

Liberia

Building Resilience of Youth, Women, and Vulnerable Groups through Social Protection Floor in Liberia using ICT

Background information

Realizing the promise of sustainable development in Liberia requires strategies that provide targeted support to those regions furthest behind to address growing inequalities that undermine national progress, stability and resilience. One of these regions is North-Central Liberia where the residents of Nimba, Bong and Lofa counties, particularly women and children, face deep-rooted and persistent challenges, including entrenched poverty, high levels of unemployment and informal employment, hunger and poor nutrition, and worsening rates of sexual and gender-based violence. These challenges have been compounded by ongoing civil strife, as well as two successive public health crises in the country in the form of the Ebola Virus outbreak and the COVID-19 pandemic, pushing these communities further off-course from achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Goals and objectives

The goal of the programme is to harness the potential of information and communication technology (ICT) and digital technology to build resilient food and social protection systems for the attainment of the SDGs for all. To this end, key objectives are to (i) increase access to digital innovation for women and youth in the target counties for community-driven food system planning, sustainable livelihoods, health services and community empowerment, and (ii) build local and community capacity, including through the Human Security Business Partnership (HSBP) for food systems planning, implementation and management, development of cooperatives, and livelihood diversification, with a focus on mainstreaming gender equality.



DURATION
May 2022 — May 2025



UN IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES
FAO, ILO, UNDP, UN Women, WFP



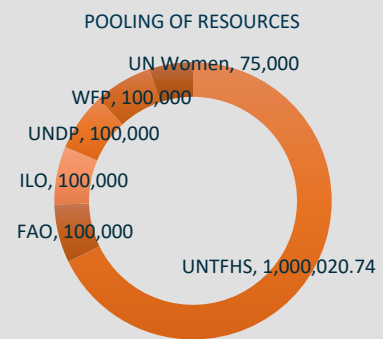
OTHER KEY PARTNERS
Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Youth and Sport, Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Cooperative Development Agency, Civil Society Organizations, Liberia Telecommunication Incorporated, Orange Liberia, International Telecommunication Union



BENEFICIARIES
1,308,914



TOTAL BUDGET
US\$ 1,475,020.74



Beneficiaries

The programme benefits the 1.3 million people residing in Nimba, Bong and Lofa counties through enhancing entrepreneurial opportunities, access to digital technology, food security, social cohesion, and greater peace and stability.

Applying the Human Security approach

While there have been ongoing interventions to advance sustainable development in Liberia following the end of the civil war almost 20 years ago, the Ebola and COVID-19 health crises demonstrated the fragility of the gains made and the instability of development that is not inclusive. To better safeguard recovery and future development progress, this programme addresses the root causes of vulnerability in some of the most marginalized counties, including the exclusion of women and youth from many formal employment opportunities, and the geographic and connectivity obstacles to advancing local development in rural areas.

By digging down to understand how these vulnerabilities create food and nutrition, economic and community insecurities that exacerbate disadvantages for women and youth, the programme identifies food systems development and social protection programmes as critical entry points that will promote positive outcomes in multiple aspects of people's lives. Moreover, it creates linkages between efforts to strengthen the policy environment through social protection with community-driven and technology-based solutions to expand opportunities and ownership of local development for mutually reinforcing actions that have greater potential to address the interconnected insecurities at the local level.

While leveraging the power and potential of ICT and digital technology will expand opportunities and access to knowledge, services and employment, it requires effective collaboration between the public and private sectors, the international community, non-governmental and community-based organizations. To this end, the programme is applying the Human Security Business Partnership (HSBP) framework to provide a mechanism for sustained dialogue across stakeholders, including local communities, to develop win-win initiatives for local economic development.

In a region still experiencing civil strife, the benefits of this type of multistakeholder partnership extend beyond enhancing economic, food and health security to strengthening social cohesion and providing neutral grounds for dispute settlement and collective planning. It provides a forum to strengthen dialogue between the local communities and critical public and private stakeholders, enabling local priorities and solutions to be upstreamed into national decision-making for sustainable development.



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