



“Gender Equality for Innovative Change” Liberia celebrates International Women’s Day

- Government of Liberia and FAO launch final phase of National Forest Inventory
- UN Peace Building Commission promises continued support to Liberia’s peace and development efforts
- Music promotes immunization in Liberia’s most populous county
- Traditional Leaders: “We are ready to end Female Genital Mutilation”

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Message from Yacoub El Hillo, Assistant Secretary-General/UN Resident Coordinator



Dear Reader,

The end of March 2019 makes it exactly one year since the United Nations Mission in Liberia departed. It also marks one year since the Liberia Moment, the high-level international Conference in Monrovia which offered a historic opportunity for the new Liberian elected government to share its development vision and to the international community to commit to stay the course and support the country to move forward with peace consolidation and development.

In the past year, some significant changes occurred within the UN system to help us better support the achievement of key priorities for the people of Liberia. These include:

- The establishment of a full-fledged Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.
- The establishment of the Liberia Multi-Partner Trust Fund (LMPTF) to help channel funding and enable Liberia to consolidate peacebuilding and reconciliation.
- A strengthened Resident Coordinator's Office thanks to Norway, Sweden, Germany and the United Kingdom.
- Increased synergies between UN Agencies, Funds and Programmes, and reduced operational costs as a result of the move to the One UN House.

We shall also use this last year of the present UN Development Assistance Framework to develop a new United Nations Liberia Partnership Framework 2020-2024 (UNLPF 2020-2024) that is more closely aligned to the priorities articulated in the Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (PAPD) aiming to put Liberia on the path to achieving the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.

This newsletter continues to be one of the platforms we use to highlight the work of the UN in Liberia, including on aspects mentioned above.

Enjoy your reading.

Message from Suleiman Braimoh, Chair of the UN Communications Group and UNICEF Representative



This UN Focus newsletter covers the period January to March 2019 and, as always, serves as a valuable platform for advocacy and awareness raising on the work of the United Nations system in Liberia. Very importantly, we focus on the impact of our joint work in supporting Liberia achieve its development agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.

The articles in this newsletter showcase the scope of the UN system's work across the country. They highlight celebrations to mark International Women's Day, the commitments made by the National Council of Chiefs and Elders in Liberia in relation to ending female genital mutilation, the UN peacebuilding

commission's commitment to continuing support for Liberia, scaling up of a home-grown school feeding programme and the use of music in promoting immunization, amongst others.

Happy reading.



Liberia’s First Lady Clar Duncan-Weah takes part in International Women’s Day celebrations. With her are Hon. Williametta Saydee Tarr, Minister of Gender Children and Social Protection, Marie Goreth Nizigama, UN Women Liberia Country Representative and Ingrid Wetteqvist, Swedish Ambassador to Liberia. Photo: UNWOMEN Liberia.

Over 500 people gathered at the Booker T. Washington Institute in Kakata, Margibi County on 6 March to celebrate International Women’s Day (IWD) 2019. This was part of activities leading to the celebration of IWD held annually on 8 March.

The celebration held under the national theme: ‘Gender Equality for Innovative Change,’ included a skit highlighting sexual and gender based violence, traditional music and performances led by Ambassador Julie Endee.

In her keynote address, Liberia’s First Lady Clar Duncan-Weah cited the Rape Law, Land Rights Act and efforts to pass the Domestic Violence Act as examples of progress Liberia has made in advancing women’s rights.

“Despite these strides, Liberian women continue to face gender inequality and discrimination. Gender equality is the necessary foundation for a peaceful world,” she said, adding that “women in Liberia can only be free if their voices are heard.”

Yacoub El Hillo, Assistant Secretary-General and UN Resident Coordinator to Liberia stressed that while the country has made some strides, the country still has some hurdles to overcome.

For example, Liberia ranks 177 of the 188 countries on the Gender Equality Index. “There is an urgent need for Liberia to pass the Domestic Violence law, address harmful practices against women include Female Genital Mutilation and develop a legal framework to support women’s participation in social and economic spheres”, he said.

“The commemoration of International Women’s Day reminds us that it is the time to take action and



Yacoub El Hillo, Assistant Secretary-General and UN Resident Coordinator to Liberia speaking during the International Women’s Day celebration at the Booker T. Washington Institute (BWI) in Kakata. Photo: UNWOMEN Liberia

dedicate our efforts to achieve gender equality for all,” El Hillo said.

Swedish Ambassador Ingrid Wetteqvist said entrepreneurship and technology are innovative ways to tackle poverty and gender inequality. Women and young girls must be empowered to move into the field of entrepreneurship and leadership.

“Women’s empowerment is not about giving strength. It’s about finding strength,” she said. ‘It is not about waiting to be led, held, helped or pushed. It is about realizing that everything that is possible for men—is also possible for women.’”

Other high-profile officials at the event included Williametta Saydee-Tarr, Minister of the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, Alyson Grunder, Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. Embassy; Juan Antonio Frutos, Deputy Head of Delegation at the European Union in Liberia and Head of the Political, Press and Information Section,



There is an urgent need for Liberia to pass the Domestic Violence law, address harmful practices against women include Female Genital Mutilation and develop a legal framework to support women’s participation in social and economic spheres.



**- Yacoub El Hillo,
UN Resident Coordinator**

Prosper Nii Nortey Addo, Deputy Head of Mission at the African Union in Liberia, Marpue Spears, Director of the Women NGO Secretariat of Liberia (WONGOSOL) and Marie-Goreth Nizigama, UN Women Liberia Country Representative.



Excerpt from UN Secretary-General message on International Women’s Day 2019

Gender equality and women’s rights are fundamental to global progress on peace and security, human rights and sustainable development. In recent decades, we have seen remarkable progress on women’s rights and leadership in some areas.

Gender equality is fundamentally a question of power. We live in a male-dominated world with a male-dominated culture.

Increasing the number of women decision-makers is fundamental. But women still face major obstacles in accessing and exercising power. As the World Bank found, just six economies give women and men equal legal rights in areas that affect their work. And if current trends continue, it will take 170 years to close the economic gender gap.

Nationalist, populist and austerity agendas add to gender inequality with policies that curtail women’s rights and cut social services. In some countries, while homicide rates overall are decreasing, femicide rates are rising. In others we see a rollback of legal protection against domestic violence or female genital mutilation.

We know women’s participation makes peace agreements more durable, but even governments that are vocal advocates fail to back their words with action. The use of sexual violence as a tactic in conflict continues to traumatize individuals and entire societies. Against this backdrop, we need to redouble our efforts to protect and promote women’s rights, dignity and leadership.

We must not give ground that has been won over decades and we must push for wholesale, rapid and radical change.

- Antonio Guterres



In February 2019, at the African Union (AU) Summit in Addis Ababa, African leaders launched a new theme for 2019: “[The Year of Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons](#): Towards Durable Solutions to Forced Displacement in Africa.”

With more than a third (20 million) of the world’s forcibly displaced, Africa is the continent most affected by forced displacement, hosting 6.3 million refugees and 15.5 million Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs).

This year’s AU theme comes at a time when Africa is also marking major anniversaries for two highly influential treaties in the field of protection of refugees and other persons of concern to UNHCR: The **1969 OAU** (Organization of African Unity) **Refugee Convention** and the **2009 African Union Convention on IDPs**, also known as the Kampala Convention.

In Liberia, the main durable solutions for refugees are voluntary repatriation to their home country or local integration in Liberia.

UNHCR Liberia during the emergency response

During both civil wars in Liberia (1989-1997; 1999-2003) virtually all of the country’s three million fled their homes at some point within the country, becoming IDPs.



Liberian refugees at Karnplay Transit Center in Cote d'Ivoire. Photo: UNHCR Liberia.

The Sierra Leonean Civil War (1991-2002) forced some 120,000 Sierra Leoneans to seek refuge in war-torn Liberia. UNHCR Liberia extended the response to Sierra Leonean refugees as well as Liberian IDPs. Both populations sometimes coexisted in the same camps.

In 2000, due to electoral violence in Cote d'Ivoire, some 38,000 Ivorians crossed into Liberia. In 2010, electoral violence forced 220,000 Ivoirian refugees to flee to Liberia.

From 2003-2006, more than 400,000 Liberian IDPs returned to their counties of origin with support from UNHCR, the government and partners. Many of

them return spontaneously on their own. Meanwhile, some 340,000 Liberian refugees repatriated from Côte d'Ivoire Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Ghana. Most of them returned spontaneously, while 155,000 Liberian refugees returned with the support of UNHCR and partners.

UNHCR Liberia today: protection and solutions

Of the remaining refugee population in Liberia (approximately 9,200), 98 percent are Ivorians, for whom the best durable solution remains to voluntarily return home. From 2012 to 2018, more than 65,000 Ivorian refugees returned in safety and dignity. Those Ivorian refugees wishing to remain in Liberia are integrating locally in the same conditions as Liberians.

Both durable solutions, voluntary repatriation and local integration, continue to be carried out with the support of UNHCR, the Government of Liberia and partners.



Daha Noel, an Ivorian refugee, lives with his family in Sanniquellie (Nimba), where he owns a pharmacy. Photo: UNHCR Liberia.

The Government of Liberia and UNICEF are using music to promote routine immunization in Liberia's most populous, Montserrado County. In addition to music being used in Montserrado County, community engagement, social mobilization and radio are also utilized to promote immunization across Liberia.



Liberian musician Sundaygar Dardoy and dancers perform at the Duala Market in Monrovia as they promote the importance of immunization of children. Photo: UNICEF Liberia.

The Ministry of Health, County Health Team and UNICEF are working with one of Liberia's top musicians, Michael Davis, popularly known as "Sundaygar Dearboy", and a group of specially trained dancers to promote immunization in Montserrado County. The goal is to reduce the number of children at risk from vaccine preventable diseases.

According to the 2017 Administrative coverage report, 16 percent (8,629) of children in Montserrado County missed the Measles vaccine - the last vaccine in the immunization schedule for children to be declared fully immunized.

'Sundaygar Dearboy' and the team of dancers are raising awareness through performances in some of the country's largest marketplaces and transport hubs like Douala and Red Light. The song focuses on the importance of immunizing children. The dancers accompanying him indicate how routine vaccines are administered, pointing at their mouths to indicate oral vaccines, or arms and thighs when he sings about injectable vaccines.

The 'Montserrado County Coverage of Immunization' (MCCI) project, supported by

UNICEF, is implemented in 121 health facilities and 7 large open markets across the County, reaching thousands of people, including those waiting for long-distance taxis who will take the message to their communities across Liberia. The main objective is to disseminate key immunization messages, respond to questions, refute rumours, and encourage immunization.

As part of the MCCI project, UNICEF funded the training of 120 vaccinators and outreach efforts, provided community registers for defaulter tracking and worked with the Ministry of Health to ensure health facilities have the required vaccines.

The project also supports the provision of immunization services at all public and some private health facilities, as well as through extended hours and on weekends so parents and caregivers working in markets can take their children to receive their vaccinations after they finish work. A 'community defaulters tracking initiative' helps track children who have not received all vaccines, and outreach is undertaken to ensure their parents are aware of the need to take their children for vaccinations.



Senior representatives of the Government of Liberia, United Nations Country Team, Development Partners and the Civil Society taking part in the UN Peacebuilding Commission (PBC)'s Ambassadorial-level meeting on Liberia's peace and development priorities. Photo: UN RCO Liberia.

The United Nations Peacebuilding Commission (PBC)'s Ambassadorial-level meeting on Liberia has called on the UN and various development partners to support the country's new five-year national development plan – the Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (PAPD).

The meeting, held simultaneously in New York and Monrovia, was chaired by Ambassador Olof Skoog, Permanent Representative of Sweden to the UN in New York.

Hon. Gbehzohngar Milton Findley, Minister for Foreign Affairs, highlighted the country's progress towards peace and development. Hon. Samuel Tweah, Minister for Finance and Development Planning presented the PAPD focusing on the areas of health, education, agriculture, infrastructure, private sector development and social protection.

In addition, Hon. Olayee Collins, Deputy Minister for Internal Affairs shared Liberia Peacebuilding Plan's commitments that have been achieved while highlighting those that were incorporated into, and will be delivered through, the PAPD.

All three Ministers called on the international community to support the country's efforts to achieve the PAPD by pooling resources together through the Liberia Multi-Partner Trust Fund (LMPTF). The Fund will work as a key coordination mechanism both financially and programmatically in support of peace consolidation and support Liberia's pursuit of the SDGs.

Yacoub El Hillo, UN Resident Coordinator in Liberia, described the country as a success story in transitioning from peacekeeping to peacebuilding. He, however, called on members of the PBC to look at Liberia through the lenses of prevention because the fragility is real; "I believe our meeting today is part of the efforts to keep Liberia on the radar screen, a central role of the PBC," adding that "the country moved within a very short period from hosting what was at some point the largest UN peacekeeping operation in the world to a regular UN presence. Liberia, therefore, requires sustained support from the international community."

Larisa Leshchenko, World Bank's Country Manager underscored the need for partnerships. "Working here on ground, we know that Liberia remains fragile, the economy as well as the social landscape are fragile and that's why we need to work together to address it," Ms. Leshchenko said.

The meeting ended with a commitment from PBC members to continue supporting Liberia, including through the Peace Building Fund (PBF) which provided seed funding of USD 5 million to launch the LMPTF in 2018. Since 2008, the PBF has provided a total of USD 65 million to support peacebuilding programmes in Liberia.

“Liberia moved within a very short period from hosting what was at some point the largest UN peacekeeping operation in the world to a regular UN presence. Liberia requires sustained support from the international community.”

**- Yacoub El Hillo,
UN Resident Coordinator**



High-profile guests at the International Day of Zero Tolerance for FGM. Photo: UNWOMEN Liberia.

Tradition leaders have committed to end the practice of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) in Liberia. ‘We are ready to end FGM,’ Chief Momo Kiazulu Vice Chair of the National Council of Chiefs and Elders in Liberia (NACCEL) said. “We are decent people. The international community can’t say something, and we don’t listen. We’re part of the global community, so we’re ready to proceed. We are in the process, give us chance.”

Kiazulu asked the international community for patience as traditional leaders begin the process of going from “village to village” to educate people about the effects of gender-based violence and FGM, one of the most sacred traditions that is harmful to women and girls.

The statements were made during the observance of the International Day of Zero Tolerance for FGM on 6 February 2019. It was celebrated under the theme: ‘Translate Political Decisions into Concrete Actions at the Grassroots to Reach the Goal of Zero Tolerance to Female Genital Mutilation by 2030.

Madam Seeta Saah, NACCEL’s National Coordinator, welcomed the engagement of traditional leaders in discussions and said that they would request President George Manneh Weah to renew the Executive Order on Domestic Violence, which includes a component that bans the practice on girls below the age of 18. She said that once the order is issued, traditional leaders will work on a permanent ban of FGM.

FGM is practiced in 11 of Liberia’s 15 counties and has affected 35,000 women and girls. Liberia’s former President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf issued an executive order banning FGM on her last day in office, January 19, 2018. The order expired January 2019.

Saah lauded the effort of UN Women Liberia Country Representative Marie Goreth Nizigama for engaging traditional leaders, acting on recommendations from the leaders of NACCEL.

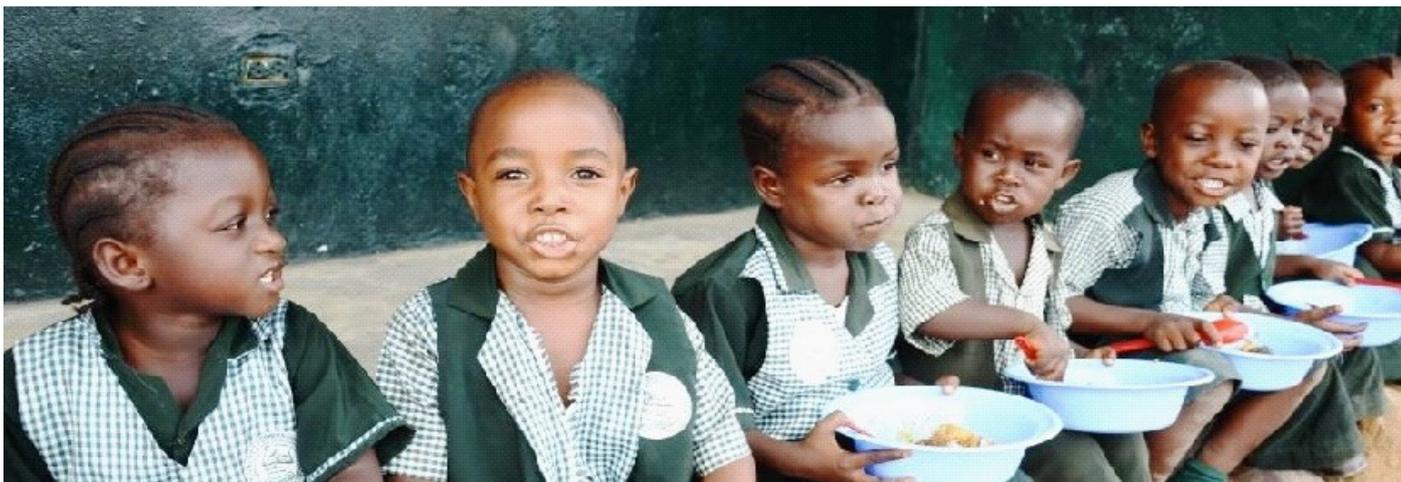
“Marie, we believe you will leave Liberia with pride,” Saah said. “We will ban FGM. We just want you to ask us how we can do it, not how you want it.”

Ms. Agnieszka Napierala, Programme Manager-Governance and Rule of Law, Gender Focal Point of the European Union, said ending FGM is ‘everybody’s business. She reiterated the EU’s commitment to ending FGM and all forms of violence against women and girls through the Spotlight Initiative. Liberia is one of eight countries benefitting from the 500 million Euro programme.

Yacoub El Hillo, UN Resident Coordinator read a statement on behalf of UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres calling for a concerted global action to end FGM and fully uphold the human rights of all women and girls.

Over 200 participants attended the observance of the International Day of Zero Tolerance for FGM. These included Paramount Chiefs, Traditional Leaders, Hon. Lydia Mai Sherman, Deputy Minister of Children and Social Protection and Hon. Alice Johnson-Howard, Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection.

In addition, Ingrid Wetterqvist, Swedish Ambassador; David Bellgrove, British Ambassador; Heads and Representatives of Diplomatic Missions; local and International NGOs; government officials; Frances Greaves, President of the National Civil Society Council of Liberia (NCSCCL); as well as representatives of the Independent National Human Rights Commission (INHCR); and students also took part in the event.



Schoolchildren eat locally produced food items in Nimba. Photo: WFP Liberia.

Building on more than fifty years of experience and support to education in Liberia, the World Food Programme (WFP), the Government and other partners are moving from the regular School Feeding Programme which involves buying food from overseas to the Home-Grown School Feeding Programme (HGSF).

The HGSF programme, introduced by WFP in 2016, has a food basket that comprises of locally produced food such as rice, beans, palm oil, fresh tubers, plantain and vegetables. This multifaceted intervention, links agriculture, nutrition and education through an integrated approach that aims to:

- Improve food and nutrition security through increased production and consumption of nutritious foods;
- Increase farmers' income and enhance resilience by promoting access to production inputs and market opportunities;
- Promote access to basic education through increasing enrolment, attendance and retention.

In 2018, the programme was scaled up to 20,000 schoolchildren in 62 schools up from 3,000 schoolchildren in 12 schools in 2016.

The School feeding programme is implemented in both public and community pre-primary and

primary schools. Targeting is informed by food security and education indicators.

This HGSF programme follows WFP's Purchase for Progress (P4P) programme which was piloted in Liberia between 2009 and 2014. Through the programme, WFP was able to source locally produced rice for monthly take-home-rations for adolescent girls in grades 4 to 6 as a family ration.

The HGSF programme is part of WFP's general school feeding initiative which is implemented in nine of Liberia's fifteen counties, particularly in rural food insecure counties. It provides safe, adequate, hot and nutritious rations to schoolchildren daily.

The general food basket consists of cereals, pulses, vegetable oil and iodized salt. Non-food items such as pots, spoons and plates among others were also provided to the assisted schools. In 2018 alone, WFP provided 5.7 million rations to 151,520 schoolchildren.

In addition, WFP provided assorted garden tools to 200 schools under the general feeding programme.

The gardens provide fresh vegetables that add on to the ration provided by WFP. 300 Improved fuel efficient local styled stoves have been built in the schools reducing their firewood consumption by 20-25 percent.

WFP intends to expand this initiative by providing all assisted schools and communities with the improved stoves, subject to the availability of funds.



Sonny Onyegbula, OHCHR Human Rights Officer makes a presentation during the Legislators training on Human Rights. Photo: OHCHR Liberia.

Seventy three Legislators have received training on human rights issues. The training was organized by the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Independent National Commission on Human Rights (INCHR) and UN Women.

The training, held in February, was intended to strengthen capacities of the legislators to execute their law making and oversight functions for effective protection and promotion of human rights in line with relevant international, regional human rights standards and principles.

The legislators were drawn from the House of Representatives and members of Statutory Committees. It also included participants from various Civil Society Organizations.

Participants received training in international and regional human rights instruments for protection of rights of women; human rights and accountability for past human rights violations, engagement with human rights protection mechanisms, gender responsive planning and budgeting. The issue of a war crimes court was also discussed.

After several meetings and calls by many Liberians for the establishment of War Crimes Court, the House of Representatives has agreed to deepen discussions with Liberians on how to go about establishing the said court”, Representative Rustolyn S. Dennis, the Chair of the House of Representatives Joint Committee on Issues of

Past Human Rights Violations said. “She also emphasized that no such past human rights violation should go unpunished”

“The issue of a war crimes court is for Liberians to decide on. OHCHR is here to guide anything that they decide should be human rights compliant,” Sonny Onyegbula, the OHCHR Human Rights Officer said while responding to the legislators who has raised the issue of the War Crime Court several times during the interactive sessions.

Legislators were also trained on treaty ratification processes and reporting on treaties that have been domesticated by the Government of Liberia.

At the end of the training, a joint partnership framework was drafted and issued by the INCHR to inform collaboration between them, the Civil Society and the House of Representatives.



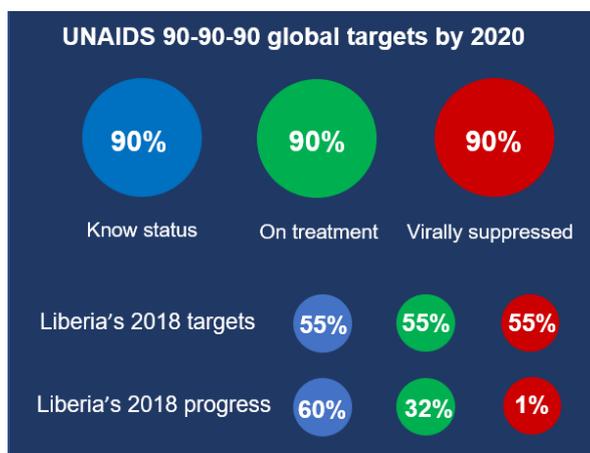
Representative Rustolyn S. Dennis, Chair of House of Representatives Joint Committee on Issues of Past Human Rights Violations, speaking at the Human Rights Training for Legislators. Photo: OHCHR Liberia.



Participants included civil society, faith based organisations, development partners and government ministries. Photo: UNAIDS Liberia.

On 11-12 March 2019, UNAIDS Liberia led a workshop on National AIDS Response to review the progress achieved against catch-up plans towards meeting UNAIDS 90–90–90 targets by 2020 (see box for details on global 2020 targets, and Liberia specific targets).

Over 70 participants from all entities working on HIV and AIDS programming took part in the evaluation workshop. They evaluated progress made on the 2017-2018 catch-up plan for Liberia. It is estimated that 43,000 people with HIV living in Liberia. The targets set for the country in 2018 was to reach 55 percent for all three indicators. For tracing purposes, the three counties with the highest levels of HIV were used: Grand Bassa, Margibi and Montserrado.



As of December 2018, an assessment showed that 60 percent of the estimated number of people living with HIV knew their status, exceeding the 55 percent target. The assessment also showed that at 32 percent, more than half of the target was

met in terms of those who knew their status and being on treatment. A weak laboratory system meant that the country could not adequately do viral load testing, which only showed progress of 1 percent. Currently, 59 percent of those on treatment are women.

National catch-up plans

Most countries in the West and Central African region, including Liberia, are falling behind in achieving global targets and have the slowest implementation rate in the world. National catch-up plans and strategies were developed to improve service delivery and enhance community mobilization. These catch-up plans have a key objective: that by 2030, HIV is no longer be a public health threat, and transmission of new HIV infection by those living with the virus would decrease significantly.

In Liberia, groups specifically targeted for interventions included pregnant women; women with sexually transmitted diseases (STIs); women living in urban areas; men aged 15-49 years; sex workers; drug users; mine workers; prison population; HIV exposed babies; persons who know their HIV status but are not yet on antiretroviral therapy.

The Ministry of Health and the National AIDS Commission (NAC) are leading the implementation of the catch-up plans. A 2019-2020 fast-track plan to achieve 90-90-90 targets is currently being developed for all 26 countries in West and Central Africa, identifying high impact interventions, including HIV prevention and reduction of stigma and discrimination. A special focus would be placed on the elimination of mother-to-child transmission of HIV and family testing to ensure wider reach and getting those identified as having HIV on treatment early.



County authorities, enumerators and Mariatou Njie, FAO Representative, at the launch of the National Forest Inventory. Photo: FAO

The Government of Liberia in partnership with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) have launched the final phase of the National Forest Inventory (NFI) in Bong and Grand Bassa Counties.

According to FAO’s Global Forest Resources Assessment 2015, 43 percent of Liberia is covered with forests which a large portion of the country’s rural population depends on for their livelihoods.

The NFI is therefore an important tool in monitoring changes in land use and providing national estimates of forest resources in Liberia. The information produced is key for sustainable forest management activities that will, in future, benefit local communities.

The Inventory is within the framework of Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD) and the sustainable management of forests, the conservation and enhancement of forest carbon stocks funded by the World Bank Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) and the Government of Norway.

The National Forest Inventory enables Liberia to identify the different types of tree species in its forests.

“The NFI will enable Liberia identify the different types of tree species in its forests,” Saah A. David Junior, National REDD+ Coordinator said during the launch. He added that the data collected in terms of forest degradation and deforestation will help determine its national forest reference emission level using in-country data which will be submitted to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

This launch follows the first one held in Voinjama, Lofa County, which then extended to 13 out of 15 counties in Liberia. It is led by the Government of Liberia through the Forestry Development Authority (FDA) with support from the World Bank, the Government of Norway and technical support from FAO.

“FAO continues to offer countries assistance in building capacities in monitoring, reporting and verification of Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions and in developing robust national forest monitoring systems for REDD+ which simultaneously meet broader monitoring needs for sustainable development,” Mariatou Njie FAO Representative in Liberia said.

Njie presented certificates to professional enumerators from the Forest Training Institute, University of Liberia, and FDA who were trained on the NFI methodology. They will enumerate approximately 47 clusters in the two counties, with the technical supervision of the FAO forest expert.

The Superintendents of Bong and Grand Bassa counties stressed their full cooperation to the process.



ICT experts, teacher trainers, training experts and media personnel take part in the development of a ICT in Education policy for Liberia. Photo: UNESCO Liberia.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is working with the Ministry of Education in Liberia to develop a national Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) in Education. The policy will provide a broad framework for training of teachers and educators, as well as teacher trainees at the three (3) Rural Teacher Training Institutes and the College of Teacher Education at the University of Liberia.

“Knowledge in ICT is essential in today’s world. If someone does not have even basic ICT knowledge, that person is at a disadvantage as it is needed for everything, from writing emails, applying for jobs, to using your high-tech mobile phone which is now a computer in your pocket,” the Minister of Education for Liberia asserts.

The Policy is being developed with funding from the People’s Republic of China through Phase II of the UNESCO-China-Funds- in-Trust project on *Enhancing Teacher Education for Bridging the Education Quality Gap in Africa*.

Stevenson Seidi, the National Project Officer noted that Liberia has to move along with technology. “We cannot always be using chalkboards,” he said. “Accomplishing this task would be a history-making success, as there is no ICT Policy in Education up

to present, despite existing in other sectors,” Seidi added.

Local ICT experts from the sub-sector, teacher trainers, Directors of the RTTIs and renowned journalists participated in the drafting of national policy. This workshop took place in March 2019.

The final version of the ICT Policy in Education will be finalized in April 2019.

“We cannot always be using chalkboards. Accomplishing this task would be a history-making success, as there is no ICT Policy in Education up to present, despite existing in other sectors”

**- Stevenson Seidi,
National Project Officer**

Extract of the speech delivered by Yacoub El Hillo, Assistant Secretary-General and UN Resident Coordinator at the launch of the Kofi Annan Living Memorial 18 March 2019

In August 2018, a large delegation of Liberian youth visited the One UN House soon after the news of Kofi Annan's passing came out. The youth delivered a letter of condolences to Mr. Annan's larger family, the United Nations. They were eager to know how the work of Kofi Annan -over four decades in the service of peace- could be preserved. I was inspired, much as all of us were grieving and mourning for the loss of this moral compass and global force of good.

In my attempt to respond I mentioned that Kofi Annan was instrumental in bringing Liberia back from the abyss when, in 2003, he as the United Nations Secretary-General worked tirelessly with the Security Council, ECOWAS and the rest of the international community to deploy the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL). That was the beginning of stopping the war and helping Liberia begin the process of rebuilding.

I suggested that the best way Liberian youth can preserve the legacy of this proud son of Africa and true global citizen is to ensure that the culture of peace takes deeper roots in Liberia and that the youth should learn how Kofi Annan always used the force of logic to resolve disputes and to prevent conflict. He did not use the logic of force.

It is therefore a true honor for me to be a part of this very important event, the launch of an inaugural pilot specialized academic program to roll out the Kofi Annan Living Memorial (KALM) in Liberia. This is an initiative to immortalize the name of the late United Nations Secretary-General, Kofi Annan. A leader who put the people at the center of the work of the United Nations and was able to turn compassion into actions across the UN system. The KALM will help us deliver on what Liberian youth were asking last August - nurture Liberian youth to become Kofi Annans as the world we live in today needs more and more of this force of good.

I wish to take this moment to extend my sincere appreciation to the Government of Liberia for accepting to be a part of this initiative in memory of Kofi Annan when H.E. President George Weah

launched the KALM concept on United Nations Day 24 October, 2018.

I encourage my colleagues the Heads of UN Agency to support this important initiative especially on the promotion of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.

The specialized courses on peace, conflict prevention, human rights and SDGs are indeed important achievements by the academia in using their platform to bridge knowledge and skills gaps. Undeniably, this pilot programme will contribute significantly in raising a generation of young leaders and change agents who are not only aware of their human rights but nurtured and equipped with requisite knowledge and skills to prevent conflict, promote peace and advance respect for human rights and the Rule of Law.

The outcomes from this initiative will hopefully also enable the Government of Liberia to report on steps taken in the implementation of the World Programme for Human Rights Education which calls upon UN member states to integrate human rights in education system and training of professionals at all levels.

Without Kofi Annan we are no doubt poorer as a people and a global human community. But it is through initiatives like the KALM that this powerful legacy will be preserved so that it continues to guide and inspire us as we all strive for a peaceful world.

We are honored that this launch is taking place in the main Conference Room at the One United Nations House. I will therefore be proposing to my colleagues Heads of UN Agency in Liberia that we name this room "The Kofi Annan Conference Room."

Read [full speech here](#).

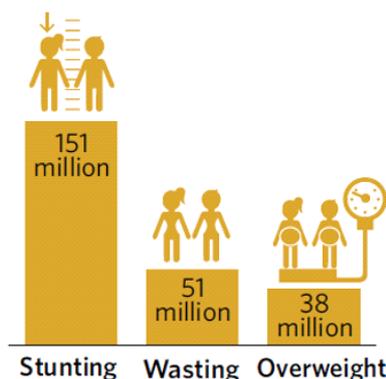


Goal 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

World hunger is on the rise again:
815 million people were undernourished in 2016, up from 777 million in 2015



Stunting, wasting and overweight
still affected millions of children under age 5 in 2017



What is the goal of SDG 2 and why?

To end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.

Extreme hunger and malnutrition remains a barrier to sustainable development and creates a trap from which people cannot easily escape.

Hunger and malnutrition mean less productive individuals, who are more prone to disease and thus often unable to earn more and improve their livelihoods.

How many people go hungry?

One in every nine people.

New evidence continues to signal that the number of hungry people in the world is growing, reaching 821 million in 2017.

Some key findings of the SDG Report 2018



- After a prolonged decline, world hunger appears to be on the rise again. Conflict, drought and disasters linked to climate change contribute to this reversal in progress.
- The proportion of undernourished people worldwide increased from 777 million in 2015 to 815 million people worldwide in 2016.
- In 2017, 151 million children under age 5 suffered from stunting (low height for their age), 51 million suffered from wasting (low weight for height), and 38 million were overweight.
- Aid to agriculture in developing countries totalled \$12.5 billion in 2016, falling to 6 per cent of all donors' sector-allocable aid from nearly 20 per cent in the mid-1980s.
- In 2016, 26 countries experienced high or moderately high levels of general food prices, which may have negatively affected food security.

PICTORIAL

International Women's Day celebration





The United Nations in Liberia is represented by the following Agencies, Funds, and Programmes:

AFDB, FAO, ILO, IMF, IOM, OHCHR, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNDSS, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNIDO, UNODC, UNOPS, UNWOMEN, WFP, WHO and World Bank.

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