's maternal and newborn health challenges. "At this point in the world, Maternal health has become a matter of concern and must be confronted as a pandemic or emergency like COVID-19. Unless we deal with the family nucleus, we cannot talk about a nation," she said. The UN Resident Coordinator praised the First Lady for organizing the event and assured her of the United Nations' commitment to mobilize the appropriate resources to fund programme and actions to accelerate efforts to reduce preventable maternal and newborn deaths in Liberia. At the same time, UNFPA Representative Bidisha Pillai said that when women have access to information and services that help them plan whether and when to have children and how many, they can better complete their education. "This increases women's autonomy within their households and improves their earning power, strengthening their economic security and well being and that of their families," she added.



UNFPA project advances youth, peace, and security agenda in Liberia

Monrovia, 07 June 2024 –Liberian youth groups, supported by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the Ministry of Youth and Sports, have organized themselves into a national coalition to drive Liberia's youth peace and security agenda. The coalition's formation follows a two-day workshop on youth, peace, and security in Monrovia. The workshop, conducted from 6-7 June, is part of the "Enhancing National Youth, Peace and Security Capacities in West Africa" project, which UNFPA is implementing through the ministries in charge of youth affairs and youth network in Liberia and Benin with the support of the United Nations Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA). The project aims to raise awareness of the Youth Peace and Security (YPS) agenda and establish a multistakeholder platform. This platform will be a central hub for coordinating national efforts and promoting youth participation in the peace and security agenda, ensuring that all stakeholders, regardless of their background, have a voice and role. "Young people constitute an untapped resource for peace and development, as they can be powerful agents for positive change due to their fresh perspectives, innovative ideas, and boundless energy. As they make up 75 percent of the population, young people are critical drivers of Liberia's stability and democratic credentials, which include over 20 years of stability with three successful and successive peaceful transfers of

power," says UNFPA Liberia Representative Bidisha Pillai. She adds: "The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the United Nations Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA), as global co-leads on the Youth Peace and Security (YPS) agenda, in line with their respective YPS strategies, work to integrate the role of youth better, and young women in particular, in conflict prevention and sustaining peace in its analyses and recommendations, and also to integrate young women and men in formal and informal peace processes." In her intervention, the UN Resident Coordinator in Liberia, Christine N. Umutoi, delivered a message on behalf of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa and the Sahel, Leonardo Santos Simão, stressing that "our primary objective today is to pave the way for a more peaceful, inclusive, and prosperous future for our young women and men. We must ensure their active participation in all aspects of conflict prevention and resolution, politics, development, peace, and security processes in Liberia." Speaking when he formally launched the coalition, Youth and Sports Minister Cllr. Jeror Cole Bangalu commended the participating youth groups for their engagement and commitment to driving Liberia's youth, peace, and security agenda and pledged his ministry support to the body.

Cllr. Bangalu emphasized that the project is designed to empower young people and enlighten them about the importance of Youth, Peace, and Security in Liberia. The National Coalition on Youth, Peace, and Security will monitor and oversee the day-to-day implementation of the “Enhancing National Youth, Peace and Security Capacities in West Africa” project in Liberia – from the consultation process, formulation, and drafting to the validation/adoption of the National Action Plan on Youth, Peace, and Security (NAPYPS).

The National Action Plan on Youth, Peace, and Security will provide the opportunity and safe spaces for the youth to voice their concerns, identify overarching goals, and prioritize strategies for advancing youth, peace, and security through an inclusive and collaborative process and a national Coalition on Youth, Peace, and Security. It will be the result of national consultation. It will serve as a framework/guiding document for governments, civil society organizations, and other stakeholders, ensuring comprehensive youth inclusion in all aspects of peace and security – from conflict prevention to peacebuilding.





Dignity kits meet the hygiene needs of displaced women and girls

UNFPA provided dignity kits to more than 200 women and girls at the temporary shelter for Liberian returnees in SKT, Bong County. The women and girls were part of the 770 Liberians the Government of Liberia facilitated their return in May 2024. The dignity kits, including sanitary pads, tooth brushes, toothpaste, soap, underclothes, and other items, are essential for ensuring the sexual reproductive health and rights needs of women and girls. They help maintain proper hygiene for those who have been displaced and are a critical part of the UNFPA humanitarian response. Speaking on May 31 as the head of the UNFPA team leading the distribution, Reproductive Health Specialist Woseh Gobeh-Weah highlighted the organization's commitment to gender equality in crisis response.

"In crisis situations, the needs for shelter, food, and security are rightly given urgent attention, but the specific needs of women and girls are too often overlooked. UNFPA is dedicated to addressing this gap," she added. In early 2024, the Government of Ghana requested 4,300 Liberians living in Ghana without legal residency status to return home. Against this backdrop and in consultation with the Ghanaian government, the Government, through the Liberia Refugee Repatriation and Resettlement Commission (LRRRC), arranged to assist the stranded Liberians in returning home. In May 2024, the Government repatriated 770 of them.





Michael & Akosua Essien Visit Liberia to Champion Polio Eradication in West Africa

Advocating for a Polio-Free Future for Every Child

Michael Essien, the celebrated football icon and coach, along with his wife, Akosua Puni Essien, are visiting Liberia to advocate for the eradication of polio. This visit aims to support the Liberian government's ongoing efforts to eradicate polio, and increase child immunization, coinciding with the synchronized polio campaign across Liberia and six West African countries. Liberia, having reported a resurgence of variant polio type 2 in wastewater, is now at the forefront of a critical fight against this disease. The nation has embarked on two rounds of nationwide immunization campaigns using the novel oral polio vaccine (nOPV2) to quickly stop the spread of the virus, with the second round set to begin on 7 June. While vaccine coverage rates are showing promising progress, the battle against polio requires unwavering commitment and action. Mr. Adolphus Clark, Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI) Manager in Liberia, has expressed his optimism about the campaign, stating, "Our collective efforts have brought us closer than ever to a polio-free Liberia. With the support of Michael and Akosua Essien and our global partners, we are renewing our commitment to ensure that every child is protected from this preventable disease." The campaign is one of hope and determination. Despite the challenges, the number of variant poliovirus cases has significantly declined, with no children paralyzed by polio since 2021. The focus remains on reaching zero cases and maintaining vigilance until polio is eradicated from the region and the world. During their visit, the Essiens have engaged in a learning trip

focused on immunization and polio eradication efforts in Liberia, understanding the vaccine infrastructure, and listening to personal stories from families and children receiving vaccines as well as the health care workers administering them. Michael also participated in a friendly football game with young athletes in Liberia. Akosua Puni Essien has expressed her enthusiasm for the eradication efforts in Liberia, stating, "It is inspiring to see the coordinated efforts in Liberia to ensure every child receives vaccination to protect them from the polio virus. I urge all parents and caregivers to ensure that children under the age of five-years-old receive their vaccines - the polio vaccine is free, safe, and crucial for protecting our children from this devastating disease." The collective efforts of frontline workers, communities, local governments, Rotarians, and other global partners have been instrumental in the fight against polio in Liberia and worldwide. With continued dedication and support, the goal of eradicating polio in Liberia and Africa is within reach. "Through unity and determination, most of the world has overcome the shadow of polio. Let its eradication be a beacon of hope, reminding us that with perseverance, even the most daunting challenges can be conquered," said Michael Essien. "I am inspired by the tenacity of the Liberian people, and I know that together, we will finish the job so no child ever has to live in fear of polio again. The Essiens' visit has been organized by the Gates Foundation and UNICEF, in coordination with the government of Liberia. "The visit of Michael and Akosua Essien underscores the power of partnership in our fight against polio.

Their presence boosts confidence in vaccination and highlights our shared commitment to a polio-free future for every child in West and Central Africa. Together, we can make polio history,” said Andy Brooks, UNICEF Representative in Liberia. The Day of the African Child 2024: A Call to Action for Education in Liberia Liberian Children Lead the Charge for Inclusive and Resilient Education Systems The Day of the African Child 2024, commemorated in Liberia on June 14th, was a significant event that highlighted the resilience and determination of Liberia’s children. These young leaders are at the forefront, advocating for action and commitment from our leaders to ensure that every child in Africa has access to education. This year’s theme, “Promoting Inclusive and Resilient Education Systems for Every Child in Liberia”, echoes the children’s urgent plea. They voiced their opinions on the progress made and pinpointed the challenges in realizing the right to education in Liberia. Their message was unequivocal: The Time Is Now. The children managed to secure commitments from various ministers present at the

event, including those from the Ministries of Youth and Sports, Gender, Children and Social Protection, Education, and Agriculture. Representatives from the Ministries of Health and Justice and the UN RC and Dean of the International Community were also present and pledged to take specific actions for children throughout the year. These commitments are not just promises; they are a roadmap for the future of Liberia’s children. Each pledge will be followed up and reviewed on International Children’s Day on November 20th. This ensures accountability and keeps the focus on the goal of providing inclusive and resilient education systems for every child in Liberia. The Day of the African Child 2024 was not just a commemoration; it was a call to action. It was a day when the voices of Liberia’s children were heard loud and clear, and their message resonates: The time for change is now, and the future of education in Liberia depends on the actions we take today. Let’s continue to be inspired by their courage and determination and work together to make their vision a reality.





UNICEF Leads Collaborative Mission for Community Development in Grand Gedeh

In a significant development, a team from UNICEF embarked on a joint United Nations mission to Grand Gedeh. The team was accompanied by the UN Resident Coordinator and a delegation from UN Women. They were joined by the Deputy Minister of Gender, Children and Social Protection, the Swedish Ambassador, and the Development Lead for Irish Aid. The mission's primary focus was on linking peace and development, highlighting it as a priority for community development. The UNICEF Representative expressed gratitude to Lt. Colonel Kowo Jr. and his team for their warm welcome at Camp Whisner Military Barrack. The visit provided an opportunity for the UNICEF team to interact with the local community and understand their needs and challenges.

The mission included a meeting with the Town Chief of Jayproken, River Gee County, James Pah Sayee. Chief Sayee manages a unique cash-box system that provides loans for affordable latrines. This initiative is a crucial step towards improving sanitation facilities in the region. In addition, Chief Sayee maintains the handpumps, ensuring a consistent supply of clean water for the community. This mission underscores the commitment of UNICEF and its partners to foster peace and sustainable development in Grand Gedeh. It also highlights the importance of local initiatives like the cash-box system in driving community development. The mission sets a positive precedent for future collaborations and initiatives.





IOM Host Post Elections Peace and Reconciliation Dialogues

Although local and international observers declared Liberia's 2023 general elections free, fair, and credible, there were records of violent incidents in specific areas in Grand Bassa, Grand Gedeh, Nimba, Bong, Lofa, and Grand Cape Mount counties, where incidents were reported, verified, and published on the iReport platform before, during, and after the 2023 Presidential and Legislative Elections in Liberia. Recognizing this, and in line with the government's pledge to work for all Liberians and prioritize reconciliation, the Liberia Peacebuilding Office (PBO), in collaboration with IOM, committed to engaging in these hotspot areas. Through the UNPBF initiative "Promoting a Peaceful Electoral Environment and Community Security," they, along with implementing partners (the Center for Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding - CECPOP and the Migrants As Messengers Association of Liberia - MAMAL), ECOWAS, and community radio stations, initiated dialogues and sports events to create conditions for

peaceful coexistence, build civic trust, and foster reconciliation. These dialogues focused on critical areas in Grand Bassa, Grand Gedeh, Nimba, Bong, Lofa, and Grand Cape Mount counties, where incidents were reported, verified, and published on the iReport platform before, during, and after the 2023 Presidential and Legislative Elections in Liberia.

Over 904 individuals (573 male and 331 female) attended these events, representing a cross-section of stakeholders, including county officials, traditional leaders, religious leaders, representatives of political parties, civil society organizations, women, youth, driver unions, motorcyclists, sports groups, traditional groups, persons with disabilities, local stakeholders, journalists, community members, and peace-building authorities.





Empowering Inclusion – EU funded Project “Youth Rising” Concludes Weeklong Training for Teachers on the production of Wooden Walking Crutches

The Government of Liberia, through the Ministries of Education and Youth and Sports, alongside its development partners, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) with funding from the European Union, concluded a weeklong inclusive skills training event in Monrovia on Friday, April 5th, 2024, at the Monrovia Vocational Training Center. This training aimed to equip Carpentry teachers with the skills necessary to produce Wooden Walking Crutches. These teachers are employed at seven (7) Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions supported by the Youth Rising Project, highlighting the commitment to bolstering vocational education in Liberia. The primary objectives of the training were to build the capacity of teachers and foster a more inclusive educational environment. Nineteen carpentry teachers from seven TVET institutions participated in the week-long training, guided by an internationally renowned carpentry expert. Throughout the training sessions, these teachers were immersed in a variety of techniques for crafting and repairing wooden Crutches. The significance of this training extends beyond skill acquisition—it represents a concerted effort to promote inclusivity within the TVET sector. By empowering teachers with the knowledge and skills to produce wooden Crutches, the initiative aims to remove barriers to participation for individuals with disabilities. This inclusivity not only enhances the educational experience for all students but also contributes to a more diverse and equitable workforce in Liberia.

The training further encourages teachers to integrate Crutches making into their curriculum, thereby fostering a supportive learning environment for students with disabilities. By incorporating practical skills into their teaching, teachers play an important role in breaking down barriers and creating opportunities for all learners. At the end of the training, Philip Reinsberg, a carpentry professor from Austria who facilitated the training, expressed his gratitude to the young Liberian teachers for being focused and willing to learn. He further emphasized the value of the skills acquired, stating that they could be applied not only in Crutches production but also in other essential carpentry products for homes, offices, schools, and beyond. Fallah Mathew Fonneh, a carpentry instructor at the Harbel Multilateral High School, also extended his thanks and appreciation to the partners for the training. He emphasized that it would not only help provide a better school environment for students with disabilities but also reduce the importation of Crutches and promote locally produced, high-quality wooden crutches in the Liberian market. This training exemplifies the transformative power of education in promoting social inclusion and fostering opportunity for all members of society. By investing in the capacity-building of teachers and promoting a culture of inclusivity within the TVET sector, Liberia takes a significant step towards creating a more equitable and prosperous future for all.



EU & UNIDO Handover Modern TVET Training Center Cape Palmas High School in Maryland County to the Government of Liberia

Cape Palmas – The European Union (EU) delegation in Liberia, along with its implementing partner, UNIDO, as part of its Youth Rising project, has handed over a modern TVET Annex of Cape Palmas High School in Harper, Maryland County, to the Government of Liberia. This initiative is part of an effort to strengthen technical and vocational education and training in Liberia. The initiative is part of the Youth Rising Project across six of Liberia's 15 counties, in nine schools, amounting to EUR 25.3 million under the EU's support for technical vocational education and training for young Liberians. Nona Deprez, the head of the EU Delegation to Liberia, conducted the turnover ceremony on Thursday, May 2, 2024, at the Cape Palmas High School TVET annex. She stated that the project was initiated in 2018 by the EU delegation's 11th European Development Fund (EDF) to support technical and vocational education training for young Liberians. According to her, Liberian youth are key actors of change and essential partners in the area of growth. With the recognition of these potentials, the EU member states and partners are making significant investments in revamping and building a modern TVET education sector in Liberia. "The dedication of this facility is part of phase one under the Youth Rising project, which covers nine schools across six counties in Liberia. Sweden is covering one school in Voinjama, and the number of schools to benefit will extend to ten over the next six years," added EU Head, Nona Deprez. Liberia's Education Minister, Dr. Jarso Maley Jallah, made remarks on behalf of the Liberian Government,

expressing gratitude to the EU and UNIDO for their steadfast commitment and invaluable support in driving progress and fostering sustainable development, as well as setting a shining example for cooperation and collaboration on the global stage. "I would like to recognize the dedication and hard work of UNIDO and its skilled workforce, who have labored to bring this project to fruition. Your craftsmanship and attention to detail are evident in every corner of this facility, and for that, we are profoundly grateful," said Education Minister Jarso Jallah. "As we stand on the threshold of this new chapter, let us seize this moment as an opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to lifelong learning and empowerment. The field of TVET is not merely a pathway to success; it is the gateway to a brighter future for our citizens and our nation as a whole. So, let us harness the transformative power of education to uplift our communities, empower our youth, and build a more prosperous and equitable society for all," Minister Jarso Jallah added. The turnover ceremony on Thursday in Harper, Maryland County, brought together ambassadors of the European Union Member States, including the Swedish ambassador, the German ambassador, the ambassador of Ireland, and a representative of the French ambassador, led by the EU Ambassador, Nona Deprez. Also present were Education Minister Jarso Jallah, Assistant Minister of Youth and Sports, county education officials, youth, and religious groups, marking a pivotal moment for investment in Liberia's educational system.



Launch of a multi-country project “Streamlining Diaspora Engagement to Catalyze Private Investments and Entrepreneurship for Enhanced Resilience (SDE4R)”

In June, IOM, the African Development Bank, and the African Union Commission launched a \$5.2 million multi-country project in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to enhance diaspora engagement. The SDE4R is a technical assistance aiming to strengthen private sector development, economic growth as well as social and climate resilience in 8 African transition states through more pro-active diaspora engagement, namely in the

Gambia, Liberia, Madagascar, Mali, Somalia, South Sudan, Togo, and Zimbabwe. The project seeks to improve the policy and institutional environment for diaspora engagement, encourage diaspora participation in local investment and private sector development, and leverage the diaspora's financial and human capital to reduce vulnerability and enhance the resilience of local populations.





Supporting Peace, Stability and Community Security through UN PBF's "Promoting a Peaceful Electoral Environment and Community Security," Initiative

In May, the Peacebuilding Office (PBO), with support from the IOM, headed a joint monitoring team comprising the National Bureau of Concessions (NBC), The National Concession Conflict Resolution Office (NCCRO) at the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS), and the Early Warning Technical Working Group (EWTWG) to conduct a fact-finding assessment in communities in Bomi and Grand Cape Mount counties where several protests and violent activities were reported the last few months by the National Situation Room for Violence Prevention and Election Monitoring. The mission aimed to gather information, identify stakeholders for peace dialogues, assess the socio-economic situation, and make recommendations for restoring peace. During the assessment, the team engaged with a wide range of stakeholders, including local authorities, community leaders, and residents in 14 affected communities including Tubmanburg, Zelekai, Bola, and Kamada all affected by the Western Cluster mining operations; Damah and Malema towns affected by Mano Oil Palm in Bomi County.

Other communities affected by the operations of the BEA Mineral Mining Companies are Jekandor, Weajue, Gold Camp/Ndablama, Kinjor, Gogoima, and Bangormah Towns, with Madina and Gohn being affected by Mano Oil Palm in Grand Cape Mount County respectively. The team's findings highlighted the root causes of community-concession-related conflicts and proposed measures to prevent or mitigate these conflicts. The recommendations focus on improving concession-community relations, ensuring the provision of basic corporate social responsibilities, addressing environmental and social impacts, and enforcing regulatory compliance to improve the quality of life for the affected communities. The report emphasizes the need for preventive, corrective, or restorative measures to limit pollution or contamination from mining operations and suggests reforestation activities in areas where large-scale felling of trees has occurred. The team also recommends pathways to resolve the identified life-threatening issues and future risks, aiming to restore peace and stability in the concession areas.



UNITED NATIONS

LIBERIA



  @UN IN LIBERIA

www.liberia.un.org