

UN Women Peace Hut Helps Business Women Grow



Women from Grand
Gedeh County

In the forested mining concession area of Tiama's Town in Grand Gedeh County, 45-year-old Mariama Kpah is utilizing knowledge acquired through the UN Women supported Peace Hut programme to expand her business.

In 2015, the mother of three who now trades in African fabrics, women's hair and rubber dishes was passionate about moving into cross-border trading but was afraid to venture because she did not understand the security and custom issues at the border and was also worried about the risks involved. "Before my participation in the Human Security Project, I used to sell in the local market in my village. I wanted to be a cross border trader but didn't understand the security issues at the border.

I had low self-esteem because I had no idea or knowledge about my rights as a cross border trader nor the security issues that many women in cross border trade face at the borders," explained Mariama. Sexual harassment of market women and extortion of money by border authorities are few of the many challenges that women who travel across Liberia's borders to trade face. Thanks to interventions by UN Women under the United Nations Joint Programme on Human Security, women cross-border traders in Liberia have benefited from numerous programmes to educate them on border regulations and to report all forms of

abuse by border authorities.

"When I participated in the Peace Hut training with women peace builders including attending regular peace hut meetings, I was able to understand my rights as a woman and what to do when my rights were abused. I begin to understand my rights and how to get justice."

As part of the Peace Hut initiative, Mariama and other women have also benefit from trainings in literacy and numeracy skills, Business Development and have received micro-loan opportunities through the Village and Savings Loans Association methodology to help them expand their businesses. "The Peace Hut in my village opened my eyes, and today, I am now crossing the borders to trade because I now have confidence as a trader and as a woman. Also, my business as a cross border trader has grown, and I continue to get mentoring and coaching services from the project. The UN Women supported Peace Huts are safe spaces for women at the community level which offer a range so services aimed a advancing gender equality and women's economic empowerment. According to Mariama, as result of the Peace Hut intervention many women and girls in her village are now reporting incidences of Sexual and Gender based Violence (ISGBV), Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA), Extortion and other serious issues that affect them.

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July 2016

United Nations Human Security Trust Fund Initiative

Monrovia

August 2016

Project Snapshot



FAO Supports Farmers In Improve Beekeeping



Project Brief

Although Liberia is no longer facing an acute humanitarian situation, nevertheless, according to the 2013 UNDP Human Development Index (HDI), she is still ranked as one of the Low Human Development Countries (LDCs). Humanitarian risks resulting from the prolonged conflict are still generating vulnerabilities among many segments of the population across the country. Poverty remains a serious challenge in the country with majority of the population surviving on less than US\$1.25 per day with the rural areas being most affected; unemployment stands at 77%, especially for young people (15-24 year old) according to LISGIS (2010 Labor Force Survey Report).

The project entitled “Human Security Initiative in the Most Neglected Communities with the Efforts by the UN Country Team in Liberia” emulates from the background that the four counties which accommodated large influx of Ivorian refugees and Liberians returnees, had already fragile border communities that were already marginalized and often neglected. This situation has caused the socioeconomic fabrics of these communities to be more vulnerable. Even though humanitarian assistance had been delivered to the region in the past, but the focus had been only on communities hosting refugees with no or little attention to communities not hosting refugees. As violence erupted in Cote d'Ivoire following the December 2010 post-election violence that encompassed the Ivorian border region with southeastern Liberia caused large influx of Ivorian refugees and Liberian returnees who were residing in the Ivory Coast due to the Liberia conflict. Below is a summary of the project’s beneficiaries, UN Agencies co-implementing, national counterparts and local Implementing Partners.

Project Summary	
Total Direct Beneficiaries	15467
Total Indirect Beneficiaries	774533
Total Population of the Targeted Counties of Intervention	790,000 people/170,000 families
Counties of Intervention	Nimba, Grand Gedeh, River Gee and Maryland Counties
Objective of the project	to enhance the human security of most vulnerable Liberian populations in the southeast region through adapting the value added approach of human security concept with “protection” and “empowerment” measures
Implementing UN agencies	FAO, WFP, UNFPA, ILO, UNICEF, UN Women and with the support of UNMIL
Implementing Partners	MoA, MoH, MoGCSP, Local government, Media CSOs including NGOs and CBOs.
Activities by agencies	FAO– lowland rice production, value addition to cassava, vegetable production and bee keeping ILO - Feeder road rehabilitation WFP - construction of grain bank and food distribution UNFPA/UN Women –SGBV UNICEF -Political, Health and community security
Project Duration	From August 2014 to July 2017 (36 months)
Total Budget	USD 4,196,338.08



Mandingo women dramatizing physical violence against women

The four NGOs namely: Rural Women and Girls Promoters for Sustainable Development in Nimba, Women and Children Development Secretariat in Grand Gedeh, Trauma Aid in River Gee and SEWODA in Maryland have been working successfully in 8 districts and 16 communities in the four project counties training community gatekeepers and volunteers in advocacy, awareness raising and Peer education. A total of 40 community gatekeepers (20 male and 20 female) have been trained in each county to conduct awareness in their communities. The community gatekeepers who are made up of influential leaders including traditional, religious, women and youth leaders are presently involve with: awareness creation using various models and approaches including GBV prevention through sports,

sensitization in churches and mosques and hosting of radio talk shows on GBV.

The awareness activities are held within up to ten catchment communities through traditional animators, sports and door-to-door approaches. Awareness creation are conducted on the different kinds of Sexual Violence (Rape, Sexual Exploitation, Gang Rape, Incest etc), Domestic Violence, Harm Traditional Practices (Force Marriage, FGM etc), Emotional Violence, Physical Violence, Persistence Non-Support, and Socio Economic Violence. The direct Beneficiaries of the project are 160 persons, with the Indirect Beneficiaries @ 100 person per community = 16,000. Continuation of community initiatives and the implementation of community action plans especially

after the close of the project period has been a serious challenge during past interventions. Therefore, learning from the lessons of the past, this project as a strategy incorporated vegetables and crop production training and farming as an income generating activities for the sustainability of the community initiatives. This intervention has been very successful especially in Nimba County. According to the Gatekeepers in Nimba, not only has the agriculture activities helped them in raising income to subsidize their expenses, example: transportation for raising awareness and follow-up of cases, purchasing of food for farmers consumptions etc. has also helped in making them a more closely netted group. The Karnplay Gate Keeper planted peppers in 2015 and were able to get 4 bags which was sold for \$4,000.00 per bag amounting to \$16,000.00LD and have started a new farm brushing project in Loelay for both cassava and vegetable. While, the Zor-gowee Gate Keeper planted peppers and Bitter Ball and were able to generated ten thousand (\$10,000.00 LD). With that income, they have selected new swamp site to develop and to produce rice. They have also decided to raise awareness in additional three communities this year. Additionally, the Zor-gowee Gate Keepers are partnering with local NGO working with them - RWGP, to cultivate 6 acres of farm land for the production of rice, eddoes, cassava and plantain in Zor-gowee.



The 16 days of activism celebration Zoegowee

UNFPA and Partners Skill-Up Efforts to Prevent SGBV



Open day awareness in Karnplay Community

Ensuring community ownership and participation in the comprehensive prevention, management and response to SGBV and harmful cultural practices including child marriage

Sexual violence particularly rape is a major issue in Liberia especially against girls below the age of 18 years. Data from the SGBV centers shows that a total of 1175 cases were seen by the one stop facilities in 2013, 1323 cases in 2014 with a total of 14 deaths resulting from rape and 1804 in 2015. According to the data, over 80% of the survivors are girls below the age of 18 years. The perpetration of Gender Based Violence (GBV) in Liberia cuts across almost all social, economic,

religious and cultural spectrums. It is sad to note that women under the guise of culture, religion and tradition have been socialized to accept, tolerate, keep silent and at times take blame for the abuses they suffer. In an attempt to reduce the prevalence of SGBV in Liberia, UNFPA with support from the United Nations Human Security Trust Fund Joint Programme and through partnership with the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MOGCSP) successfully recruited four local NGOs to work in the selected four counties (Nimba, Grand Gedeh), River Gee, Maryland) to strengthen community ownership and participation in the comprehensive prevention and management of SGBV. **Con't on page 6**



Religious leader listening during session

FAO Supports Farmers In Improve Beekeeping



FAO-supported farmers in Nimba County

Liberia is blessed with seasonal rainfall, flowering trees, honey bees and water that can be a clear indication that it has great potentials for sustainable, profitable and healthy beekeeping initiatives.

Under the United Nations Human Security Trust Fund (UNHSTF) initiative, the Government of Liberia through the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) working with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) introduced the improved method of beekeeping to farmers for income generation.

The UNHSTF is being implemented by key humanitarian actors including UN agencies, Government of Liberia and local implementing partners in Nimba, Grand Gedeh, River Gee and Maryland Counties. In Nimba, under the project objectives, FAO in collaboration with MoA is building the capacities of two farmer groups, the beekeepers and lowland rice producers.

In late June 2016, a team from FAO visited three project sites in Nimba County where farmers are engaged in beekeeping. Upon arrival at the project site, the head of the swamp/beekeeping team Madam Martha Yarn Belleh said: "We can boast about the relevance of this project in our lives because our families can turn to it as a major source of livelihoods." Madam Belleh added that "This is our first harvest since we started this beekeeping." She informed the team that they started with 13 boxes and four is ready for harvest. She further noted: "This beekeeping project will benefit us because it is profitable and easy to raise," adding that "FAO came and trained us in beekeeping and though it is our first time we find it easy to do and it's profitable." Madam Belleh also underscored the gender appropriateness of the project as "This

project is good for women and it will help us to help our husbands support the children. We are happy that FAO and the MOA came."

Also speaking during the visit, Mr. Ezekiel Freeman, FAO Beekeeping Consultant outlined the economic and nutritional benefits of beekeeping to farmers: "Beekeeping is an activity with low production cost; it is not labor-intensive and can generate high incomes." He emphasized the ease with which this enterprise can be blended with other farming activities. "Beekeeping can be easily integrated with other farm activities to add sources of income for a sustainable livelihood base." There are also positive externalities from beekeeping namely the pollination services which result in increased crop and improved product quality, and the fact that bees also produce wax which can be transformed into candles, skin creams, wood polish to generate extra income is good news for you the framers." Mr. Freeman explained that honey contains plenty of essential vitamins and minerals and can also be used as a medicine to treat sicknesses such as sore throat and can also help prevent bush fire.

The FAO Consultant also encouraged the farmers to continue with beekeeping because it will generate more income for support of their families. He said.

FAO and partners have involved project participants in intensive practical training sessions in beekeeping and management as well as marketing through Farmers Field School approach. Before the harvest, training was for the farmers in improved methods of beekeeping. From this first harvest beneficiaries are expected to see a good level of improvement in the lives of group members in terms of skills acquisition and income generation thus encouraging other people to embrace the enterprise.

FAO Conducts Business Management Training



Participants at the training in Neegbein, Nimba County

Over three hundred farmers from across four of Liberia's fifteen counties of Nimba, Grand Gedeh, River Gee and Maryland have acquired skills in Business Management and Marketing, thanks to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Government of Liberia.

The training is geared towards strengthening the agriculture-based livelihoods of farmers by increasing their income generating activities and thereby enabling them have access to better markets.

The three-day exercise took place simultaneously in Nimba, Grand Gedeh, River Gee and Maryland Counties. The objective was for farmers to acquire skills in business management to enable them respond to the resource-poor farmers for knowledge and the access to information as well as scale-up their farming schemes.

Saye Boayue, one of the training facilitators in Nimba County, described the exercise as a "rewarding venture" intended to improve the skills of the farmers in managing their own businesses. "If the farmers learn

how to manage their own businesses, they will have better income at the end of their sale." He stated that this process has been introduced to the farmers in order to motivate them through an improved method of farming.

Mr. Boayue who was trained by FAO as a Farmer Field School (FFS) Facilitator, recalled that "the business management and marketing training has helped other farmers to improve their business status by salvaging more money after their harvest." Also speaking at the end session, FAO National Monitoring and Evaluation Consultant/ Programme Interim encouraged the participants to take advantage of the exercise because it will boost their production skills and improve their livelihoods.

Mr. Jesse Yuan noted that as a major partner to the Government of Liberia, FAO stands ready to work with farmers to improve their agriculture skills. He said: "We are prepared to work with the government and its partners in making sure farmers have the necessary support to improve their farming skills."

UNICEF Working With Communities on HIV Prevention and Child Protection



SRHR training with Kwelee CBO in Zonituo

Since the inception of the Liberia Women Empowerment Network (LIWEN), to United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in collaboration with line ministries including the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MoGCSP) has intensified efforts to safeguard vulnerable children, promote the health of adolescents, and prevent Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV). In the four counties where the project is being implemented, UNICEF is working through local partner, the

In Nimba and River Gee, LIWEN has also conducted training with eighty-five beneficiaries living with HIV on drugs adherence.

UNICEF is supporting the MoGCSP and other line ministries to ensure vulnerable children are maintained in family based care and are protected from all forms of violence. Social Workers of the MoGCSP provide case management and family tracing and reunification support to children identified in need. In Grand Gedeh and River



UNICEF protecting children rights in River Gee

WFP Food Assistance to Vulnerable Farmers



WFP food distribution

The United Nations World Food Program (WFP) in a joint collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) under component 5 of the United Nation's Human Security Trust Fund for initiative in May 2016, distributed 127 metric tons of food items to thirteen (13) farming communities in Nimba, Grand Gedeh, Maryland and River Gee Counties. The communities benefited from the food supply included: Zontuo, Zayglay, Bunadin and Kpein in

Nimba; Zuajah, Gbarkeh and Teladee in Grand Gedeh, Coluso, Dorobogblaken, & Pleebo Zone A& B in Maryland and Gbarkeh, Jaybroken and Klaboken in River Gee Counties. During the distribution, the team could not reach to communities listed due to bad road condition. However, as the result of the situation, some communities received their supply to locations that were accessible to the WFP vehicle. For example, In Grand Gedeh County, the distribution team from FAO, MOA and

WFP met in Zuajah as a central point for the distribution. The pattern of distribution in Grand Gedeh was different from River Gee. In River Gee, Klaboken beneficiaries received their supply in Klaboken, and Gbarkeh farmers took delivery of their supply in putuken. Beneficiaries in Jaybroken, sent a representative to Fish Town to collect their supply due to the same bad road condition. Objective five (5) of the human security project is jointly implemented by WFP and FAO. Under this objective, two significant outcomes however are 6.4 metric tons of rice seeds and assorted hand tools for lowland rehabilitation procured and distributed to 550 lowland beneficiary farmers in all four counties. In Maryland, 300 received supply, in River Gee, 75 was distributed as well as in Nimba 100 benefited and Grand Gedeh received 75. 83 hectares of lowland rice have been cultivated in 13 communities and harvesting is ongoing. Impact will be reported at the end of harvesting.

ILO Road Rehabilitation Involved Rural Communities



ILO working with farming communities in Maryland County

The International Labour Organization (ILO) is collaborating with the Ministry of Public Works (MPW), the Ministry of Agriculture and other UN agencies including FAO and local implementing partners to strengthen the agriculture based livelihood capacity farmers under the

joint human security trust fund project. During the first quarter/ year of activities under the joint program, ILO through the Ministry of Public Works and the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) and partners created short-term job opportunities

for three hundred and fifty eight (358) beneficiaries from knowledge transferred in nine (9) communities within Maryland, River Gee, and Grand Gedeh Counties through the rehabilitation of 92.6 kilometers of road work. Based on the project impacted the lives of the various community dwellers to the local communities. It also improved the safety of those using these roads, and enabled farmers to bring their products to the market with moderate convenience. The International Labour Organization (ILO) collaborated with FAO in training several farmers in the project counties through peacebuilding and