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OUR VISION

A just, equitable and sustainable world in which every person enjoys the right to a life of dignity, freedom from poverty and all forms of oppression.

OUR MISSION

To achieve social justice, gender equality, and poverty eradication by working with people living in poverty and exclusion, their communities, people's organizations, activists, social movements, and supporters.

OUR JOURNEY

"I AM HAPPY TO SHARE WITH YOU THROUGH THIS JOURNAL AND GIVE YOU AN UNDERSTANDING OF WHY WE DO WHAT WE ARE DOING"



Elizabeth G. Johnson- AAL Country Director

THE PAST, PRESENT, AND THE FUTURE

Established in Liberia in October 1997, just at the beginning of the second Liberian civil war.

ActionAid Liberia (AAL) continues to fight for justice and equality by promoting human rights. Contributing to the Government of Liberia's Vision 2030, which seeks to create a society in which every citizen enjoys a happy, fulfilling lifestyle complemented by a standard of living that provides a safe and secure environment for families and access to public services including health care and education, AAL continues to work with the diverse stakeholders, donor communities and government through relevant line ministries and agencies.

We started as a humanitarian organization servicing cross boarder initiatives in Grand Cape Mount and later in Lofa, Grand Gedeh, and RiverGee Counties. During the period, we built schools in some of the mentioned counties, and in some, we renovated schools. We built a total of 500 houses in a refugee camp, in the place known as Greater Monrovia. Because of the war, most homes were destroyed, and those who survived migrated.

In 2010, AAL transformed from a humanitarian to a development organization, strengthening our human rights-based approach to the communities, with Gbarpolu being the first county to be at our service.

Today, AAL has expanded to 14 Counties in Liberia with four offices in Montserrado, Bong, Gbarpolu, and Grand Gedeh. Our Head office is headquartered in Tarr town, Old Road in Monrovia, the Capital City of Liberia.

We are grateful to have embedded Sexual Harassment, Exploitation, Abuse, and Safeguarding principles to protect our beneficiaries, at-risk adults, partners, and staff members. We have also embedded Feminist principles to continue harnessing inclusiveness and power transformation across all our project communities, grooming more women into leadership roles.

ActionAid Liberia is one of the leading organizations in Liberia on women's rights and gender equity and equality with government and community recognition. We are known for a non-negotiable stance on women's rights and all the most excluded in Liberian society.

By reading this article in this Journal, I hope you will better understand who we are and what we stand for. As you journey with us in this Journal, I wish you all the best in your workplaces.

In appreciation,

Elizabeth G. Johnson

ENSURING SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH SYSTEMATIC RESPONSE

In 2023's first quarter, our Program Quality, Learning, and Management (PQLM) Unit visited the project communities in the Western part of the country. Looking back over two years, since some projects phased out, the team examined the sustainability of three projects across three communities in Gbarpolu County: Child Sponsorship Project (CSP), Strengthening the Agency of Young Women in Peace Building Process and Land Tenure in Liberia, and the Transformative Implementation Framework (TIF) Project.

Our work has resulted in empowered communities determined to sustain the gain to free themselves from the cycle of poverty and exclusion. Despite the impact of recent shocks – COVID-19 and the Russia-Ukraine war, our communities are more determined to sustain the gains made so far.

JEC SRHR NETWORK LAUNCHES “DIGNITY KITS FOR ALL WOMEN PRISONERS IN LIBERIA”

"It is our wish that we fundraise more than enough, to cater to all women prisoners in Liberia"

*[Garmai T. Yarsiah
SRHR Network Lead]*

Happy International celebrations of Menstrual and Hygiene Management Day on the 28th of May.

The Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights Network (SRHR) has embarked on a year-long “Pad for women prisoners 2023 campaign” across 15 counties of Liberia. The month-long campaign aims at fundraising in cash or kind donations to purchase dignity kits for all women prisoners in Liberia. The dignity kits comprise; Disposable Sanitary pads, 3-yard Lappa cloth, Scissors, Chlorine, Dettol, powder, and bathing soap. The items promote a safe menstrual and hygienic period.

This campaign comes as a result of 2022's intervention of four-week-long awareness through talk shows on the importance of Sexual Education. The intervention climaxed with the distribution of the dignity kits to South Beach Prison in Monrovia and [the demand to remove](#) the tax on Sanitary Pads, making them accessible and affordable to women and girls who need the pads.

SRHR network comprises young women from various organizations under the Just and Equal Communities project funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA).

HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

The recent Windstorm crisis on the 12th of February 2023 in the Gbarquita community destroyed 100 homes and left more than 300 women, including children, homeless. Watch the assessment and our intervention approaches here for a [short video](#).

WOMEN IN HUMANITARIAN CRISIS

How Naomi Pewu is coping following the devastating impact of the 12th of February 2023 Windstorm in Gbarquita community

Women are disproportionately affected by disasters and bear the burden of caring for children and the aged and rebuilding households. The Gbarquita community in the Bopolu District of Gbarpolu county was hit by the windstorm of 12th February 2023. At the storm's end, over 100 houses had their rooftops destroyed in the community

Naomi Pewu, a 42-year-old woman, is one of the many young women left homeless by the devastating impact of the windstorm and rainfall in the Gbariquita community. To worsen this, Naomi had her business stock looted by some unscrupulous residents who pretended to be helping her transfer her goods to a safer place. Residents confirmed that the storm caught them unaware. The vicious storm descended on them when they were having a community meeting.



Naomi displays her empty fridge as a result of looting.

When the rain ended, rooftops were blown away, with 100 houses affected. Among the houses, Naomi's shelter was brought down to the ground.



Gbarquita residents help Naomi to rebuild her house from scratch

**I AM DEVASTED,
DEPRESSED, AND
SICK. I CANNOT EVEN
BOAST OF LRD20
NOW. BEFORE I USED
TO SELL AND HAVE
MY OWN MONEY.
-NAOMI PEWU**

"After the storm ceased, it was getting dark; I ran to the shop, and opened it to take out all the goods to a safer place. I called for my husband's attention, and a group of men followed him to give a hand. They took enough of each of my stocks and disappeared into the thin darkness. I was confused could not chase after them. Most of my stock was stolen rather than destroyed." she asserted.

Despite the pains of losing a home and her livelihood, hope and the resilience to start over again were seen in Naomi following AAL's interaction with her and other women in the town. As part of its feminist response, ActionAid provided Sexual Reproductive Health Rights training on the use of disposable sanitary pads and distributed the pads to a total of 371 women and girls. It also distributed a Cash Basket of US\$150 per affected household.

AAL is committed to supporting communities to rebuild their lives following emergencies and disasters and is guided by AA Humanitarian signature in emergency response.

POWER SHIFT AND WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

GIRLS IN FARWENTA REDUCE GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

As a result of livelihoods training for girls in Farwenta, community dwellers have stopped walking long distances to Bopolu, the City of Gbarpolu County

As a result of the soap-making training for Farwenta young women, community dwellers are benefiting from the soap that their own children produce in their own town. The soap group comprises 25 members (two men, two women, and 21 girls attending high school in the city). The group produces; solid round soap, bar soap, and powder soap. It also produces chlorine detergent.



Farwenta Soap making members

“We no longer walk long distances, and our girls are safe from gendered violence,” asserted Farwenta Women

Education and Motivation

“For us, this has become our focus second to our studies. We are proud of ourselves. This project has made education meaningful as we now understand that to run a business, we need to be able to read, write and understand basic accounting. We no longer worry about the soap to keep our uniforms clean”

The detergent production has provided vast advantages to Farwenta, including keeping the households clean, washing laundry, and sanitizing the bathrooms. The commodities are accessible, and available at an affordable price making the supply-demand to rise.

The soap project has also lessened parents' worrying over their girls' safety. from walking up to 30 or 45 minutes to Bopolu City to buy home commodities, including soap. Walking such distances, sometimes unaccompanied, makes the girls vulnerable. With the skill of soap making, chances of gendered violence have been reduced.



Granules of soap ready to be grated and sieved into powder soap

The soap project for girls is a livelihood initiative under an 18-month-long project titled; "Strengthening the Agency of Young Women in Peace Building Process and Land Tenure in Liberia." The project focuses on building young women's capacity in conflict mediation skills in peace-building processes and land occupation in Liberia to be the agents of peace in their communities. The project is implemented in Sinoe, Gbarpolu, Margibi, and Bong Counties counties.

SHIFTING POWER TO WOMEN THROUGH STRATEGIC MALE PARTNERSHIP

The story of Valarence B. Sirleaf, Town Chief of Mulbah Town.

"It was easy for me to grant permission to the women to do their peanut farming, because I already had vast knowledge and understanding on AAL's approach of empowering women. My wife is also part of this group and doing well both in the town and the house" noted Valarence."



At 35, Valarence V. Sirleaf is now the Town Chief of Mulbah town. He had always lived in Mulbah Community. At the age of 19, he started to participate in a Child Sponsorship program funded by ActionAid Liberia. Since then he never looked back. Each time that training is held in his community, he would voluntarily attend. This practice has raised his consciousness about rights, and AAL works with the communities.

His interest, passion, and willingness towards community development earned him the respect and trust, of the Mulbah community members. As a result, he was elected as the Town Chief. A position he has held for two terms, with his two-year term ending in December 2023

Valarence has expressed his commitment to advancing women's and girls' rights in his community. He acknowledged AAL's work on empowering women with knowledge in family planning, children's rights, gender-based violence, referral pathway, and case management as fundamental life skills and knowledge communities should obtain.

I do testify that the programs for AAL have done the Mulbah community good. This town has harmony, peace, and respect with dignity. As long as I am part of this community, I will rally behind all town development that includes women's participation", he said.

Valarence has committed to working with AAL to support the town's women and young people in all community development programs. He also committed to helping women's leadership and noted the importance of obtaining modernized tools and more seedlings to expand the women's farm.

Through deliberate actions and targeting, AAL is strategically engaging men and boys toward shifting power to women and girls. With male champions like Valarence, women's rights advancement will be upheld and promoted at community levels.

WOMEN LEADERSHIP AND AGRICULTURE

The story of Mulbah community



CS Mothers weeding at the farm

It is about one year since the Child Sponsorship (CS) program was phased out of Liberia. Child Sponsorship Mothers in Mulbah's town have embarked on group farming following the CS Phase-Out process. AAL provided the women with livelihood training, including the Village Saving Loan Association, as an exit strategy under the CS project.

After AAL's training on VSLA, we received a grant of one thousand united states dollars. We agreed collectively to use the money for group farming. We have two hectares of land that were given to us by our town chief. We manage the ground, and we are grateful for this decision".

[Mulbah Community Women]

The women anticipate harvesting one ton of peanuts in August 2023 and selling them to get money. The women will use some of the money to pay school fees for children in need in Mulbah town as a continuation of the CS program.

Challenges

Despite the excellent work on the farm, women noted that they face challenges with peanut seeds to complete planting on the farm. The lack of modernized agriculture tools has lowered their efforts to expand the farms. The availability of modernized tools will enable them to expand their farm and yields. They also noted the need to fence their farm so animals like the Groundhog will not enter to destroy the plants. Mulbah CS mothers have a total of 30 members. They work on the group farm every Tuesday and Thursday, and then they attend to their individual farms on other days.



Left: Women farm displaying the recently planted peanuts, and on the right, CS mothers take a rest after the whole day work

OUR NEW PROJECT



From left: CAMILLINI Simona from the EU, and Laurent DELAHOUSSE EU Ambassador, Nkechi Ilochi-Kanny from ActionAid Liberia, during the launch

On the 17th of May 2023, AAL, together with co-partners, strategic stakeholders, Line ministries, and beneficiaries, launched our European Union-funded project titled "Strengthening Resilience of Key Population Groups and Human Rights Defenders in Liberia", at Sinkor Palace in Monrovia.

The project seeks to protect and empower the key population groups and Human Rights Defenders (HRD) in Liberia to live lives free of discrimination, violence, and stigmatization.



Group photo after the project launch

The action will focus on community work and advocacy and policy work at the national level. Lead agency ActionAid Liberia (AAL) and its two co-partners, Youth Alive Liberia (YAL) and Liberia Women Empowerment Network (LIWEN) will combine their expertise and experience to implement a 24-month project of measures that fulfill the key priorities of the call.

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DISCLAIMER

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