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President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf inaugurates the George W. Bush Bridge in Barclayville

Grand Kru, Liberia - In Barclayville, capital of Grand Kru County in Liberia, the George W. Bush Bridge today was inaugurated by President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf. As part of an attempt by the Liberian Government to reach out to the Counties, this project literally bridges the development backlog in the south-eastern part of the country.



President Johnson-Sirleaf, Ambassador Booth and Wendy MacClinchy inaugurating the George W. Bush bridge

The United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) with the support of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), through its Civil Military Coordination (CIMIC), Joint Logistic Operations (JLOC) and Civil Affairs Sections, implemented the construction work, which was led by the Ministry of Public Works of the Government of Liberia. This project was funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

UNMIL played a key role in preparing the terrain for the project, mobilizing the involvement of the local community and providing logistical support and coordination on the ground.

“I anticipate this project will become a metaphor for the collective efforts of the rural people of Liberia and its international partners – to build strong, stable and lasting bridges to the future” said Wendy MacClinchy, UNOPS Representative, speaking at the inauguration.

The bridge took a year to be completed at a cost of \$1.3 million US dollars. It created employment opportunities for a core team of one hundred Liberians. During the course of construction, hundreds of part-time workers were hired, including vulnerable groups of war-affected persons, physically impaired, and former fighters, supporting many communities in Grand Kru, Maryland and Sinoe Counties.



President Johnson-Sirleaf greets Barclayville residents

The County’s inaccessibility was of primary concern to its citizens as it led to a setback in the deployment of humanitarian agencies, the local economy and development as a whole. The George W. Bush Bridge is one of the first major infrastructure projects successfully completed within the first three months of the newly-elected Government of President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf.

Also present at the ceremony were the US Ambassador Mr. Donald Booth, UNMIL’s Director of Administration, Mr. Ronnie Stokes, the Minister of Public Works, Hon. Willis Knuckles, the Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs, Hon. Soko Sackor, officials of the US Embassy, and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and local Authorities.
