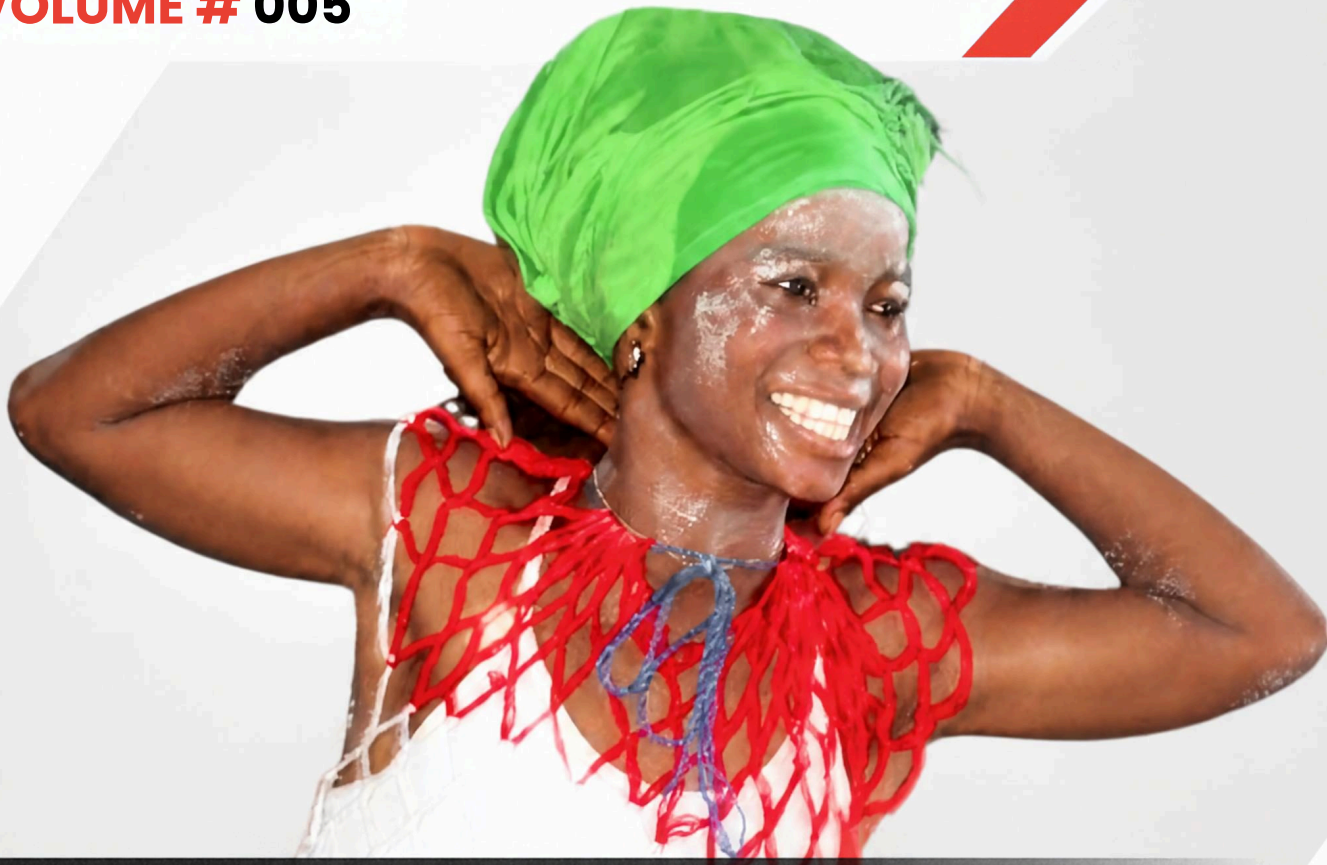


QUARTER-III NEWSLETTER

2026 **VOLUME # 005**



**Reinforcing impacts, Celebrating
Culture, Renewing Commitments &
Strengthening Partnership**



ActionAid Liberia

Tarr Town Old Road, Near Open Bible School
Monrovia, Liberia



info.liberia@actionaid.org



<https://liberia.actionaid.org>

Inside This Edition

- **ActionAid International Secretary
General Visits Liberia- pg4-5**
- **2026 National Culture Festival Highlights
- pg 6-7**
- **National Debt and Climate Audit Report
Launch - pg
8-10**
- **Women in Gbargolu Launch First
Feminist Movement -pg 11**
- **Sustaining Change Beyond
Swedish Embassy Support- pg 12**
- **Story of Change, Gobah Town Women
Transformational Journey - pg 13**
- **ActionAid Liberia Supports Three
youth to the Climate Justice Academy
in Tanzania- pg 14**



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Reinforcing Impact, Celebrating Culture and Strengthening Partnerships



This edition of the ActionAid Liberia Quarter II Newsletter highlights the power of women, young people and communities to lead change.

The visit of ActionAid International Secretary General Arthur Larok strengthened partnerships with government, civil society and communities. In Gbarma, Gbarpolu County, he heard directly from women and traditional leaders about local progress, including the Traditional Art School's livelihood opportunities for former FGM practitioners, survivors, and other women.

The 2026 National Cultural Festival brought approximately 2,500 people together to celebrate Liberia's heritage while advocating for the rights and wellbeing of women and girls. ActionAid Liberia also joined more than 20 civil society organizations to launch the National Debt and Climate Audit Report and present the Monrovia Declaration Petition to the National Legislature.

Community leadership continued to grow. Nearly 100 rural women launched the Gbarma District Feminist Movement, while 18 women in a Gobah Town savings group built collective savings exceeding LRD 400,000. Three young Liberians strengthened their advocacy and leadership skills at the Climate Justice Academy in Tanzania.

I invite you to enjoy the stories in this edition and meet the people and partnerships behind our impact. Together, we can continue building a more equal and resilient Liberia.

Elizabeth G. Johnson
Country Director, ActionAid Liberia

ACTIONAID INTERNATIONAL SECRETARY GENERAL VISITS LIBERIA

The visit of our international secretary general, Arthur Larok for the first time to Liberia's country program was invaluable for the ActionAid Liberia team, and was one that built stronger relationship and reaffirmed ActionAid Liberia's ties with key institutions, civil society, youth groups, deepened relationship with INGOS leaders and the government.

Arthur Larok arrived in Liberia on June 15, here he spent a week which was characterized with engaging government institutions, civil society organizations, international development partners, youth movements, and community-based organizations to advance more collaboration and enhance partnership further.

Arthur's visit also reflected ActionAid International's continued commitment to supporting national development efforts and strengthening collaboration with key stakeholders across Liberia.

During his week-long visit, Arthur visited one of our Just and Equal Communities Project sites in Gbarma, Gbarpolu County.

At that visit, he for the first time got to interact with local county authorities, and heard first-hand the impacts of ActionAid's intervention and work. Prior to his journey to Gbarpolu, Arthur met with heads of Liberia's leading civil society, the Minister of Gender, Children and social



protection, the EU Delegation, and the Swedish. He also met with heads of Liberia's environmental protection agency, youth, traditional leaders and a cross-session of Liberian youths under ActionAid Liberia program.

For Arthur, visiting Gbarma, and hearing the stories carried special meaning because they came directly from the people whose lives have been transformed. He noted that **"such powerful testimonies could never be fully captured in written reports alone."**

As a symbol of appreciation and empowerment, the women of Gbarma honored him with beautifully crafted Liberian country cloths branded 'ActionAid 1' (AA1) produced at the Traditional Art School an initiative bringing together former FGM practitioners, survivors, and other women to build sustainable livelihoods.



Meeting the people and hearing the impacts first-hand



Photos Collection of SG Visit

Arthur Larok's visit to Gbarma in Gbarpolu County-Western Liberia



ARTHUR, & AAL CD ALONGSIDE TRADITIONAL LEADERS OF GBARPOLU



ARTHUR, & ACTIONAID LIBERIA STAFF IN GBARMA DURING HIS VISIT THERE



LIBERIAN CIVIL LEADERS MEET SG ARTHUR WHEN HE VISITED LIBERIA RECENTLY



SG HELD A HIGH-LEVEL MEETING WITH THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY



SG LAROK MEETS WITH YOUTH NETWORKS



ARTHUR LAROK MEETS OUR JEC PARTNERS



SECRETARY GENERAL ARTHUR AND AAL COUNTR DIRECTOR MEET WITH GENDER MINISTER GBEME HORACE KOLLIE



GBARMA WOMEN CARRY ON TRADITIONAL WELCOME CEREMONY FOR ARTHUR



THE TOWN CHIEF OF GBAMA WELCOMES ARTHUR



DOMAFEIGN ED PRESENTS ARTHUR TO THE PEOPLE OF GBARMA

SG LAROK MEETS WITH UN AGENCIES & INGOs' HEADS



POSE AFTER A FORMAL MEETING WITH UNGENCIES & INGO LEADERS



SG, UNHCR & UNICEF COUNTRY REPS CHATTING



ARTHUR & UN WOMEN NEW REP. IN CONVERSATION

2026 NATIONAL CULTURAL FESTIVAL HIGHLIGHTS

More than 1,200 people gathered at the Samuel K. Doe Sports Gymnasium in Paynesville on August 1, 2026, as ActionAid Liberia and partners hosted the third edition of the National Cultural Festival. The Festival celebrated Liberia's rich cultural heritage while amplifying a strong call to protect and empower women and girls.

Held under the theme, "Our Culture, Our Pride: Empowering Women and Girls," the festival brought together government officials, traditional leaders, development partners, civil society actors, women, young people and community members for a vibrant showcase of Liberia's diverse cultural identity. Cultural troupes from Bong, Margibi, Grand Gedeh, Gbarpolu and Montserrado Counties thrilled the audience with traditional music, dance, drama and other artistic performances.



The festival was organized by ActionAid Liberia in partnership with DOMAFEIGN, NAPTAH, SAIL, WOC DAL and LIWEN, with support from the Embassy of Sweden in Liberia under the Just and Equal Communities (JEC) Project.

Spoken-word presentations and messages from national and international partners reinforced a central message of the festival: Liberia can preserve and celebrate its culture while ending harmful practices that violate the rights, dignity and wellbeing of women and girls. At the Festival, Swedish Ambassador to Liberia, Karl Backéus, used the occasion to call for stronger protection of women and girls and the complete abolition of harmful traditional practices, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).

Ambassador Backéus stressed that ending harmful practices does not mean abandoning Liberia's cultural identity. Instead, he said, culture should uphold the dignity, safety and rights of everyone, particularly women and girls.

He also underscored the importance of investing in the education and empowerment of Liberian women and girls as an essential part of the country's development.

The 2026 festival demonstrated that culture and human rights can advance together. Beyond the colourful performances, the festival provided a national platform for communities, traditional leaders, government and development partners to celebrate Liberia's heritage while building momentum for a future where positive cultural traditions flourish and women and girls live free from harmful practices. **[Read More....](#)**

It was about promoting Liberian culture Without Harm. Delivering the keynote address, Gbarpolu County Superintendent Hon. Sam Zinnah emphasized the importance of preserving Liberia's positive cultural values and passing them on to younger generations, while ensuring that cultural practices contribute to stronger and more inclusive communities. He reaffirmed the Government of Liberia's commitment to preserving the country's arts and cultural heritage and pledged continued collaboration .

[illegible]

NATIONAL DEBT AND CLIMATE AUDIT REPORT LAUNCHED

On August 5, 2026, ActionAid Liberia and over 20 Liberian leading civil society organizations launched National Debt and Climate Audit Report.

Report reveals the depth of Liberia's debt crisis and calls for debt relief, grant-based climate finance, stronger domestic resource mobilization and greater investment in essential public services and presentation a joint petition to the House of Representative committee on Claims and Petition.

The report was formally launched in Monrovia by the Executive Director of Liberia's Environmental Protection Agency, Hon. Emmanuel Urey Yarkpawolo, following its validation and endorsement by civil society leaders and other national stakeholders.

The Report is known as the Monrovia Declaration. [Read More.....](#)



"It is a vicious cycle where climate impacts create new financing needs, and government borrows to respond, causing the country's debt to increase. Already the fiscal space is shrinking, and communities are left even more vulnerable to climate shocks," Elizabeth Gbah- Johnson, AAL Country Director said at the launch.



LEGISLATURE PETITIONED

Then on August 6, 2026, climate justice activists, led by two leading civil society leaders, Lawrence Yealu, the chairperson of the National Civil Society Council of Liberia, and Dayugar Johnson, chairperson of the NGO Coalition of Liberia peacefully marched to capital Hill at the National Legislature and presented the Monrovia Declaration Petition to members of the Legislature.



The Petition was presented to the House of Representatives' Committee chairperson on Claims and Petition, Hon. Prince Toles.

The petition raises several critical National and global issues about Liberia's debts and the need for government to cut back on servicing debts to invest in Climate change mitigation, invest in National development priorities such as education, healthcare, roads, and infrastructure. The campaign was under the theme "Who Owes Who? [Read More.....](#)

Photo Gallery: Launch of the National Debt & Climate Audit Report on Liberia



More than 20 CSO leaders signed & endorsed the Report



Photo Gallery-Legislative Petition-Presentation of the Monrovia Declaration to the House of Representatives Chair on Claims & Petition



GBARPOLU WOMEN LAUNCH 1ST FEMINIST MOVEMENT



For years, women across Gbarma District in Gbarpolu County participated in trainings, held conversations in their communities, challenged harmful norms, and quietly built the confidence to speak up.

that journey has reached a defining milestone.

The official launch of the Gbarma District Feminist Movement became one of the major milestones of in Gbarpolu, all geared towards sustaining advocacy and the protection of girls and women with network of such who can stand up against vices that undermined women's growth.

The launch of the movement represents the emergence of a strong, locally owned movement where nearly **100** rural women are standing together to shape the future of their communities.

The celebration brought together more than **300** residents, local authorities, youth representatives, traditional leaders, government officials, and delegates from the Embassy of Sweden. But beyond the colorful gathering was a powerful message: lasting change happens when women organize.

Through ActionAid Liberia's Just and Equal Communities (JEC) Project, these women have spent the past several years strengthening their knowledge of women's rights, leadership, movement building, [Learn more](#)





SUSTAINING CHANGE BEYOND SWEDISH EMBASSY SUPPORT

As SIDA concludes its support to Liberia, one question has remained central: What happens after the project ends?

In Gbarpolu County, the answer is already unfolding.

One of the strongest indicators of the Just and Equal Communities (JEC) Project's success is not simply the activities delivered over the past several years, but the commitment of local leaders to carry the work forward with their own resources.

During a joint monitoring visit by representatives from the Embassy of Sweden and ActionAid Liberia, Gbarpolu County Superintendent Sam Zinnah announced that the county has allocated funding to sustain and expand one of the JEC Project's most transformative innovations the Traditional Art School model.

The Traditional Art School was designed as a safe, culturally positive alternative to harmful traditional practices, including female genital mutilation (FGM). Instead of exposing girls and women to violence, the school promotes Liberia's rich cultural heritage while equipping participants with practical livelihood skills such as country cloth weaving and other traditional crafts.

What makes this achievement especially meaningful is that the model is no longer dependent on donor funding alone. Following sustained advocacy by grassroots women's groups and collaboration with the Gbarpolu County Development Council, county authorities have committed public resources to maintain the existing Traditional Art School in Gbarma while expanding similar centers to other districts across Gbarpolu County.

This marks an important shift from externally funded programming to locally financed development a strong example of communities influencing public investment and shaping their own future. The JEC Project was never only about delivering activities, it was about strengthening local leadership, building community ownership, and creating systems that continue to serve women and girls long after donor support has ended.

A STORY OF CHANGE:

GOBAH TOWN WOMEN TRANSFORMATIONAL JOURNEY



Some of the most powerful signs of change are not found on project signboards. They are reflected in people's lives.

In Gobah's Town, Todee District in Rural Montserrado County, 18 women are proving that when communities are empowered with the right opportunities, transformation continues long after the training ends.

Through their Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA), the women have nearly doubled their collective savings in just two years growing from their first year's achievements to more than LRD 400,000 in savings. But the real success story is not the amount saved. It is what those savings have made possible.

Today, members are investing in cassava farming, palm oil production, and other small businesses that are strengthening household incomes, improving food security, and creating greater financial independence for their families.

The group is made up of women whose journeys reflect remarkable resilience. Many are former practitioners of female genital mutilation (FGM) and survivors who have chosen a different path, one rooted in dignity, opportunity, and community leadership. Today, they proudly serve as Change Champions, inspiring others to embrace safer and more inclusive futures.

Their transformation began through ActionAid Liberia's Just and Equal Communities (JEC) Project, implemented in partnership with the Liberian Women Empowerment Network (LIWEN). Recognising that ending harmful practices requires sustainable alternatives, the project invested in economic empowerment by supporting former FGM practitioners and vulnerable women with livelihood opportunities, financial literacy, and Village Savings and Loan Associations.

Rather than leaving women without economic options, the program helped them build new sources of income that protect both their livelihoods and the rights of women and girls in Gobah Town.

What started as a small savings group has since grown into a platform for mutual support and economic resilience. Members now use their savings to expand businesses, support their children's education, respond to family emergencies, and provide loans that help other women start or grow income and are not in returning loaning money to other women in the town.

ACTIONAID LIBERIA SUPPORTS THREE YOUTH TO THE CLIMATE JUSTICE ACADEMY IN TANZANIA



ActionAid Liberia has strengthened its investment in youth leadership and climate justice by supporting three young Liberians to participate in the Climate Justice Academy in Arusha, Tanzania, under the SPA-II Climate Justice Program.

Selected from a competitive pool of more than 100 applicants, the three young climate leaders travelled from Liberia to Tanzania for the intensive one-week academy, joining other emerging climate justice advocates to deepen their knowledge, strengthen their leadership and build practical skills to drive climate action in their communities.

Their selection reflects the growing determination and potential of young Liberians to take a leading role in addressing the climate crisis and advocating for solutions that put people, rights and justice at the centre. Throughout the academy, participants explored climate justice and human rights, advocacy and communication, negotiation and leadership, and project planning for climate solutions.



A key objective of the training was to move participants beyond understanding climate change only as an environmental issue. They were supported to examine the climate crisis through the lenses of social justice, human rights and intersectionality, including how

its impacts are experienced differently by women, young people and communities already facing poverty, inequality and other forms of vulnerability.

The academy further equipped participants with practical skills in climate justice activism, communicating effectively on climate issues, advocating for change, designing and planning initiatives that can respond to climate challenges within their communities.



It's a fact that the impacts of climate change are experienced differently by women, young people and communities already facing poverty, inequality and other forms of vulnerability. The training further equipped these three young people with practical skills of how to continue sustained advocacy.



Supporting the participation at the Academy is part of ActionAid Liberia's broader commitment to

building a new generation of informed, confident and skilled climate justice leaders. The initiative aligns with Priority 3 of ActionAid Liberia's Country Strategy Paper III (2024–2029), which focuses on Climate Justice and Resilient Livelihoods. Through this priority, AAL works with communities, particularly women, young people and smallholder farmers, to strengthen resilience to climate change, promote sustainable and agroecological livelihoods, advance environmental and climate justice, and ensure that people most affected by the climate crisis have a voice in decision-making.

Together, Change Takes Root

Across Liberia, women are organizing, communities are sustaining local solutions, and young people are leading the call for climate justice. These stories remind us that lasting change is built through local ownership, collective action, and equal rights.

Stand with communities. Support women's rights. Invest in climate justice.

ActionAid Liberia remains committed to a just and equal future for all.



FOLLOW US

Facebook: ActionAid Liberia

X: AAL Liberia

Instagram: actionaid_liberia

CONTACT US

info.liberia@actionaid.org