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Elizabeth Gbah Johnson
Country Director

Greetings;

I am pleased to present ActionAid Liberia's Newsletter (Volume 003).

This edition showcases ActionAid Liberia's strategic leadership and programmatic impact across climate justice, women's rights, youth empowerment, and community-led development. It reflects strong alignment with CSP III priorities and national development agendas while amplifying ActionAid's contributions to policy influence, grassroots transformation, and movement-building in Liberia.

During this period, ActionAid convened and influenced high-level national and regional dialogues, most notably the 2025 National People's Climate Justice Summit.

The summit mobilized over 1,000 delegates and produced a joint civil-society communiqué calling for decisive government action on climate finance, land governance, and agroecology reinforcing ActionAid's role as a leading voice in climate justice advocacy.

The newsletter also highlights investments in feminist movement-building and youth leadership. Through the launch of the Young Urban Women's Movement and digital safety initiatives, where more than 180 girls and young women were trained in SRHR, advocacy, and safe digital engagement, advancing the 16 Days of Activism agenda to end violence against women and girls.

Results from the Just and Equal Communities (JEC) Project demonstrate measurable community-level impact, with 73 youth-led campaigns delivered across five counties.

ActionAid also contributed technical expertise to the review of the draft Girls and Women Protection Act, reinforcing its position as a trusted partner in legislative reform to end FGM and harmful practices.

Through the Liberia Women Empowerment Project (LWEP), over 1,000 beneficiaries were reached with GBV and social-norm change interventions, supported by grievance mechanisms and women-champion networks that promote sustainable empowerment.

RECOUNTING IMPACTS

OVER 1,000 DELEGATES CONVERGED FOR THE 2025 CLIMATE SUMMIT WITH RENEWED CALLS FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE



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- 2025 National People's climate Summit
- Liberian Climate Activists Assess COP30 Outcomes
- Urban Young Women Movement Launched, 100 trained
- The JEC Impacts Highlight
- Liberia's Women Empowerment Project in focus
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- Stories of Change



The summit followed the inaugural national climate justice summit held in late 2024, which at the time set an ambitious agenda to scale agroecology, accelerate renewable energy, and advance people-driven climate finance.

As such, this 2nd people's national climate justice summit sparked deeper engagement between civil society and key government agencies, all geared towards strengthening domestic resource mobilization to tackle the growing effects of climate change.

CALL TO ACTION & COMMITMENTS

The 2025 National People's Climate Justice summit saw over a thousand delegate from across Liberia, and the West African region (Nigeria and Sierra Leone) in attendance. It ended with over thirty leading civil society organizations uniting their voices to call for a stronger people-centered climate action that is just. Their position was contained in a joint communiqué that was presented to the government of Liberia.

In the joint communiqué, which include several counts, ActionAid and Liberian civil societies outlined a range of concrete demands and commitments to advance climate justice, equity, and sustainable domestic resource mobilization for just transition.

The communiqué was officially presented by the head of the National Civil Society Council of Liberia, Loretta Pop-Kai, who then turned it over to the government of Liberia. Key among the demands, delegates urged reforms to land governance, called for investment in agroecology, and urged the government to raise domestic revenue to fund Liberia's national climate actions and disaster response rather than relying on international donors funding. Read the communiqué [here](#).



LIBERIA ASSESSES COP30 OUTCOMES

AT THE NATIONAL PEOPLE'S CLIMATE JUSTICE SUMMIT

The Conference of the Parties (COP30) has come and gone, but Liberians at the National People Climate Justice Summit 2025 organized by AAL and CSOs took off time to review, discuss and give deep insights on the outcomes of COP30 and what those outcomes mean for Liberia.

During this panel discussion, stakeholders examined both the opportunities and unresolved challenges emerging from COP30.

ActionAid and stakeholders flagged critical issues ranging from climate financing, promises versus access and some of the inequalities at the global level when it comes to the distribution and availability of climate finances, and adaptation responses.

ActionAid Liberia's country director, Madam Elizabeth Gbah Johnson, reflecting on her experience at COP 30, shared her perspective on the importance of framing climate discussions from a people-centered approach.



"What we saw at COP was a space for intense advocacy, but we also recognized that the issues around climate change can no longer be addressed from a top-down approach," Johnson said. "It must be from the people's perspective, focusing on the most vulnerable – women, youth, and marginalized communities."

She emphasized the concept of a just transition, a key focus at COP 30, explaining that it is critical to ensure that any climate action taken is must be equitable and inclusive. "When we talk about just transition, we are referring to a shift that prioritizes vulnerable groups. It is not just about addressing climate change but ensuring that those who are already marginalized and mostly affected are part of the solution," Elizabeth told delegates at the summit.

Speaking on the issues of climate finance, the technical lead at Green Future Initiative Platform, Sylvia Diamon Dorbor described access to climate finance remains a major stumbling block for African Countries, especially the developing and local income countries such as Liberia.

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BUILDING YOUNG WOMEN'S MOVEMENT, AAL LAUNCHES YOUNG URBAN WOMEN'S MOVEMENT



Over 80 Girls and Young Women understanding sharpened about feminism leadership, and human rights issues

As part of AAL Country Strategy Paper (CSP-II) which aims to strengthen feminists' leadership across the organization with a strong emphasis on gender-sensitive policies, and inclusive work environment, the training empowered, educated, and supported 83 young women in their learning journey while also fostering the growth of a vibrant network of young women.

In December, ActionAid Liberia officially launched the Liberia's chapter of the Young Urban Women's Movement and was combined with the training of least 83 girls and young women in several critical advocacy and human rights issues including digital safety and protection. The launch and training were in commemoration of the 2025 16 Days of Activism in which ActionAid Liberia held series of activities including a two-day capacity building training.

The two days capacity building training took place at the Liberia Baptist Theological Seminary Youth Center from November 27 to 28, bringing together some of Liberia's great women's rights defenders, and feminists facilitating.

AAL's Young Urban Women's Movement Capacity training enhanced the skills and capacity of young women in the areas of sexual and reproductive health and rights, movement building, digital safety, and a lot more topics among others.

The two days training highlighted key critical topics such as: Reproductive Justice and Bodily Autonomy titled "Decolonizing Power, Reclaiming Choice, advocacy and feminism, team building, understanding movement building around Advocacy for Policy and law: Context of the Draft Public Health Bill. [Learn More](#)



6 DAYS OF ACTIVISM

AAL ADVANCES DIGITAL SAFETY AMONG YOUTH

Over 100 youth gained Knowledge and skills in how to keep safe in digital Spaces & Report Cycle Violence

A major milestone achieved in 2025 was the training of over 100 young Liberians about digital safety and protection.

Participants were taught how to authenticate links on the internet before clicking, how to setup their two-factor authentication for the protection of their social media handles and the effects of online bullying and how they too can become champions of change.

At the day-long training, young people also got to learn about opportunities in the digital world, as well as the risks and ways they can prevent and protect themselves against cyber violence.

Then on December 5th a two-hour regional webinar training featured expert facilitators from ActionAid Nigeria, Sierra Leone, and Liberian professionals who offered practical guidance to participants about navigating online spaces safely.



The training was part of series of activities organized in celebration of the 16 Days of Activism which was under the theme: Unite to end Digital Violence Against All women and Girls.” While the national theme is “Unite to end Violence: Protecting all Women and Children in our Communities and Digital Space.”

The president of the Female Journalists Association of Liberia (FeJAL), Lisa Diasay spoke about the transformative potential of digital platforms for young women, while addressing the growing risks associated with digital engagement.

Adolphus T. Gblorso, Local Leadership and Capacity Strengthening Manager at Catholic Relief Services Liberia, informed participants about the education and other development opportunities, but at the same time scams that youths must watch out for in order to keep safe at all times.

AAL’s Child Rights Ambassador, Little Angie Sackey who delivered an inspiring spoken word, told young women that they have the power in their hands to change the world around them, but added that the best person to support them is themselves. Angie went on stressing that every women and girls deserve safety and protection, but if they remain silent how will they achieve it? she asked, but she called on them to stand up boldly for themselves.



RECOUNTING THE JUST AND EQUAL COMMUNITIES PROJECT IMPACTS



In 2025, under the Just and Equal (JEC) Community Program AAL was able to successfully reach and work with at least 439 former FGM practitioners across the 5 JEC counties who received support, education, and economic empowerment as they transition to a new form of livelihoods: now champions of girls and women protection.

The JEC does not only work with communities; it also drives meaningful change at the local level. This work closely aligns with Action for Rights and Social Justice of AA Liberia's "Action for Global Justice" Strategy 2028." Through this strategy, we are committed to strengthening social justice globally, eradicating poverty, and promoting gender equality. We prioritize working with the most vulnerable and marginalized communities, alongside organizations, activists, social movements, and supporters to advance lasting change

In 2025 the launch and introduction of the Village Saving and loan Association (VSLA) became a turning point and a beacon of hope for women economic empowerment and financial sustainability in rural and semi-urban communities. A total of **670** women benefited from the first phase of the economic empowerment (VSLA) raising cash of over **\$13 Million** (LRD **\$13,994,575** Amount in Words: Thirteen million, nine hundred and ninety-four thousand, five hundred -seventy-five.

In 2025, AAL surpassed it's planned target of twenty-nine(29) youth-led awareness campaign. Through strengthened intentional engagements, the organizations successfully established seventy-three (73) girls and boys forums and community-based campaigns Gbarpolu, Grand Gedeh, Bong, Margibi, and Montserrado.

Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) advocacy, strengthened community accountability, and improved access to youth friendly health services. Sustained outreach and community dialogues empowered adolescents particularly girls to access SRHR information and services with increased confidence, while targeted initiatives such as the Girl-to-Girl Talk seminar and localized media coverage expanded outreach to both in school and out of school youth.

A notable outcome during the period was the JEC support to Messengers of Peace (MOP) 7th Youth Summer Peace Camp for 100 youths that took place in Gbarnga, Bong County. [Learn More..](#)

ACTIONAID MOBILIZES LAWMAKERS AND CIVIL SOCIETY TO FAST TRACT-GIRLS AND WOMEN PROTECTION ACT



THE DRAFT BILL IS SEEKING TO OUTLAW FGM & CHILD MARRIAGE

As Liberia moves closer to outlawing female genital mutilation (FGM) ActionAid is playing a pivotal role in shaping the national conversation and strengthening legislative momentum around the proposed Girls and Women Protection Act.

Following president Joseph Boakai's submission of the draft bill to the legislature, ActionAid has intensified its support to civil society organizations and key lawmakers to ensure the proposed law is thoroughly reviewed, widely understood, and strategically advanced toward passage.

Through a series of high-level engagements and consultative forums, ActionAid is facilitated critical discussions on the draft legislation, drawing lessons from counties other countries that have successfully criminalized FGM.

By equipping members of the House of Representative with comparative insights, and technical guidance, AAL is also supporting advocacy and lobbying efforts aimed at building broader legislative consensus to finally end the harmful practice in Liberia.

The two days Expert and Legislative Consultation Review of the Draft Bill, AAL Presented a range of recommendations to the House of Representatives' Committee on Gender together the committees on Health, Judiciary, Internal Affairs, Child Development and social Services.



Presenting the recommendations our programs coordinator, Willet Salue first commended the Liberian President, Joseph Boakai, for taking the courage and exhibiting the political will by presenting a draft bill to end FGM and child marriage.

In the four-count recommendation, ActionAid called for legislative enactment, budgetary allotment, community education about the draft bill and protection for activists. She also called on the legislature to engage and take more concrete steps this time to officially ban FGM and other harmful practices that affect and limit Liberian girls and women beyond short-term prohibition.

LIBERIA WOMEN EMPOWERMENT PROJECT IN FOCUS



With ActionAid implementing Component 1b of the Liberia Women Empowerment Project (LWEP), between November and December 2025, AAL team led series of awareness activities across the LWEP Counties, enlightening and strengthening communities' understanding and knowledge about gender-based violence and as part of the 16 days of activism.

These GBV awareness activities were carried out across all 6 counties: Gbarpolu, Rivercess, Montserrado, Bomi, Grand Cape Mount, and Grand Gedeh reaching over 1,000 direct and indirect beneficiaries.

It was also done alongside the mapping of Influencers, identification of Women Champions, who would subsequently support and contribute to the implementation the LWEP project components 1, 2, & 3.

The goal at the end of the exercise was to identify, select, and train 300 influencers and women champions who will lead advocacy around women's rights, and look at the different social norms that negative affects girls and women to support with advocacy across the 3 components; component 1a & b, which has to do with social norms component 2a & b(citizen engagement and mobilization and component 3 a & b that focused on livelihoods and Village saving and Loan (VSLA).



During these activities, our team further conducted the orientation and replacement community for the establishment of the Grievance and Redress Committee (GRCs) in Rivercess.

The total of **41 communities** were replaced and mobilized across Grandeh, Rivercess, Gbarpolu, Grand Cape Mount and Bomi Counties.

COMMUNITIES SPEAK OUT DURING 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM IN GRAND GEDEH

“What We Learned Changed How We See the World”

communities in Blown Town, B’hai Tarway, and Dougee Towns in Grand Gedeh County gathered not only to listen but also to reflect, question, and learn. The awareness sessions, led by the Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection through its Liberia Women Empowerment Project (LWEP), sparked new conversations about digital violence, community responsibility, and women’s leadership that many participants say they had not previously considered.

For many, understanding digital violence was the biggest eye-opener. Participants learned that violence is not only physical but also occurs on phones, social media, and messaging platforms through insults, threats, non-consensual sharing of photos, and online shaming.

“I used to think violence only means beating somebody,” one male participant from Blown Town admitted. “But today I learned that when men insult women on Facebook or share their pictures without consent, that is violence too. This thing is happening every day and we never took it seriously.” James Farr a resident of Blown said promising to educate his peers about online violence



Blown Town: Hearing about Digital Violence for the First Time.

In Blown Town, discussions focused on recognizing different forms of digital violence and how they silently harm women and girls. Participants shared real-life examples from their own communities, WhatsApp messages used to threaten women, rumors spread online, and young girls being mocked in group chats.

Women participants said the session gave them the confidence to speak up.

“Now I know that what happens to us on the phone is not normal and should not be ignored,” a woman participant shared. “We learned that we have the right to report and to protect ourselves.” Annie Vaye said.

B’hai Tarway: Mapping Influencers and Women Champions



In B’hai Tarway, the learning delved deeper into community replacement and influencer mapping. Participants identified trusted voices, traditional leaders, youth leaders, religious figures, and respected women who can help change harmful norms around violence and online abuse.

WOMEN CHAMPIONS WERE OPENLY RECOGNIZED FOR THE FIRST TIME



A Shared Outcome Across Communities

Across all three towns, participants walked away with clear lessons: Digital violence is real, harmful, and preventable; Communities have the power to replace silence with action; influencers and women champions are key drivers of change. These engagements reinforced the Ministry of Gender's commitment, through LWEAP, to build informed, empowered, and responsive communities, where violence in all its forms is recognized, challenged, and reported.

One participant summarized at the close of the sessions saying: ***"This knowledge will not stop with us. We will take it back to our homes and our children."***

Through awareness, dialogue, and community ownership, the 16 Days of Activism in Grand Gedeh became more than an event; it marked the beginning of lasting change.

Participants learned that change comes not only from external initiatives but also from community members willing to speak out, intervene, and support survivors.

Dougee Town: Identifying Women Entrepreneurs and Local Solutions

In Dougee Town, the focus shifted to identifying women entrepreneurs and examining how economic empowerment is linked to protection from violence. Participants noted that financially independent women often have stronger voices at home and in the community.

Women shared ideas on small businesses, savings groups, and how entrepreneurship can reduce vulnerability, both offline and online.

"When a woman can stand on her own, people respect her more," a female participant noted. "This session helped us see that empowerment and protection go together."



Participants learned that change comes not only from external initiatives but also from community members willing to speak out, intervene, and support survivors. A female participant in a remark said, ***"This session helped us see that empowerment and protection go together."***

As a result of the awareness, and the dialogue, in Grand Gedeh the session became more than an event; it marked the beginning of reorientation of residents' minds.



WHEN THE MARKET BECAME A CLASSROOM: UNPACKING DIGITAL VIOLENCE IN GBARPOLU

During the 16 Days of Activism, a powerful shift took place across Bopolu District in Gbarpolu County, as community members gathered to confront a form of violence many had never considered as violence- digital violence.

The market-centered awareness campaign, held in Bopolu and surrounding areas, reached more than 20 towns within the district and extended to neighboring towns in other districts of Gbarpolu County.

Through open dialogue and practical examples rooted in daily rural life, facilitators unpacked what digital violence looks like beyond smartphones and social media buzzwords, showing how harmful voice notes, non-consensual sharing of photos, online shaming, threatening calls, and the misuse of mobile phones can silently harm women and girls, even in remote communities.

FOR MANY PARTICIPANTS, THE SESSION WAS AN EYE-OPENER.

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The market-centered awareness campaign, held in Bopolu and surrounding areas, reached more than 20 towns within the district and extended to neighboring towns in other districts of Gbarpolu County.

“We thought violence only meant beating somebody,” shared a male resident from Bopolu. “But today we learned that using a phone to threaten a woman, spreading her picture, or insulting her on audio is also violence. These are things we were ignoring before.”

James Farr -Bopolu Resident

TRANSFORMING LIVES

STORIES OF CHANGE

From Harmful Tradition to Sustainable Livelihoods:

How Kamara Women 1st Village Saving Earned Them \$769,655 Thousand



Forty-five women from Kamara Town never imagined they would one day manage thousands of dollars, either as a group or individually. For many of them, financial independence once felt completely out of reach.

In Kpo-River, rural Montserrado County, change began through support from SIDA under the JEC program. In 2025 alone, the women raised \$769,655 Liberian Dollars through their Village Savings and Loan Association.

Ninety percent of the women in the village saving are former FGM Practitioners whom AAL refers to as "Change Champions" who have now transitioned out of the practice to now a sustainable livelihood source of income.

JEC PROJECT IS GIVING RURAL WOMEN ECONOMIC FREEDOM



In just their first year of participation, the beneficiaries, the majority of whom are FGM survivors and former practitioners describe this economic transformation as the first of its kind in their lives. Through savings, small loans, and income-generating activities, they are building confidence, stability, and new opportunities for their families.

For the former FGM practitioners in the group, the impact is especially profound. Having abandoned the practice, which was once treated as a source of income within traditional structures, they now have sustainable livelihood options that replace that dependency. What was once a money-making venture has been replaced with dignified, community-supported economic empowerment.

To date, the women of Kamara Town are not only managing money, they are managing change. Their story is one of courage, transition, and lasting transformation.



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