

UNDP Liberia News Board

Quarterly Journal of UNDP Liberia



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Information Commission urged to “Guard Conscience of Society” UNDP Country Director...

On January 7, the Chairman of the Liberia Independent Information Commission Counselor Mark Bedor-Wla Freeman at the Head of a 3-man team, paid a courtesy call on UNDP Country Director, Dr. Kamil Kamaluddeen.

During the meeting held in the Office of the UNDP Country Director, Counselor Freeman informed Dr. Kamaluddeen that the aim of the courtesy call was part of efforts by the Commission to solicit support from development partners in the execution of its mandate.

He spoke of plans by the Commission to develop and implement a five-year strategic plan and expand its activities to all parts of the Country. Responding, the UNDP Country Director described the role of the Commission as a unique and honorable responsibility that guards the conscience of integrity.

He urged the Commission to use independent information not only to expose the ills in society but to ensure that the right things are done to strengthen integrity.

“Access to information is power and UNDP is interested in all aspects of your work” said Dr. Kamaluddeen. The UNDP Country Director then encouraged the Commission to take its task as a challenge and an opportunity to write and make history through its work.



Counselor Freeman and Mr. Howe in conversation with Dr. Kamaluddeen



\$6.7M Early Warning Project Kicks-Off Under the Least Developed Country Fund

The Minister of Transport Tornolah Varpilah has described the Early Warning Project as very important to the sustainable socio-economic development of the Country.

Speaking at the official commencement of the project on January 22, 2014, Minister Varpilah noted that the EWS is one of three priority climate change adaptation projects prepared by the Government of Liberia through its National Adaptation Program of Action (NAPA) under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, submitted to the Global Environment Facility (GEF).

The project is aimed at setting up an Early Warning System to help Liberia adapt to the negative impact of climate change in the face of economic development to ensure sustainability. “Today marks the beginning of the implementation of a four year Early Warning

System Project, funded by the GEF, under the Least Developed Countries Fund” Minister Varpilah said.

This project is a cost shared initiative comprising of a total grant amount of US\$6.7 million from the Least Developed Country Funding (LDCF).

Co-financing in-kind is from the Government of Liberia

(GoL) through the line Ministries



Benjamin Larroquette, Cleophas Torori and Minister Tornolah Varpilah

and Agencies, while US\$200,000 is from UNDP.

Also making remarks at the program, UNDP Deputy Country Director for Programme Cleophas Torori emphasized that efficient and effective use of tailored climate change information can be communicated to enable informed decision making and increase awareness in the government and private sectors, as well as local communities of the major risks associated with climate change.

“Available information could be used when formulating development policies and strategies” stressed Torori.

Meanwhile, the Regional Advisor for Early Warning System, Benjamin Larroquette has reiterated that people’s livelihoods depend on climate change information which helps improve productivity and mitigates the impact of climate change

UNDP Supports the Promotion of Cassava Value Chain in Liberia

As part of innovation to integrate economic growth and social inclusion in Liberia, the United Nations Development Programme in Liberia under its Private Sector Development Programme held a Sensitization and Awareness Campaign around Cassava Value Chain Development in partnership with the National Cassava Sector Coordinating Committee (NCSCC).

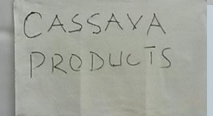
This event was conducted through a retreat to promote cassava value chain in Liberia. Held from **10-12 January 2014** at the Booker Washington Institute, in Kakata - Margibi County, the retreat was in partnership with the Liberia Central Agriculture Research Institute (CARI), Co-operative Development Agency (CDA), National Standard Laboratory, and the Ministry of Agriculture.

Speaking at the event, UNDP Assistant Country Director/Team Leader for Sustainable Economic Transformation, Mr. Stanley Kamara expressed UNDP’s commitment to working with the Private Sector in improving the economy.

Mr. Kamara urged participants to take seriously the issue of forming themselves into cooperatives for better coordination and results.

He further stressed that the development of cassava value chain would contribute to employment creation, reduce poverty and food insecurity, and encouraged participants to be attentive to modern methods of production, packaging, and storage,

Over 75 participants drawn from various cassava groupings across the fifteen (15) counties of Liberia including producers, processors, marketers, and transporters attended.





Minister Konneh (far right) Aeneas Chuma (UN) and US Ambassador Deborah Malac

The Commission, through its Commissioner with Oversight Responsibility on Communications, Davidetta Browne Lansanah, said the NEC is committed to acquiring a clean Voters' Roll for Liberia and it has put into place several mechanisms to detect fraudsters.

Ms. Lansanah said anyone caught attempting to swindle the ongoing Exercise will be prosecuted in line with the laws of Liberia.

UNDP through a Basket Fund is supporting the National Elections Commission, with financial contributions from donors like the European Union.

"The Commission expects that that individuals who fall within the three categories will turn out at our respective Voter Roll Update Centers in order to be included on the voters' roll" Commissioner Lansanah intimated.



Voters' Roll Update taking place in one of 19 elections magisterial areas in Liberia

She said this is important because obtaining a valid voter ID card is the pre-requisite for participation in the October 14, 2014 Senatorial Election.

Announcing preliminary data on the process so far, the total number of eligible Liberians who have been included on the voters' roll as of Saturday, February 22, 2014, is 26,287.

Commissioner Lansanah, at a news conference said out of this number, 17,496 are males while 8,791 are females.

She disclosed that Transferred Voters or registered voters who changed their locations are 6,981.

These numbers, she said, represent processed forms received from areas that are accessible.

At the first meeting to mark the onset of the GOL/Donor Coordination within the framework of the Liberia development Alliance, held in Monrovia, the Minister of Finance and Acting Minister of Planning Amara Konneh, spoke of the government's commitment to best practices on aid effectiveness.

According to Minister Konneh, employment remains critical for the government. "Employment is a potential generated through projects being implemented under the AFT" Minister Konneh noted.

Development Partners from Sweden, World Bank, United States, Norway, Germany, and the United Nations System among others, discussed with their Liberian Government counterparts, progress on the first year implementation of the Agenda for Transformation (AFT) through the Liberia Development Alliance.

The progress report scorecard reveals that of the 26 projects tracked, 2 are considered problematic, 11 delayed and 13 satisfactory, representing an overall performance of 50%.

The report said not all sectors performed equally; however, road and energy have made significant progress with few exceptions.

Meanwhile, the National Coordinator for the Liberia Development Alliance (LDA), has told a gathering of senior government officials including President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and donors, that the government invested US\$130million in the first year of the implementation of the Agenda for Transformation.

Finance Minister Amara Konneh in a one-year report, delivered at the Steering Committee Meeting of the LDA held in Buchanan, Grand Bassa County, spoke of increasing investment in programs from seven to twenty-six percent of the National Budget.

The National Elections Commission Launches Voters' Roll Update in Liberia

The National Elections Commission (NEC) commenced the Voters' Roll Update (VRU) Exercise on January 29 in Liberia.

The VRU is aimed at including on the Voters' Roll, Liberians who have reached the age of 18 years and above since the 2011 Voters' Registration Exercise.

Liberians who, did not register in 2011 and registered voters who have changed locations within the country and wish to be captured in their current areas of residency are among those included in the VRU process.

The Constitution Review Committee Begins Public Consultations in Liberia

Consistent with a mandate to review the 1986 Constitution of Liberia, the Constitution Review Committee (CRC) has commenced civic education and public consultations, across the Country.

The CRC has adopted a bottom to top approach which gives every citizen the opportunity to have a say in the review of the nation's constitution .

The objective of the civic education and public consultation activity is to create an atmosphere that will allow citizens across the country to fully understand the review process, own it, and be given the opportunity to make suggestions and to submit proposals that will lead to amendments in the 1986 Constitution.

The Committee is encouraging every citizen to participate. The CRC believes it is in the best interest of the Country that Liberians fully cooperate and participate in the exercise.

The Public Consultations are part of series of activities being conducted by the CRC in organizing and leading discussions and debates on the 1986 Liberian Constitution.

They are geared toward deriving proposals for amendments, which would be submitted to the National Legislature and subsequently to the voting population in a referendum for approval.



Flash Back: CRC Consultative Forum with 32 Political Parties

On-going deliberations are centered around six constitutional topics including: land, National Elections Commission (NEC), citizenship, integrity in governance, qualification of elected positions, and decentralization.

Support to Constitutional Reform is one of several programmes being supported by UNDP under its new programme cycle 2013-2017. It is a key priority of the Government of Liberia in its Agenda for Transformation Framework which is people driven and creates the platform for nation building, reconciliation, peace consolidation, security and development.

Modern Firearms Marking Machines turned over to the Government of Liberia

The Liberia National Commission on Small Arms (LiNCSA) in collaboration with the Africa Regional Centre on Small Arms (RECSA) officially handed over two (2) electronic firearms marking machines to the Government of Liberia on Wednesday, March 19, 2014.

The ceremony was held at the National Police Training Academy in the City of Paynesville, and brought together an array of high level government officials, representatives of the United Nations including the UNMIL and the UNDP Country Office in Liberia; heads of missions including AU, EU and ECOWAS Ambassadors; as well as representatives of security sector agencies and civil society representatives.

A 2-day training workshop for security personnel on the use of the firearms marking machine followed immediately after the official turn over ceremony.

A total of 20 people drawn from the Liberia National Police (LNP), Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization (BIN), armed Forces of Liberia (AFL), Executive Protective Services (EPS) and the Liberia National Commission on Small Arms participated in the training.

UNDP Resident Representative Bids Farewell to Liberia



UNDP Former Resident Representative Aeneas Chuma

The Former Resident Representative of UNDP has taken up a new assignment as Head of the International Labor Organization (ILO), Africa.

Prior to his departure from Liberia in February, Mr. Chuma at a farewell program held in his honor, noted that his new assignment presents a narrower mandate but promised to remain engaged with Liberia on labor issues that affect the social fabric of the Country.

He emphasized the need for youth employment and micro economic growth to be given serious attention by the government of Liberia, ensuring that the most vulnerable groups in society are reached.

“Unemployment in post-war creates instability to growth and development” Chuma stressed.

He called on Liberians not to lose sight of the success stories, as well as the challenges associated with elections in 2017, as they look toward a promising future.

Making remarks at the program, the Vice President of Liberia Joseph Boakai commended Mr. Chuma for championing the development of Liberia during his tenure.

“The people of Liberia will remain grateful to you and the UNDP for the development initiatives both at the community level and the nation at large” intimated VP Boakai.

The Program was attended by a cross-section of the UN family, donor community, government officials and other dignitaries.

Chuma's Farewell In Pictures



Contributions

Individuals

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- McAnthony Keah
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Units

- Inclusive Governance and Public Institutions Pillar
- Energy and Environment Unit
- Sustainable Economic Transformation Pillar

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Staff News: Departures & Arrivals

Arrivals

1. *Ekuru Aukot –CTA CRC Project*
2. *Anthony Dweh-Field Security Assistant*
3. *Abiodun Onadipe– Reconciliation and Development Specialist*

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