

2026 National Cultural Festival under the Just and Equal Communities Project (JEC)

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)



What is ActionAid and the Just and Equal Communities Project (JEC)?

ActionAid Liberia (AAL) is a human rights and social justice organization operating in Liberia since 1997 to advance the rights of women, children, young people, excluded and marginalized communities and shift the development paradigm to one that is people-centered, utilizing our human rights-based approach (HRBA) and an intersectional feminist analysis across all programs, campaigns, policy, advocacy and partnerships. In taking sides with the most excluded, this has meant that AAL is often present in rural and physically hard to reach communities. AAL's interventions and advocacy are aligned to our solidarity with the struggles of the communities and groups we work with. We are known for a non-negotiable stance on human rights, especially as it pertains to the rights of women and the most excluded in the Liberian society.

Implementing the Just and Equal Communities Project (JEC), Action Aid Liberia (AAL) aims to serve as an ally to people's struggles and demand for a just, equitable and inclusive Liberian society in which every person enjoys the right to a life of

dignity and freedom from discrimination, sexual violence, injustice and poverty in Liberia. *Just and Equal Communities*, envisions to promote access to sexual and reproductive health rights information and services of young people, sexual minorities and other marginalized groups in 30 communities in five counties, Bong, Gbarpolu, Grand Gedeh, Margibi, and Montserrado. Guided by feminist analysis and a Human Rights-Based Approach, the project seeks to promote access to comprehensive sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) and services and consequently, improve the socio-economic status of young women and men, sexual minorities and other marginalized groups in Liberia.

The fulfillment of SRHR is central to ensuring that young people are able to gain education, make healthy and informed decisions about their sexual health and well-being, independently assert their reproductive choices, and participate effectively in social, economic and political life. Access to SRH rights and services are also key to address the Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV); exploitation, abuse and the discrimination young people faced based on HIV status, disability or their sexual orientation or gender identity.

The Just and Equal Communities contributes to increased awareness of SRHR, Harmful Traditional Practices and prompt shifts in individual and collective attitudes on SRH. It draws on lessons learned from previous programs on SRHR, SGBV and ongoing interventions targeting young people at communities and national levels.

What is the National Cultural Festival?

The National Cultural Festival now in its 3rd year is a national celebration organized by ActionAid Liberia and partners under the Just and Equal Communities (JEC) Project to celebrate Liberia's positive cultural heritage beyond FGM/FGC while promoting the empowerment and protection of women and girls. The festival establishes working relationship with the Rural Women Network to support on community level awareness with families of FGM practitioners and other community dwellers including men and women. It also showcase success stories of from practitioners who have transitioned to more sustainable credible livelihood and who are now promoting and protecting girls while at the same time upholding those rich culture practices that advance communities.

What is the Scope and Methodology of the Festival

The collaborative Festival will be celebrated through cultural exhibition of arts, dance performances, displaying the uniqueness of cultural heritage by each county before judges panel, and the awarding of winners.

Scope of Work

- Collaborate with Rural Women Structures and the National Traditional Council at county and national levels (Ministry of Local Government, Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, and JEC Partners).

- Engage Cultural Practitioners: Involve cultural practitioners from the 50 project communities to participate in the festival.
- Raise Awareness: Focus on harmful social norms, stigma, and discrimination against key and vulnerable populations.
- Engage Leaders: Involve political, social, religious, and community leaders to influence social perceptions and improve SRH services.
- Showcase Positive Practices: Highlight county-specific positive cultural practices, performances and handicraft work.



When and where will it take place?

Saturday, August 1, 2026, beginning at 10:00 a.m. at the Samuel K. Doe Sports Complex Gymnasium, Paynesville.

What is this year's theme?

Our Culture, Our Pride: Empowering Women and Girls.

Is attendance free?

Yes. Attendance and registration are free.

Who can attend?

Everyone, families, students, youth groups, cultural organizations, artisans, government institutions, civil society organizations, and the general public. People who have businesses to exhibit or showcase at the event can attend. But they have to be at the venue on the even to the even to set up their sale spot. No alcohol sale will be allowed.

What can visitors expect?

Traditional dance, storytelling, arts and crafts, cultural exhibitions, food, educational displays, spoken word, community dialogue, speeches and remarks, live performances and delicious Liberian dishes (food), sales of traditional fashion, country cloths.

Why is the festival important?

It celebrates Liberia's cultural diversity while promoting positive traditions, gender equality, alternative livelihoods and awareness about ending harmful practices affecting women and girls. It also mostly showcases the work and impact of ActionAid and Partners working on the Just and Equal Communities project (JEC) across the 5 counties in which the project has been implemented. The stories are stories from former FGM practitioners, survivors, communities, and stories of local authorities.

Who organizes the festival?

ActionAid Liberia in collaboration with DOMAFEIGN, NATPAH, LIWEN, WOCDAL and SAIL.

Can artisans and exhibitors participate?

Yes. Cultural groups, artisans, Poets, and exhibitors are encouraged to register and showcase their work.

What rememberable can I take away physically from the Festival?

Beautiful Liberian Country cloths made at the Traditional Arts School in Gbarma-Gbarpolu by former FGM practitioners (Change Champions) and survivors, and the women from Po-River, Kamara town will be on sales at very reasonable prices.



How do I register?

It's simple and free, Registration is done online through this official registration link
<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSd25AdZp-1nm0MLN1j6GrSG73uPTOPQ0h2hC5lUbMhxnknXZg/viewform?usp=publish-editor>

Who can I contact if I have any further question who do I contact?

Call ActionAid Liberia Head of Program or Festival Lead on the following contacts:
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Visit ActionAid Liberia Web [www.https://liberia.actionaid.org](https://liberia.actionaid.org)