



CHAMPIONING AGRICULTURE: "GROW WHAT YOU EAT"

A vision for food security, jobs, and a stronger Liberia through sustainable agriculture.



STRENGTHENING LIBERIA'S DEMOCRACY:
HOW UNDP'S LESP+ HELPING BUILD A MORE

PAGE 37



HOW FRANCE'S AMBASSADOR ISABELLE LE GUELLEC HAS STRENGTHENED TIES WITH LIBERIA

PAGE 15



Hon. J. Alexander Nuetah, PhD.
MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA



ECONOMIC DIPLOMACY. TRADE. INVESTMENT:
BUILDING THE BRIDGE TO CAPITAL

PAGE 23



DISMANTLING LIBERIA'S DRUG CARTELS: THE FIGHT FOR A SAFER REPUBLIC

PAGE 70



COOKING ON THE EDGE: THE HIDDEN HEALTH RISKS OF LOCALLY MADE ALUMINIUM POTS

PAGE 62



National Port Authority

The Gateway to Liberia's Economy



About the National Port Authority of Liberia

The National Port Authority (NPA) was established by an Act of the National Legislature in 1967 and amended in 1970 as a state-owned corporation to manage, plan, and build all public ports in Liberia. The NPA system encompasses four ports:

Freeport of Monrovia: This is the largest and the main port within the Authority's network.

- Port of Buchanan
- Port of Greenville
- Port of Harper

The strategic vision for the NPA is to become a premier port in West Africa through partnerships with both the public and private sectors. By doing so, the NPA aims to strengthen the economy, improve international trade, and promote tourism and community development. The goal is to make our port services in Freeport of Monrovia, Bushrod Island Liberia efficient and effective for generations to come.



Our Mission

The Strategic Vision & Mission of the National Port Authority (NPA) is to become a premier Port in West Africa, Strengthening the Economy, Improving International Trade, and Promoting Tourism and Community Development. It also focuses on reducing cost of trade, maintain an efficient modern port facility in the MRU basin, create an environment that promotes, provide, and maintain safe sea Port operation for business transactions in the subregion.

Our Vision

The vision of the National Port Authority of Liberia is to be West Africa's leading and most trusted port system, driving trade competitiveness. This vision is a result of the NPA's strategic plan, which aims to reposition the authority as a driver of inclusive growth, trade facilitation, and infrastructure renewal. The plan is anchored on five strategic pillars and eight thematic priorities, including the decongestion of the Freeport of Monrovia, which currently generates 40 percent of NPA's revenue. The plan is valued at US\$550 million and is a critical step toward repositioning Liberia's ports as dynamic engines of trade and economic growth.

Editorial

TURNING AGRICULTURAL PROMISE INTO LASTING PROGRESS

Liberia's agricultural sector appears to be gaining the momentum it has long needed. The Ministry of Agriculture's latest progress report shows that, within two years of launching the Liberians Feed Yourselves Agenda, the country has moved beyond promises to tangible results. New policy frameworks have been developed, rice and cassava production has expanded, cocoa plantations are growing, farm-to-market roads are opening access to markets, and private investors are beginning to see Liberia as a destination for agribusiness.

These are encouraging developments. For a country that continues to spend millions importing food despite its fertile land, every step toward greater domestic production is a step toward economic resilience and food security. The government's focus on strategic value chains and agricultural modernization is the right direction.

But the report also delivers a sobering message. Progress is fragile. Without adequate funding, skilled extension workers, reliable rural infrastructure, and sustained political commitment, today's achievements could easily become tomorrow's missed opportunities. Policies alone do not cultivate farms; people, equipment, and resources do.

The Ministry's proposals—including recruiting more technical staff, expanding mechanization, and establishing an Agriculture Enterprise Development Bank—deserve serious consideration. Farmers cannot increase production if they lack access to financing, quality inputs, and technical support.

Agriculture has always been described as the backbone of Liberia's economy. It is time to make that description a reality. The gains recorded so far should not breed complacency but renewed determination. Government, development partners, the private sector, and farmers themselves must now work together to ensure that the Liberians Feed Yourselves Agenda becomes more than a slogan. It must become a lasting national success story—one measured not by reports and targets, but by fuller markets, stronger rural livelihoods, and a Liberia that increasingly feeds itself.



OUR VISION:

To redefine the Liberian digital landscape by bridging the gap between raw data and creative storytelling and Liberia's most trusted source of truth, fostering an informed and empowered society through uncompromising integrity.

OUR MISSION:

To deliver accurate, evidence-based reporting that holds power to account, provides a voice for the voiceless, and sets the golden standard for journalistic excellence in West Africa.

ABOUT US

Hard Facts Print & Electronic Media Inc. has been a trusted name in news publishing, delivering timely, accurate, and comprehensive journalism to our readers. With dedicated reporters and a passion for truth, we ensure every story matters.

From global events to local highlights, we bring life to news to keep you informed.

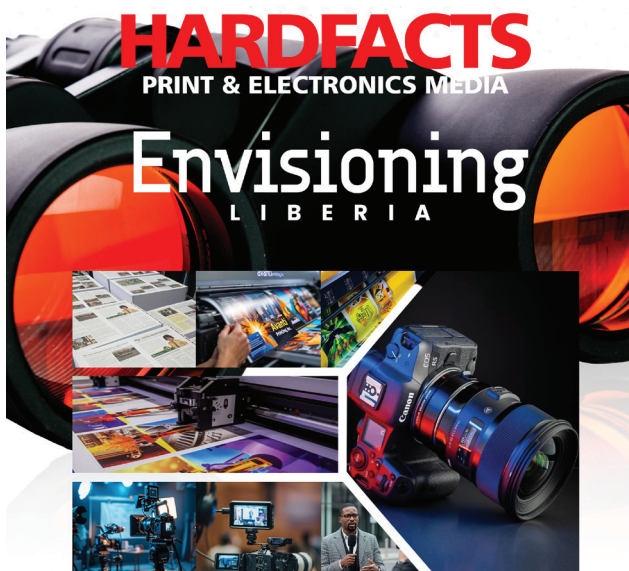
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Philip G. Nyantte, Sr.
Managing Publisher

About the Founder

Saywhar Nana Gbaa is a voice of conviction and vision in Liberia. Guided by a deep belief that Africa's oldest republic must rise to its rightful place as a continental leader, she champions dignity, accountability, and innovation as the pillars of national progress. She believes that Liberia is not only a nation with a proud legacy, but one destined to set the standard for democracy, unity, and advancement across Africa.

As founder and CEO of **Hardfacts Print and Electronic Media Inc.**, the publishing house behind *Envisioning Liberia Magazine*, Gbaa has built a platform that challenges complacency and sparks dialogue. *Envisioning Liberia* is entirely about brainstorming the country in a variety of positive ways. Societal improvements like human resource development, infrastructure improvement, a better economy, and so forth, are a few of several concerning factors that make this dream come true. In line with these goals, Saywhar Nana Gbaa's 'Envisioning Liberia' phraseology is not only a mere verbal expression, but has become the catchphrase of this vibrant magazine. The magazine serves as a call to action urging Liberians to embrace truth, take pride in their identity, and accept the collective responsibility of shaping a future worthy of their history.

Her journalism reflects courage and integrity, telling Liberia's story with honesty while inspiring citizens and leaders alike to rise above division. Beyond media, she brings her expertise as a diplomat and public affairs strategist to bridge divides, foster unity, and amplify Liberia's voice on the global stage.

Whether through media, diplomacy, or advocacy, her work is animated by a single purpose: to see Liberia thrive as a beacon of democracy and pride in Africa. For Gbaa, envisioning Liberia's leadership is not abstract; it is lived daily in her dedication to truth, accountability, and innovation. She calls on Liberians to embrace their national identity with confidence, to lead with purpose, and to honor the country's legacy by shaping a future that reflects its rightful status as Africa's oldest nation.



Sylvester M. Grigsby: A Historical Legacy of Publishing, Diplomacy and National Service

There are public servants whose careers are measured by the offices they occupied. Then there are those whose significance lies in the institutions they touched, the generations they influenced and the national conversations they helped shape.

Sylvester Mondubue Grigsby belongs to the latter category. His was a remarkable Liberian journey—one that moved through journalism and publishing, diplomacy, international representation, executive government and presidential service.

By the time of his death on August 9, 2025, Grigsby had accumulated more than four decades of public service and had become one of Liberia's most experienced diplomatic and governmental figures. The Liberian government described him as an esteemed statesman, venerable diplomat and distinguished public servant. Yet the historical significance of Grigsby's life cannot be fully understood through government titles alone.

His story is also the story of a publisher who believed in the power of independent journalism, a diplomat who represented Liberia abroad, and a statesman who carried decades of institutional memory into the highest levels of government.

The Publisher Who Entered History – Long before the Executive Mansion became the center of his professional life, Grigsby entered Liberia's media landscape.

In the 1980s, he helped establish the Sun Times Newspaper, an independent publication that emerged during one of the most politically difficult periods in Liberia's history. Accounts from members of the Sun Times family say Grigsby joined legendary journalist Rufus Mammah Darpoh in 1985 to establish the Sunrise Group Inc., publisher of Sun Times, following the closure of the Daily Observer. The new publication absorbed some journalists who had been displaced by that closure. That decision carries historical weight. The press was operating in an environment in which political authority, censorship, public opinion and freedom of expression were deeply contested.

Sun Times became part of a wider tradition of Liberian journalism that sought to give citizens access to information beyond official government narratives. According to accounts published after Grigsby's death, the paper covered governance, human rights, arts, entertainment and sports, while also providing employment opportunities for journalists and media workers. In this respect, Grigsby's publishing legacy deserves to be remembered alongside his diplomatic achievements. He did not begin his public career simply by speaking for government.

Journalism as an Education in Public Life – Publishing gave Grigsby an education that no diplomatic academy could completely provide. A newspaper publisher must understand people. He must understand public sentiment, political currents, competing interests and the importance of credible information. He must know how society responds to events and how government decisions affect ordinary citizens. Those skills would later prove valuable in diplomacy. The Publisher's audience was the Liberian public, the Diplomat's audience would become foreign Governments, the Statesman's audience would eventually include Presidents, Ministers, Ambassadors, international institutions and the Liberian people, the audiences changed and the essential discipline remained the same: Listen. Understand. Communicate. Persuade. That continuity provides an important lens through which to interpret Grigsby's career.

The Diplomatic Years – Grigsby's transition from publishing into government did not diminish his commitment to communication. It broadened its scale; He entered the diplomatic service in the late 1970s and subsequently occupied a succession of senior positions within Liberia's foreign-policy establishment. His assignments included Deputy Minister for International Cooperation, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs and Ambassador to Belgium and the Benelux countries.

His diplomatic career placed him at the intersection of Liberia's national interests and the international system. As Ambassador to Belgium, he represented Liberia in a European environment that was particularly important to Liberia's relations with the European Union and other international partners. His diplomatic accreditation also included Luxembourg, the Netherlands and the European Union institutions in Brussels. In 1993, he received the Grand Band of the Order of the Star of Africa, one of Liberia's highest honors, further reflecting the recognition he received for his public service. The significance of these assignments extends beyond protocol.

A Diplomat Through Liberia's Turbulence – Grigsby's professional life unfolded against some of the most consequential events in Liberia's modern history. He served during periods of military rule, political transition, civil conflict, international isolation, peacebuilding and post-war reconstruction. He worked under different administrations and political circumstances, yet continued to find a place within the machinery of the Liberian state. That continuity became one of his defining characteristics; he became an institutional memory.

The Art of Surviving Political Change – Liberia's political history has repeatedly tested the ability of public servants to distinguish loyalty to a government from loyalty to the state. Grigsby's career offers a fascinating example. He served under different political administrations and worked with leaders of varying ideological and political backgrounds. His longevity was therefore not merely a product of political affiliation. It reflected the value successive governments placed on his experience and knowledge; this is one reason his career deserves historical examination.

In a country where political transitions can produce institutional discontinuity, experienced officials can provide a bridge between administrations. Grigsby became one such bridge, his knowledge of diplomatic practice, international relations and government administration allowed him to carry institutional experience from one political era into another.

The Statesman Behind the Diplomat – Eventually, Grigsby's career moved beyond foreign affairs. He became Minister of State without Portfolio and later served as Minister of State for Presidential Affairs under President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf. Years later, President Joseph Nyuma Boakai appointed him again as Minister of State for Presidential Affairs, that second appointment was particularly significant. By then, Grigsby represented something rare in Liberian politics: a senior official whose experience extended across diplomacy, journalism, local administration and executive government.



CONTENTS

Executive Brief Ellen Crayton Anderson Page 8	
Liberia's Untapped Competitive Advantage Page 9	
A New Chapter for Liberia and France Page 11	
How France's Ambassador Isabelle Le Guellec has Strengthened Ties with Liberia Page 15	
Christian Wahblo Konneh: From the Shadow of War Page 17	
Liberia Pushes Ahead with Justice Reforms Amid Funding Page 19	
Amb. Mohammed M. Bah: The Diplomat Driving Liberia's Investment Story Page 21	
Economic Diplomacy. Trade. Investment: Building the Bridge to Capital Page 23	
Guardians of Truth: How Liberia's Witness Protection Agency is Giving Courage a Voice Page 27	
A Profile of a Dedicated Servant Leader from Qweikpala Page 29	
Agriculture Ministry Reports Major Gains, Seeks Stronger Backing to Sustain Sector Reforms Page 31	
Ministry of Education Steps up Efforts to get Children Back to School Page 35	
Strengthening Liberia's Democracy: How UNDP's LESP+ Helping Build a More Page 37	
King Suakoko, Reginald Goodridge Sr. Seeks New Paradigm for Liberia Page 40	
NPA Pushes Reform Agenda As Liberia's Ports Record Progress Page 42	
A Light Long Awaited: Why Buchanan Must Now Guard what Took 34 Years to Regain Page 44	
Uniting Grand Bassa: From Division to Sustainable Development Page 48	
Liberia's Silent Emergency: Bringing Mental Health Out of the Shadows Page 52	

Patriotism and Love for Country:
A National imperative for Liberia | **Page 55**

Solidifying Liberia's Future: Gender Ministry
Steps up Support | **Page 60**

Cooking on the Edge: The Hidden Health Risks
of Locally Made Aluminium Pots | **Page 62**

Liberia and Morocco: From Diplomatic
Ties to Economic Partnership | **Page 63**

Saudi Arabia and Liberia: A Partnership
that Moves Beyond Aid | **Page 66**

Liberia National Police: Building Trust in
a Changing Liberia | **Page 68**

Dismantling Liberia's Drug Cartels:
The Fight for a Safer Republic | **Page 70**

Building Liberia. Literally. The Sethi Brothers
Group's Three-Decade Journey | **Page 72**

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EXECUTIVE BRIEF

LIBERIA'S UNTAPPED COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE:

Why Our Diaspora Must be Central to **National Development**

By Ellen Crayton Anderson

Executive Summary

Thousands of Liberian professionals have acquired world-class expertise in technology, healthcare, engineering, finance, education, public administration, and other strategic sectors. Many are willing to return home or contribute remotely to strengthen national institutions. This brief recommends placing qualified Liberian expertise at the center

of national development while continuing to engage international partners where they add value.

The Opportunity

Executive Order No. 163 and Liberia's broader modernization agenda create an opportunity to build lasting institutional capacity. Sustainable transformation requires knowledge transfer, leadership development, and

intentional engagement of Liberian professionals alongside global partners.

Key Recommendations

- Establish a National Diaspora Experts Registry covering priority sectors.
- Require knowledge transfer and mentoring plans in major government consulting engagements.
- Ensure qualified Liberian professionals have meaningful opportunities to compete for leadership and technical roles. Develop partnerships among government, universities, the private sector, and the diaspora.
- Create fellowship and short-term executive service programs for diaspora professionals.
- Measure success by institutional capacity, workforce development, and long-term sustainability—not only project delivery.

Expected National Benefits

- Stronger public institutions
- Greater local capacity and skills transfer
- Improved digital government implementation
- Higher investor confidence
- Retention of institutional knowledge
- Development of the next generation of Liberian professionals

Call to Action

Liberia's greatest competitive advantage is its people. National development should intentionally place Liberian talent at the center of institution building while leveraging international partnerships to complement—not replace—domestic expertise.

LIBERIA'S UNTAPPED COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE:

Why Our Diaspora Must be Central to National Development

By Ellen Crayton Anderson

Introduction

Every nation reaches defining moments when it must decide not only what it wants to build, but who it will trust to build it.

Liberia stands at such a moment.

As our country seeks to modernize government, strengthen institutions, attract investment, and compete in an increasingly digital world, we must ask ourselves a difficult but necessary question:

Are we fully utilizing Liberia's greatest untapped resource—our own people?

Across the United States, Europe, Africa, and beyond, Liberians have built distinguished careers as physicians, engineers, technology executives, enterprise architects, educators, researchers, entrepreneurs, cybersecurity specialists, financial experts, and public administrators. Many are willing to leave established careers and comfortable lives because they believe Liberia is worth investing in—not only financially, but personally and professionally.

They return because they want to serve.

Building Institutions, Not Dependency

This is not an argument against international cooperation. Liberia should continue to welcome international partners and global expertise where they add value. The question is one of balance. When qualified Liberians possess the knowledge, experience, and commitment to lead, they should

be given meaningful opportunities to do so. National development is strongest when international expertise complements domestic capability—not when it unintentionally substitutes for it.

Every modernization effort should leave Liberia stronger than before by transferring knowledge, mentoring young professionals, strengthening institutions, and building long-term national capability.

From Policy to Practice

During the past several months I have spent in Liberia, I have observed both encouraging progress and persistent challenges. Executive Order No. 163 presents an important vision for coordinated digital transformation. But every Executive Order ultimately succeeds through implementation. Policies alone do not transform governments—people do.

Implementation requires leadership that aligns recruitment, procurement, partnerships, and institutional development with the broader objective of building Liberian capability.

A Different Definition of Patriotism

Many members of Liberia's diaspora have earned advanced education, professional certifications, and executive experience around the world. Many are prepared to return—not because Liberia offers greater financial rewards, but because it offers the opportunity to help build a stronger nation.

That willingness should be

recognized as a national asset.

A Legacy Worth Leaving

Roads will age. Buildings will require maintenance. Technology will eventually be replaced.

Strong institutions and well-trained people, however, continue serving a nation for generations.

Imagine a Liberia where universities partner with diaspora professionals, where young engineers, architects, AI specialists, cybersecurity experts, physicians, and public administrators are mentored by Liberians with global experience, and where every major project intentionally develops local leadership.

A National Call to Action

Liberia does not face a choice between international expertise and Liberian expertise. It should embrace both.

However, our own people must never become an afterthought.

Our diaspora represents decades of accumulated knowledge, global experience, professional credibility, and an enduring commitment to Liberia's success.

If we truly believe in building stronger institutions, creating sustainable development, and preparing Liberia for the future, then we must also believe in the value of Liberians who have prepared themselves to serve. Our greatest competitive advantage is not only found in our natural resources. It is found in the talent, resilience, and dedication of our people.

The question before us is not whether Liberia has the expertise to transform itself.

The question is whether we have the vision—and the courage—to fully embrace it.



*President Joseph Nyuma Boakai Sr. And
French President Emmanuel Macron*



A NEW CHAPTER FOR LIBERIA AND FRANCE:

Turning Diplomatic Friendship into Shared Prosperity

By HardFacts Magazine

Diplomacy is often measured in handshakes, official photographs and carefully worded statements. In Liberia, however, its real value is measured after the cameras are gone: whether international relationships translate into investment, jobs, skills, infrastructure and better opportunities for ordinary people.

That is why President Joseph Nyuma Boakai Sr.'s meeting with French President Emmanuel Macron in Paris on October 30, 2025, deserves attention beyond the usual diplomatic headlines. At the Élysée Palace, the two leaders held a working lunch focused on Liberia-France relations, development cooperation and Liberia's growing role in international affairs. The meeting also came during a broader effort to renew the framework of cooperation between the two countries.

At first glance, such a meeting may appear to be another routine engagement between heads of state. But the circumstances suggest something more consequential. Liberia is seeking to reposition itself

economically and diplomatically, while France possesses capital, technical expertise, development institutions and a powerful voice in global affairs.

The question, therefore, is not whether Liberia and France should remain friends. They already are. The more important question is what that friendship can produce.

President Boakai has been clear about how he wants Liberia's foreign relations to function. Just days before his Paris visit, he told newly accredited ambassadors: "We see diplomacy as a tool for progress and cooperation—not competition." He also said Liberia was ready to work with other governments to promote "shared prosperity, peace, and a fairer world order."

Those words provide an important lens through which to view the relationship with France. Diplomacy, in this context, is not an end in itself. It is supposed to open doors that lead to economic opportunity, stronger institutions and a better quality of life.

From Friendship to Investment

Investment is perhaps the most

obvious place to begin.

Liberia has significant potential in agriculture, mining, energy, infrastructure, logistics and services. Yet potential alone does not create prosperity. Capital must meet opportunity. Technology must meet local talent. Markets must connect with producers. And good ideas must be supported by institutions capable of turning them into viable businesses.

That is where French engagement could become particularly valuable.

French companies and institutions have experience across infrastructure, engineering, energy, transportation, telecommunications and other sectors closely connected to Liberia's development needs. Deeper commercial engagement could therefore bring more than financial capital. It could introduce technology, professional expertise, management experience and access to wider international networks.

At the same time, Liberia should not approach France simply as a source of assistance.

The country is an emerging market with an Atlantic coastline, substantial natural resources, a young population and considerable room for economic expansion. A French company willing to take a long-term view may see something different from the traditional aid narrative: a market where early investment can establish a lasting presence. That is where mutual interest becomes important.

French businesses gain opportunities to expand into a new market, while Liberia gains investment that can help create employment, strengthen domestic production and connect local businesses to international value chains but none of this will happen automatically. Liberia must continue improving the environment in which investors operate. Predictable regulations, reliable electricity, efficient infrastructure, transparency and a more business-friendly regulatory system will be just as important as presidential meetings. In other words, diplomacy can open the door, but domestic policy determines whether investors walk through it.

A Presidential Visit Could Change the Pace

That is why President Boakai's invitation to President Macron to visit Liberia could become particularly significant. According to the Liberian government, Macron "warmly accepted" the invitation, and both presidents instructed their foreign ministries to work out the modalities and timeline for the visit. The significance of that response goes beyond protocol.

A visit by the French president would give Monrovia an opportunity to place Liberia directly before French political and business leaders. Instead of presenting only broad development ambitions, the country could use such an occasion to showcase specific investment projects, introduce Liberian entrepreneurs to French companies and identify areas where

both governments can move quickly from discussion to implementation. That opportunity should be approached with preparation.

Liberia should arrive with a clear investment pipeline: projects that have credible feasibility studies, defined financing requirements, transparent procurement arrangements and measurable economic benefits. French investors should be able to see not merely what Liberia needs, but where they can participate and how those investments can generate returns. The difference between a diplomatic visit that produces photographs and one that produces results will be preparation.

Infrastructure That Unlocks the Economy

Infrastructure would naturally occupy a central place in that conversation.

In Liberia, roads, ports, transport networks and telecommunications are not simply construction projects. They shape the entire economy. A farmer who cannot get produce to market loses income. A manufacturer facing high transport costs becomes less competitive. A small business without reliable digital connectivity is excluded from an increasingly connected economy. That is why infrastructure should be viewed as an economic multiplier.

A road should connect producers to markets. A port should make trade faster and cheaper. Digital infrastructure should allow entrepreneurs to reach customers beyond their immediate communities. Transport networks should reduce the cost of moving people and goods. France has considerable experience in these fields. Liberia, meanwhile, has considerable need.

The opportunity lies in bringing those two realities together, the same principle applies to energy.

Energy: The Foundation Beneath Everything

Reliable and affordable electricity remains one of Liberia's most important economic challenges.

Businesses need dependable power to operate and expand. Hospitals need electricity to provide basic services. Schools need it to support modern learning. Entrepreneurs need it to run digital businesses and small-scale manufacturing. Investors need confidence that unreliable power will not undermine their operations. Consequently, cooperation in electricity generation, transmission, distribution and renewable energy could have effects far beyond the energy sector itself.

More reliable power could support agro-processing, manufacturing, information technology and small businesses. It could also make Liberia more attractive to investors looking for an environment in which production can operate consistently. And once electricity improves, other possibilities begin to open.

A food processor can expand. A cold-storage business can operate more reliably. A technology company can grow. A rural enterprise can move beyond subsistence. That is the kind of development connection Liberia should seek from its relationship with France: one investment creating the conditions for another.

The Most Important Investment Is in People

Physical infrastructure, however, cannot transform a country on its own. Liberia also needs to invest in people.

Education, vocational training, scholarships, university partnerships, research and professional exchanges could become some of the most enduring areas of French-Liberian cooperation. These initiatives can help produce the engineers, technicians, entrepreneurs, teachers, health

professionals and other skilled workers required to sustain economic growth.

This matters especially to Liberia's young population.

Economic transformation should not happen around young Liberians while they remain spectators. They need access to the skills and opportunities that allow them to become participants in the transformation.

French universities and technical institutions could work with Liberian counterparts to develop programmes aligned with the country's actual economic needs. Vocational training could focus on construction, energy, agriculture, technology and other sectors where skilled workers are in demand.

Such cooperation would produce something more valuable than a short-term project: human capacity that remains in Liberia long after a particular agreement has ended.

Diplomacy and Liberia's New Global Role

The relationship also carries a significant diplomatic dimension.

Liberia's election to a non-permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council has given the country an opportunity to play a more visible role in international affairs. President Boakai has emphasized the historical significance of Liberia's position as one of the four original African signatories to the UN Charter and the only one among those four countries not previously to have served a full term on the Council.

France's position as a permanent member of the Security Council makes the relationship particularly important. During their Paris discussions, President Boakai sought French support for Liberia's nomination to chair and co-chair four UN sanctions committees.

This is where economic and

diplomatic interests intersect.

A stronger relationship with Paris can help Liberia navigate the complex environment of the Security Council, while France gains another African partner with which it can engage on peace, security and multilateral diplomacy.

Liberia, in turn, has an opportunity to demonstrate that its return to the Security Council is not simply symbolic. The country can use its seat to bring African perspectives to international debates while strengthening its reputation as a constructive and responsible diplomatic actor.

What Happens After Paris Matters Most

Still, the real test of the relationship will not take place inside the Élysée Palace.

It will take place in Monrovia, in businesses, universities, ministries, construction sites, farms, power facilities and communities. Presidential meetings create momentum. They do not build roads. Agreements create frameworks. They do not automatically create jobs.

That work requires ministries, businesses, universities, development institutions and civil society to follow through. Encouragingly, the Liberian and French sides have already recognized the importance of moving from discussion to implementation. The official Liberian account of the Paris meeting says both sides agreed on the importance of technical cooperation and follow-up mechanisms.

That follow-through will be crucial.

Every major commitment should eventually answer four basic questions: What will be done? Who will finance it? When will it begin? How will success be measured? Without those answers, diplomatic goodwill risks becoming another collection of promises.

A Partnership, Not a Dependency

There is another principle that should

guide the relationship: partnership must not become dependency. Liberia should welcome French investment without surrendering its own economic priorities. French companies should be encouraged to invest, but local businesses should also have opportunities to participate. French expertise should complement Liberian capacity rather than replace it.

The strongest partnership would therefore be one in which French investment creates Liberian employment, French technical expertise strengthens local professionals, French educational institutions establish lasting relationships with Liberian counterparts, and Liberian companies become active participants in new commercial ventures.

That is when diplomacy becomes human.

A French engineer working alongside Liberian professionals may ultimately do more to strengthen bilateral relations than another formal declaration. A Liberian student studying in France and returning with valuable skills can create a connection that lasts for decades. A French company employing Liberians can make the relationship tangible in the daily lives of workers and their families. A Liberian entrepreneur entering a partnership with a French business can turn an international relationship into a local opportunity.

These are the connections that ordinary people can understand.

The Opportunity Ahead

The Paris meeting has created an opening. President Macron's acceptance of President Boakai's invitation creates another.

What happens next will determine whether this moment becomes a footnote in diplomatic history or the beginning of a more ambitious chapter. Liberia must come to the table with clear priorities, credible projects and



a serious commitment to improving its investment climate. France, meanwhile, can bring its private sector, development institutions, universities and technical expertise into a deeper relationship with Liberia.

There are already signs that the relationship is moving beyond ceremony. In 2026, Liberian officials said a high-level French business delegation was expected in Monrovia to identify investment opportunities, following commitments made during President Boakai's 2025 visit to France.

That development illustrates the central point: diplomacy becomes meaningful when it generates activity beyond the meeting room. If the goodwill generated in Paris leads to

investment, better infrastructure, reliable energy, stronger skills and deeper diplomatic cooperation, then the Boakai-Macron meeting will have achieved something far more lasting than a successful diplomatic encounter. It will have helped redefine what Liberia-France relations can mean in the 21st century.

For President Boakai, the opportunity is to demonstrate that Liberia's foreign policy can directly support economic transformation. For President Macron, it is an opportunity to deepen France's relationship with a historic African republic while opening new avenues for French businesses and institutions. Ultimately, the promise of the Boakai-Macron partnership is straightforward.

Liberia has opportunities that France can help develop, while France has expertise and capabilities that Liberia can help put to work.

The task now is to connect the two.

If both countries can turn diplomatic goodwill into investment, investment into jobs, infrastructure into productivity, education into skills and cooperation into measurable results, then the relationship will become more than a friendship between governments.

It will become a partnership experienced in the lives of ordinary people.

And that is where diplomacy matters most.



Ambassador Le Guellec

HOW FRANCE'S AMBASSADOR ISABELLE LE GUELLEC HAS STRENGTHENED TIES WITH LIBERIA

By Samuel B. Johnson

How France is Deepening its Partnership with Liberia

French Ambassador Isabelle Le Guellec's tenure in Liberia has focused on turning diplomatic relations with France into practical development support, particularly in health, education, agriculture and social protection.

Her work has combined high-level engagement with the Liberian government with visits to communities benefiting from French-funded programs.

Health at the center of cooperation

Health has been one of the main areas of France's partnership with Liberia.

In 2025, the Ministry of Health, Expertise France and Action Against Hunger launched the Better Health Outcomes for Liberia (BEHOL) and HEALTH projects. The programmes

support maternal and child health, family planning, nutrition, mental health and other essential services.

France has also supported the training of health workers. In 2026, Liberia introduced a revised Registered Midwifery Curriculum with technical and financial assistance from Expertise France through the HEALTH project, funded by the French Development Agency. French support has also gone towards health infrastructure, including the construction of a primary health-care clinic in Koon's Town.

Investing in young Liberians

Education and skills development have been another priority. A Liberia-France scholarship programme supports Liberian students studying in Côte d'Ivoire. The initiative targets areas considered important to Liberia's future, including information and communication technology, agriculture, forestry and industrial development.

Ambassador Le Guellec has also promoted French-language education

and academic cooperation. During a 2026 visit to William V. S. Tubman University, she discussed opportunities for academic and cultural exchange.

Supporting vulnerable communities

France has committed about US\$9.5 million through the French Development Agency to the REALISE Project, which supports vulnerable Liberians, particularly women and young people. The programme focuses on livelihoods, agriculture, food security, employment and social protection. Beneficiaries receive farming inputs and training, while communities can access grants to support local development.

Le Guellec has visited beneficiaries in Bong and Bomi counties, highlighting efforts to increase agricultural production, household incomes and community resilience.

Climate and environmental cooperation

France's partnership with Liberia also includes environmental protection and climate resilience. In 2026, Le Guellec joined other European ambassadors on a mission to Grand Cape Mount and Bomi counties. The delegation visited communities involved in the REALISE Project, agricultural activities and forest restoration in the Lake Piso Reserve. The visits underscored the links between economic development, food security and environmental protection.

Strengthening institutions and cultural ties

Beyond individual projects, French cooperation has increasingly focused on strengthening Liberian institutions. In 2026, France supported Liberia's Ministry of Health in developing a framework for leadership, management, governance and decentralization. The initiative is intended to improve the capacity of the health system and strengthen local ownership. Cultural diplomacy has also been part of Le Guellec's work. The French Embassy has supported Francophonie activities, French-language learning, cultural events and educational exchanges.



A partnership with a practical focus

Ambassador Le Guellec's tenure has been marked by a broad approach to diplomacy, combining government-to-government relations with development programmes that reach communities. From health facilities and professional training to scholarships, agricultural support and social protection, French-backed initiatives have targeted some of Liberia's key development challenges.

The lasting measure of the partnership, however, will be how effectively these programmes strengthen Liberian institutions and improve opportunities and services for citizens. For France and Liberia, the relationship is increasingly being defined not only by diplomatic ties, but by cooperation on the ground.





Christiana Wahblo Konneh

CHRISTIANA WAHBLO KONNEH:

From The Shadows of War to the Heights of Diplomacy. The Remarkable Journey of a Liberian Woman Whose Life Proves that Resilience can **Shape Destiny.**

By Samuel B. Johnson

“Do not allow your present condition to determine who you will become in the future. Get up and stand for what you believe in. I did not reach here by accident; I worked for it.”

- Hon. Christiana M. Wahblo Konneh

There are people whose achievements tell only part of their story. Then there are those whose greatest accomplishments are found not in the positions they hold, but in the obstacles they have overcome. Hon. Christiana M. Wahblo Konneh belongs to the latter.

Today, she serves as Assistant Minister for American Affairs at

the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, helping to strengthen the country's diplomatic ties with nations across the Americas. It is a position of responsibility and influence, but one that gives little hint of the difficult road she travelled to get there.

Her story began in Zleh Town, Grand Gedeh County, where she was born on September 16, 1985. Like many Liberian children, her early years were interrupted by the civil war. Instead of enjoying a peaceful childhood, she experienced fear, displacement, and uncertainty.

The war forced her family to flee Liberia. Amid the violence, her father disappeared. When peace eventually returned, the family searched for him, but he was never found. That painful chapter remains one of the deepest wounds of her life. For many young people, such a tragedy might have shattered every dream. For Christiana, it became a quiet source of determination.

Seeking safety, she lived first in Côte d'Ivoire before relocating to Ghana, where she spent much of her childhood. She moved between relatives and host families, constantly adjusting to unfamiliar environments. Looking back, she believes those experiences shaped the woman she would become. "Living with different families helped me understand people," she recalls. "It taught me how to adjust and survive in different environments."

Even in difficult circumstances, she refused to abandon her education. After attending schools in Liberia, including SDA School and Christ the King Catholic School, she continued her studies in Ghana. At the Buduburam Refugee

Camp, she completed high school in 2005.

Life in a refugee camp was far from easy, but she never allowed her surroundings to define her future. Instead, she focused on the opportunities education could provide.

Returning to Liberia after graduation, she enrolled at the African Methodist Episcopal University, where she earned a bachelor's degree in Political Science in 2012. Her interest in diplomacy grew from a simple desire—to serve Liberia beyond its borders. "I chose diplomacy because it is a very humble field," she says. "It allows you to serve your country and build relationships."

Determined to prepare herself for that responsibility, she enrolled at the Gabriel L. Dennis Foreign Service Institute, earning a postgraduate diploma in Foreign Service between 2014 and 2015. Her hard work paid off when she graduated as the valedictorian of her class.

Her journey into government had actually begun a few years earlier. In 2011, during a visit to her university, then-President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf recognized her potential and introduced her to public service through the government's cadet program.

The position offered little financial reward at the time, but Christiana accepted it anyway. She saw it not as a job, but as an opportunity to learn and serve. After completing her diplomatic training, she joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as a Research Analyst in the Bureau of International Cooperation.

Through commitment, discipline, and professionalism, she steadily climbed the ranks, serving as Desk Officer for Multilateral Cooperation, Officer-in-Charge of the Bureau, and eventually Assistant Minister for American Affairs.

Despite her senior position, she remains remarkably reserved. Unlike many public officials, she rarely seeks attention or engages in public debates on social media. "I don't normally go on social media responding to issues because I'm a diplomat," she explains.

To her, leadership is not about visibility but responsibility. "Doing the people's job and touching lives is not about popularity. It is about how many people can see my impact. "Those who know her describe her as someone who quietly helps others without expecting recognition.

Away from government, another calling shapes her life. She serves as a pastor at Divine Harvest International Ministries, where her faith continues to influence her outlook on leadership and service. "I'm a highly spiritual person," she says. "I believe in helping people and showing kindness."

She is also a devoted mother of four boys and understands the challenge of balancing family responsibilities with the demands of public office. Reflecting on Liberia's social challenges, she believes the country's family structure remains one of the lasting casualties of the civil war. "Our family values are no longer where they used to be. The civil war affected our family structure, and many families are broken. "As one of the few women occupying a senior leadership position in government, Hon.

Konneh also advocates greater support among women. "Women must support women," she says. "Sometimes women fight each other, and that affects our progress."

Her advice to young Liberians is rooted in her own experience. "Your present condition does not determine your future. Stand up for what you believe in. I did not get here by accident—I worked for it."

Today, as Assistant Minister for American Affairs, she oversees Liberia's diplomatic engagement with countries across the Americas, including the United States. She believes strong international partnerships remain essential to Liberia's development and expresses confidence in the country's diplomatic direction. Yet beyond titles and official responsibilities, Christiana Wahblo Konneh's greatest achievement may be the example she sets. She is living proof that a child displaced by war can become a respected diplomat. That loss does not have to destroy purpose. That quiet determination can speak louder than public applause.

Her journey reminds us that history may shape where we begin, but character, perseverance, and faith often determine where we end. For young Liberians searching for hope amid hardship, her life offers a powerful lesson: circumstances may delay your dreams, but they do not have to define them. And perhaps that is the most enduring legacy of Hon. Christiana M. Wahblo Konneh—a woman who transformed personal tragedy into a lifetime of service to her country.



CLLR. N. OSWALD TWEH
 MINISTER & ATTORNEY-GENERAL
 MINISTRY OF JUSTICE
 REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA

LIBERIA PUSHES AHEAD WITH JUSTICE REFORMS AMID FUNDING AND LEGISLATIVE DELAYS

By Samuel B. Johnson

Liberia is pursuing a broad overhaul of its justice system, with reforms aimed at expanding access to justice, reducing pressure on the courts and prisons, and strengthening accountability.

The government says progress has been made across 12 interventions under its Justice Policy Reform

and Decentralization programme during the 2025 and 2026 financial years. The reforms include the expansion of mediation, digital case management, correctional infrastructure, child diversion programmes, legal aid, human rights protection and proposals for specialized courts. But the progress is uneven. Several key laws remain before the legislature, while overcrowded prisons, limited funding, infrastructure gaps and

large caseloads continue to constrain the justice system.

The government's own figures provide a mixed picture.

Mediation takes pressure off courts

One of the strongest gains has been in alternative dispute resolution (ADR).

The Ministry of Justice says its ADR programme handled 476 cases in the first quarter of 2026, resolving 461. In the second quarter, the number rose to 750 cases, with 723 resolved. That represents a substantial increase from the 199 cases recorded in 2024.

The expansion reflects efforts to strengthen referral mechanisms, train mediators and take dispute resolution into communities. For a country where formal justice services remain concentrated in urban areas, community mediation can provide a quicker and potentially less costly way of settling disputes. But the proposed ADR Bill, which would give the system a clearer statutory basis, is still under legislative review.

Courts begin digital transition

The Judiciary is also moving towards greater use of technology.

Fourteen digital tablets have been deployed to support case tracking and documentation, while 60 court clerks and assistant clerks have been trained to use the upgraded Judiciary Case Management System.

The Supreme Court has also established a committee to standardize legal filings, while law firms are now required to register with the Office of the Supreme Court Clerk. The reforms are intended

to improve record management, communication and accountability. Their impact will depend partly on whether they can be extended beyond Monrovia, where limited connectivity, electricity and technical capacity remain obstacles.

Prison reform remains a work in progress

Correctional services remain one of the most difficult areas of reform.

Renovation at the National Palace of Corrections and Buchanan Central Prison had reached 90% by the second quarter of 2026, while work at Voinjama Central Prison was 85% complete. Other facilities are also being renovated or constructed. The government is simultaneously seeking to give the Bureau of Corrections and Rehabilitation greater autonomy through the proposed Liberia Corrections Service Act.

But the legislation has yet to complete the parliamentary process.

Meanwhile, probation and parole services are being expanded as alternatives to imprisonment. During the reporting period, officials prepared 50 pre-sentence investigation reports, supervised 32 probationers and facilitated the release of 19 eligible pre-trial detainees. The measures are intended to reduce unnecessary detention and ease overcrowding.

Child justice and sexual violence

The government has also increased its use of diversion for children in conflict with the law. A total of 713 child justice cases were mediated and diverted from formal court proceedings during 2025. In the first quarter of 2026, another 321 cases were mediated, with 45

juveniles released and reintegrated with their families. But 55 juveniles remained in detention at the end of the second quarter.

The figures suggest that while restorative justice is gaining ground, alternatives to detention are not yet available on a scale sufficient to meet demand.

The justice system is also under pressure from sexual and gender-based violence cases. The SGBV Crimes Unit handled 216 cases during the second quarter of 2026. It secured 26 indictments and completed eight trials, resulting in five convictions, one acquittal and two hung verdicts.

However, 181 cases were still awaiting indictment at the end of the period. That backlog points to the need for greater investigative and prosecutorial capacity, particularly as statutory rape, rape and gang rape remain among the most frequently reported offences.

Accountability laws await action

Some of the most consequential reforms remain proposals.

The government has advanced legislation to establish a War and Economic Crimes Court to prosecute serious crimes committed during Liberia's civil conflicts. It is also pursuing a National Anti-Corruption Court, alongside legislation to abolish the death penalty and establish a National Preventive Mechanism to strengthen safeguards against torture and ill-treatment.

A draft Legal Aid Bill has undergone stakeholder review and validation, with more than 100 representatives from government,

the legal profession, civil society and development partners involved in the process. If enacted, the legislation would establish a stronger framework for legal assistance to people unable to afford representation.

The Ministry is also developing an integrated legal codification system. During the second quarter of 2026, officials collected 215 Supreme Court opinions and 23 legislative acts for inclusion in the proposed repository.

The implementation gap

The breadth of the reforms is significant. But passing legislation and launching programmes will not, by themselves, change how Liberians experience justice.

The decisive test will be implementation.

That means extending digital systems beyond Monrovia, reducing case backlogs, improving prison conditions, ensuring that children are diverted where appropriate, and making legal assistance available to people who cannot afford it. It also means giving new institutions the money, personnel and authority required to function.

Liberia's justice reform programme has therefore reached an important stage. The foundations are being laid, but the harder task is turning policy into institutions that work consistently across the country. Citizens will ultimately judge the success of these reforms by whether they can resolve disputes more easily, obtain legal representation, see cases concluded without unreasonable delay and have confidence that the justice system will treat them fairly.



Ambassador Mohammed M. Bah

AMB. MOHAMMED M. BAH:

The Diplomat Driving **Liberia's Investment** Story

By Gesther Ghampson

By every measure, Ambassador Mohammed M. Bah represents a new generation of African leadership—one that understands that the future of economic growth lies not only in policy, but in partnerships, vision, and the confidence to tell a nation's story to the world.

As Presidential Special Envoy on Investment for the Republic of Liberia, Ambassador Bah has become one of the country's leading advocates for investment, working to build meaningful relationships between Liberia and the

global business community. Appointed by His Excellency President Joseph Nyuma Boakai, Sr., he serves as a trusted representative of the President, engaging investors, development partners, and business leaders to position Liberia as a competitive and attractive destination for sustainable investment.

Yet behind the title is a journey shaped by resilience, entrepreneurship, and an unwavering belief in Liberia's potential.

Before assuming national responsibility, Ambassador Bah had already established himself as an accomplished businessman whose practical understanding of enterprise gave him firsthand insight into the challenges and opportunities facing

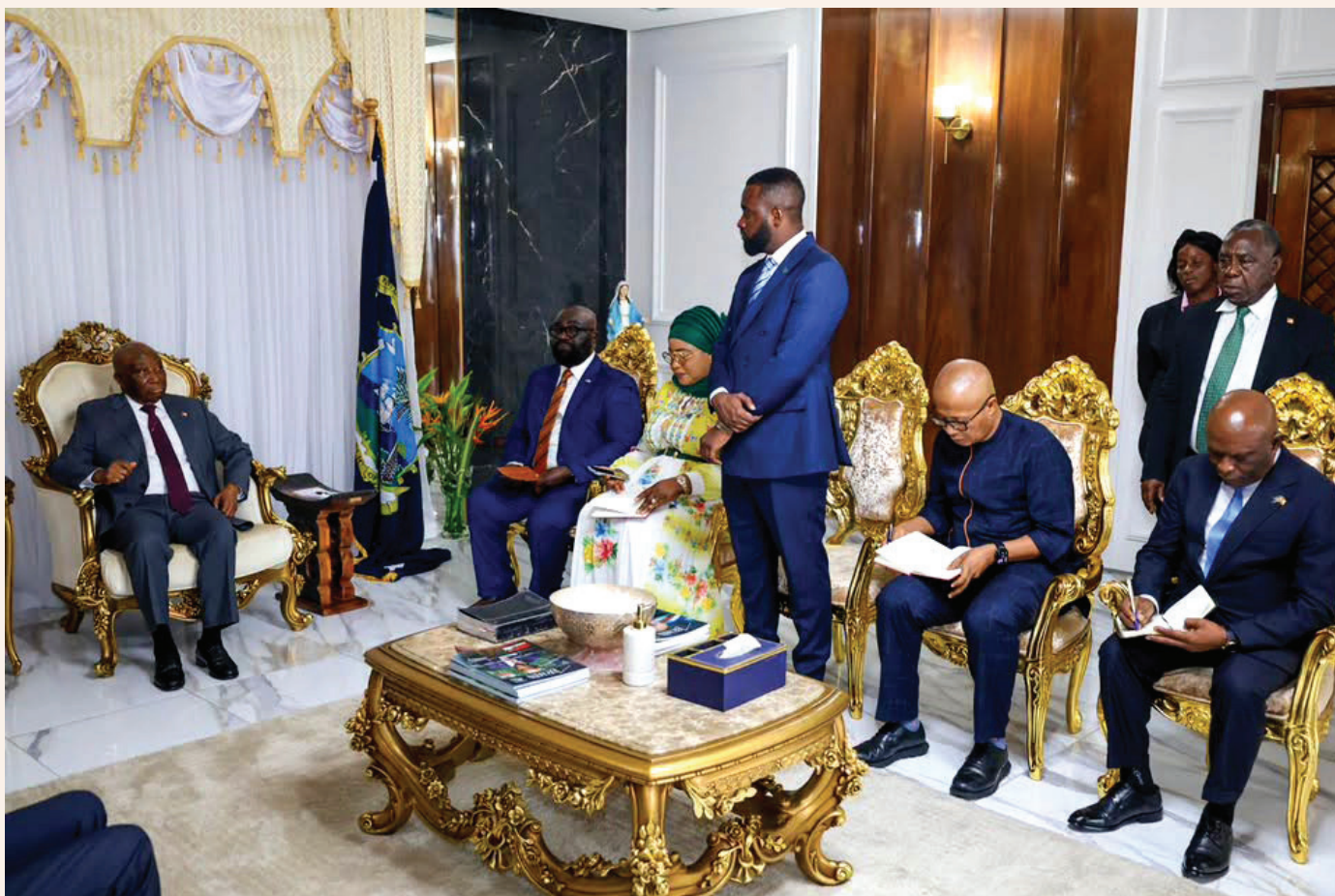
investors. His experience in business has allowed him to approach investment promotion not simply from a policy perspective, but through the lens of someone who understands what entrepreneurs need to succeed—clarity, trust, stability, and strong partnerships.

That business acumen is reinforced by a solid diplomatic foundation. Ambassador Bah is a trained diplomat of the Gabriel L. Dennis Foreign Service Institute of the Republic of Liberia, where he received professional training in diplomacy, international relations, diplomatic protocol, negotiation, and strategic engagement. The Institute equipped him with the skills required to navigate complex international relationships while effectively representing Liberia's interests on the global stage. Today, those competencies continue to shape his approach to economic diplomacy, enabling him to bridge government priorities with private-sector opportunities and foster mutually beneficial international partnerships.

For Ambassador Bah, investment is far more than attracting foreign capital. It is about creating opportunities that improve lives, empower local businesses, stimulate innovation, generate employment, and strengthen Liberia's long-term economic resilience. Every engagement, whether with multinational corporations, development institutions, or emerging entrepreneurs, is guided by a simple conviction: sustainable investment should deliver shared prosperity.

As Presidential Special Envoy on Investment, Ambassador Bah has worked to deepen Liberia's engagement with international investors across sectors including infrastructure, manufacturing, mining, renewable energy, tourism, and technology. His efforts reflect the broader vision of the Boakai Administration to leverage strategic partnerships that accelerate inclusive economic growth while expanding opportunities for Liberians.

Those who have worked alongside him often describe him as approachable,



thoughtful, and solutions-driven. Rather than viewing diplomacy as a series of formal engagements, he sees it as the art of building lasting relationships—relationships grounded in trust, mutual respect, and a shared commitment to development. It is this people-centered philosophy that has become one of the defining characteristics of his leadership.

Ambassador Bah's growing influence has also earned him recognition beyond Liberia's borders. His contributions to investment promotion, business leadership, and economic transformation have been acknowledged through several distinguished honors.

Among them is the Global Impact Award, presented by the Africa Intercontinental Network in recognition of his exceptional leadership, his commitment to advancing Africa's development agenda, and his efforts to strengthen the continent's engagement within the global economy.

He is also the recipient of the Visionary Investment Award, conferred during the prestigious Golden Image Awards 2026. The award recognizes his forward-thinking leadership and outstanding contribution to investment promotion and economic development, celebrating his role in expanding opportunities for growth and positioning Liberia as an emerging destination for responsible investment.

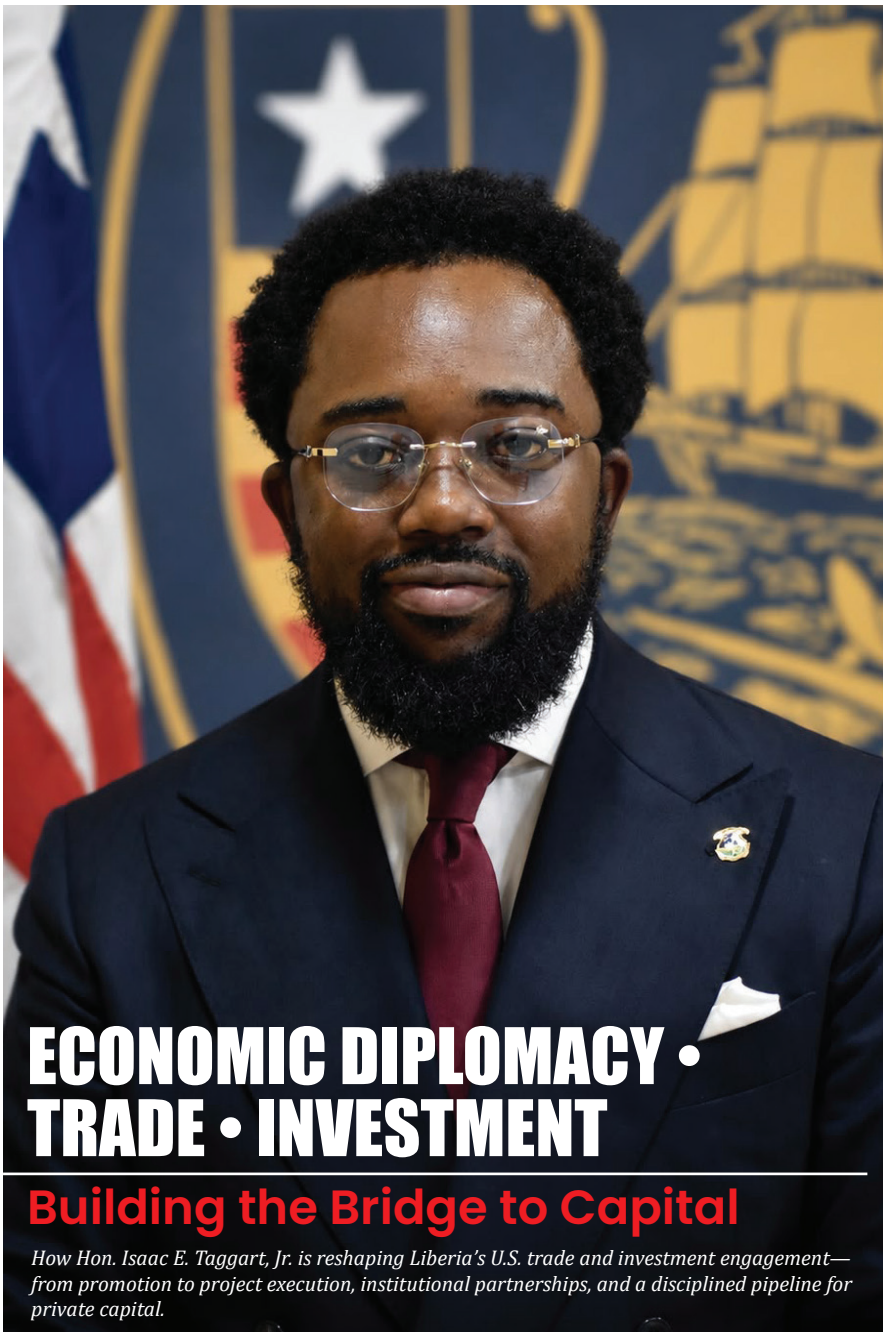
These honors are more than personal achievements; they reflect the growing recognition of Ambassador Bah as a leader whose work transcends national borders. His efforts continue to contribute to a broader African narrative—one that champions innovation, strategic partnerships, and investment as powerful tools for sustainable development.

At a time when nations compete not only for investment but also for credibility, Ambassador Mohammed M. Bah believes that trust is Liberia's

greatest currency. His mission is to demonstrate that Liberia is not simply a country rich in natural resources, but one rich in opportunity, ambition, and people prepared to build a prosperous future.

His story is still unfolding, but one thing is already evident: Ambassador Mohammed M. Bah is helping redefine how Liberia engages the world. Through diplomacy, entrepreneurship, and purposeful leadership, he is contributing to a future in which investment becomes more than an economic transaction—it becomes a catalyst for national transformation.





ECONOMIC DIPLOMACY • TRADE • INVESTMENT

Building the Bridge to Capital

How Hon. Isaac E. Taggart, Jr. is reshaping Liberia's U.S. trade and investment engagement—from promotion to project execution, institutional partnerships, and a disciplined pipeline for private capital.

By HardFacts Magazine

In a global environment where countries compete not only for capital but for confidence, access and execution, Liberia's investment diplomacy has taken on a more deliberate posture. At the center of that effort is Hon. Isaac E. Taggart, Jr., Special Envoy for U.S. Trade & Investment under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, whose mandate has been to convert bilateral goodwill into commercially credible pathways for American investors, institutions and strategic partners.

In only one year in the role, Hon. Taggart has focused on a central proposition: Liberia cannot rely on promotion alone. Investment attraction must be supported by prepared and increasingly bankable projects, clear government coordination, credible counterparties, and sustained engagement with the institutions that shape capital decisions in the United States. That philosophy has informed a growing body of work spanning energy, infrastructure, ports and logistics,

critical minerals, agriculture and agro-processing, manufacturing, technology and other sectors aligned with the Government's ARREST Agenda.

“The work is not simply to tell investors that Liberia is open for business. It is to help make Liberia easier to understand, easier to evaluate and, ultimately, easier to invest in.”

A Mandate Built Around Execution

Hon. Taggart's office serves as a bridge between Liberia's public institutions and the U.S. commercial ecosystem. In practice, that has meant identifying credible investors, coordinating access to Liberian ministries and agencies, positioning projects for institutional review, supporting public-private dialogue, and cultivating relationships with U.S. government agencies, development-finance institutions, law firms, chambers, universities and private-sector operators.

Rather than operate as a stand-alone investment promotion function, the Office of the Special Envoy has increasingly worked as a coordination platform—helping government counterparts and investors move from initial interest to the next practical stage: diligence, technical review, project structuring, bankability assessment, financing conversations and implementation planning.

Trade Missions That Convert Interest into Engagement

Two signature missions illustrate Hon. Taggart's approach to economic diplomacy. The first, the Bridge to Prosperity: U.S.-Liberia Trade & Investment Mission, held June 17–21, 2025, brought a U.S. delegation of investors, business leaders and institutional partners to Liberia for direct engagement with government officials, site visits, sector discussions and high-level dialogue. The mission was designed to move participants beyond

general interest and into direct exposure to Liberia's opportunities, decision-makers and investment environment.

That platform was followed by the Michigan-Liberia Trade Mission held June 7-12, 2026. Over five days, the mission brought together Liberian government institutions, the National Investment Commission, the U.S. Embassy, universities, healthcare institutions, small and medium-sized enterprises, infrastructure and logistics operators, and other partners. The mission produced four Memoranda of Understanding, more than ten institutional engagements and three curated site visits—demonstrating a repeatable model for converting U.S. market outreach into structured in-country engagement.

Beyond formal trade missions, Hon. Taggart has also facilitated and coordinated the entry or direct Liberia engagement of individual investors and companies across multiple sectors, including energy, oil and gas, digital government, education, infrastructure and development. These have included engagement involving Tarpeh Global Initiative, Valco Energy, RippleNami, Astria Learning, Red Sea Consulting and other U.S. and diaspora-linked firms and partners. The emphasis has consistently been on moving credible parties from introductory interest to direct meetings with the appropriate ministries, agencies and commercial counterparts.

Advancing a Transformational Energy Project

Energy has emerged as one of the strongest pillars of Hon. Taggart's investment portfolio. Among the most significant projects advanced during his tenure is Tarpeh Global Initiative's proposed 300 MW natural gas-to-power project in Buchanan, an investment estimated at approximately US\$500 million.

The project has progressed beyond an introductory concept. Commercial terms with the Liberia Electricity Corporation have been agreed, a Memorandum of Understanding

was signed in Washington, D.C., and development of the Power Purchase Agreement has been underway. The project is designed around an integrated LNG-to-power model intended to materially expand Liberia's generation capacity while creating a platform for industrial growth, investment and improved reliability.

Hon. Taggart's role has centered on strategic facilitation: helping connect the project to relevant government institutions, U.S. agencies, technical partners and financing conversations while preserving the responsibilities of the project sponsor and the statutory authorities responsible for energy approvals.

The broader significance extends beyond a single power plant. A successful U.S.-backed energy investment of this scale would send a strong signal to the market that Liberia can originate, structure and advance large infrastructure opportunities with serious international partners.

The Invest in Liberia Roadshow: Taking the Pipeline to the Market

Another signature initiative has been the creation of the Invest in Liberia Roadshow, a closed-door U.S. engagement platform designed to bring Liberia's investment pipeline directly to investors, operators, legal advisers, development-finance institutions and other strategic partners.

The Roadshow was deliberately designed to move away from broad promotional conferences. Its format centers on focused, invitation-only sessions in which a limited number of decision-makers can review projects, ask technical and commercial questions, and identify specific next steps. Sector emphasis is tailored by city so that Liberia's opportunities are presented to the U.S. markets most capable of advancing them.

Houston, for example, has been positioned around energy, LNG, oil and gas, and infrastructure finance; New York around institutional capital and

large-scale infrastructure; Washington around U.S. agencies, policy capital and development finance; Baltimore around ports and logistics; Atlanta around logistics, agriculture and technology; and Detroit around manufacturing, critical minerals, logistics and value-added industry.

The first phase of the Roadshow has required extensive partner cultivation with U.S. law firms, chambers of commerce, institutional investors, government agencies and local conveners. Its purpose is straightforward: shorten the distance between a credible, bankable Liberian project and the U.S. decision-makers capable of financing, operating, advising or investing in it.

Building an Institutional-Grade Deal Pipeline

Supporting the Roadshow is another major piece of institutional infrastructure: the Liberia Strategic Investment Deal Book, developed as a curated pipeline and engagement tool for investors. The 2026 edition organizes opportunities across energy and power, logistics and ports, critical minerals, agriculture, manufacturing and strategic infrastructure, while emphasizing that project preparation, diligence and government coordination remain central to execution.

The Deal Book reflects an important shift in investment diplomacy. Instead of asking investors to begin with a blank page, Liberia can increasingly enter conversations with defined opportunities, preliminary project narratives, sector logic, counterpart information and a clearer understanding of what must happen next.

“Investors do not only invest in opportunity. They invest in clarity, structure, credibility, bankability and the confidence that there is a path from conversation to execution.”



Hon. Isaac E. Taggart, Jr.

Deepening U.S. Institutional Relationships

A central part of Hon. Taggart's work has been strengthening Liberia's relationships with U.S. institutions that can help move strategic projects forward. His office has cultivated engagement with the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation, the U.S. Trade and Development Agency, the Export-Import Bank of the United States, the U.S. Department of Energy, the Millennium Challenge Corporation, the U.S. Department of Commerce and other public and private partners. Just as importantly, he has worked to build relationships within the White House and the U.S. Department of State, expanding the range of senior U.S. policy and diplomatic channels through which Liberia's trade, investment and strategic economic priorities can be advanced.

These relationships matter because U.S. private investment into emerging markets rarely moves in isolation. Project preparation, political-risk mitigation, technical assistance, feasibility support, debt financing, guarantees and

commercial diplomacy can each play a role in moving a transaction toward bankability.

That institutional engagement has already created practical openings. Energy-sector discussions following high-level U.S. engagements generated additional technical attention to Liberia's power pipeline, including follow-on engagement with USTDA and the U.S. Department of Energy. At the same time, the Office has continued to position critical minerals and infrastructure opportunities within the broader U.S. conversation around secure supply chains, strategic resources and African investment.

Economic Diplomacy Beyond Washington

Hon. Taggart's approach has also broadened the geography of Liberia's U.S. engagement. Rather than concentrate exclusively on Washington, D.C., the Office has pursued relationships across major U.S. commercial centers and state-level ecosystems—recognizing that investment decisions are often made

in boardrooms, law firms, chambers, universities, family offices, industry clusters and corporate headquarters far beyond the federal capital.

That strategy has helped connect Liberia to institutions and leaders in Michigan, Georgia, Texas, New York, Maryland, Ohio and other markets, while creating a platform for diaspora professionals and U.S. business leaders to participate in a more structured investment conversation.

A Public Voice for Liberia's Investment Story

The Envoy's role has also carried a public-facing dimension. Through speaking engagements, investor roundtables, university lectures and international forums, Hon. Taggart has worked to present Liberia not merely as a recipient of development assistance, but as a country with strategic assets, a young population, access to regional markets and real commercial opportunities that can support mutually beneficial partnerships.

His messaging consistently ties investment to national priorities under the ARREST Agenda—Agriculture, Roads, Rule of Law, Education, Sanitation and Tourism—while highlighting the enabling importance of energy, infrastructure, ports and logistics, critical minerals and value-added production.

The Next Phase: Converting Momentum into Capital

The work remains unfinished. Several Roadshow stops and investment discussions are still in development, major projects remain subject to due diligence, financing, regulatory approvals and definitive agreements, and Liberia's investment environment continues to require disciplined coordination across government.

But the architecture being built is increasingly clear: a stronger and more bankable project pipeline, more deliberate U.S. institutional relationships, targeted investor engagement, improved coordination and a willingness to move beyond ceremonial diplomacy toward transaction-oriented economic diplomacy.

For Hon. Taggart, the measure of success is not the number of meetings held or invitations received. It is whether those engagements create durable pathways for capital, technology, expertise, jobs, infrastructure and long-term economic opportunity in Liberia.



Hon. Isaac E. Taggart, Jr.

That is the bridge now being built—one investor, one institution and one project at a time.

SELECTED MILESTONES

Bridge to Prosperity & Michigan-Liberia Trade Missions — Two U.S.-Liberia missions spanning 2025 and 2026, including the June 2026 Michigan mission that produced four MOUs, 10+ institutional engagements and three curated site visits.

300 MW LNG-to-Power Project — Strategic facilitation supporting a proposed US\$500 million Buchanan gas-to-power project; commercial terms with LEC agreed, MOU signed, and PPA development underway.

Invest in Liberia Roadshow — Created a closed-door U.S. engagement platform connecting Liberia's project pipeline to investors, operators, law firms, DFIs and strategic partners across multiple U.S. markets.

Strategic Investment Deal Book

— Developed an institutional-facing 2026 deal book organizing priority opportunities across energy, logistics, ports, critical minerals, agriculture, manufacturing and infrastructure.

U.S. Institutional Engagement — Expanded working relationships across DFC, USTDA, MCC, DOE, EXIM, Commerce and other U.S. public- and private-sector institutions.

Economic Diplomacy — Advanced a state-by-state and city-by-city U.S. engagement strategy designed to connect Liberia with commercial ecosystems beyond Washington, D.C.

ABOUT THE ENVOY

Hon. Isaac E. Taggart, Jr. serves as Special Envoy for U.S. Trade & Investment under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Liberia. His mandate centers on bilateral economic diplomacy, investment attraction, strategic partnerships, trade missions and coordination with U.S. public- and private-sector stakeholders.



Hon. Isaac E. Taggart, Jr.

GUARDIANS OF TRUTH:

How Liberia's Witness **Protection Agency** Is Giving Courage a Voice

By Samuel B. Johnson

Every society depends on people who are willing to speak when others choose silence. They are the witnesses who reveal what they know, the whistleblowers who expose wrongdoing, and the citizens who step forward because they believe justice must prevail.

However, telling the truth is not

always easy.

For many people, the decision to report a crime or provide evidence comes with serious concerns—fear of threats, intimidation, social pressure, or retaliation. When citizens believe that speaking out may put them in danger, the entire justice system suffers.

This is why witness protection has become a vital part of modern justice systems around the world.

Justice cannot succeed if the people who help uncover the truth are left without protection.

In Liberia, the establishment of the Witness Protection Agency (WPA) in 2022 marked a significant step toward creating a justice system where courage is supported and accountability is strengthened. The Agency represents the country's recognition that those who help fight crime and corruption deserve protection, not punishment.

That responsibility became even more visible following the seizure of 237.6 kilograms of cocaine valued at US\$19.2 million at Roberts International Airport in 2026. During the investigation, concerns emerged over the unlawful disclosure of the identities of protected witnesses connected to the case.

In response, the WPA warned that revealing protected identities was not simply a legal violation—it was a direct threat to individuals, investigations, and public confidence in justice. The Agency's position was clear: a society cannot effectively fight crime if those who provide critical information are placed at risk.

Beyond individual cases, the work of the WPA reflects a broader transformation in Liberia's justice system. It is helping to answer a question that many citizens have quietly asked for years: If I speak the truth, who will stand with me?

The existence of the Agency sends a powerful message that the state has a responsibility to protect those who choose honesty over silence.

Liberia's efforts are also part of a wider African movement toward stronger witness protection systems. Across the continent, countries such as South Africa, Kenya, Rwanda, and

Liberia have established dedicated witness protection institutions or frameworks, recognizing that justice requires more than laws and courts—it requires protecting the people who make justice possible.

Meanwhile, countries including Ghana, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Uganda, and Lesotho have developed witness and whistleblower protection measures through anti-corruption bodies, law enforcement agencies, and justice-sector programs.

For Liberia, the journey is still developing. The Witness Protection Agency is a young institution, but its purpose carries national importance. Its success will depend not only on laws and policies, but also on public trust, professional capacity, and strong partnerships.

Through collaboration with government institutions, civil society organizations, and international partners, the WPA is working to build a culture where citizens feel confident reporting corruption, assisting investigations, and participating in the pursuit of justice.

Ultimately, the fight against corruption and crime is not won only inside courtrooms. It begins with people who have the courage to speak and the confidence that their voices will be protected.

A strong witness protection system assures citizens that truth has value and that those who stand for justice will not be left alone.

Liberia's Witness Protection Agency represents that promise—a step toward a society where accountability is strengthened, courage is respected, and justice is protected.





Joe K. Williams
Vice Chairman of the Liberia Land Authority

A PROFILE OF A DEDICATED SERVANT LEADER FROM QWEIKPALA TOWN

By HardFacts Magazine

Nominated by His Excellency President Joseph Nyuma Boakai on April 19, 2024, and confirmed by the Senate on June 13 of the same year, comrade Joe K. Williams, National Vice Chairman for Political and Governmental Affairs of the Rainbow Alliance (RA), serves as the Vice Chairman for Administration and

Customer Service of the Liberia Land Authority (LLA). He's a member of a result-oriented team of dedicated public servants sailing the ship of Liberia's land reform and administration----mitigating explosive land crises and providing worthy education on land acquisition, ownership and administration, as a crucial component of President Boakai's

ARREST AGENDA.

Born on April 19, 1967, in Qweikpala Town, Jorquelleh District, Bong County, to Nyamah Qweikpala and Baekei Cooper, Joe was raised by his uncle, Joseph Qweikpala. He grew up in Qweikpala Town in Jorquelleh District and Sinyeah Town in Suakoko District, Bong County respectively.

Joe grew up with a strong guardian principle but in some of the tough and challenging conditions that many born in his time and setting faced. Like many rural kids seeking education, he, along with his cousin, Elli J. Kweikpala walked from Kweikpala Town to Weinsue Town just to attend school, and had to farm and cut palms to pay tuition. Joe started school late (16 years old) beyond the normal child-age and, for many days, got at school late due to house chores and the long distance he had to cover to get on campus.

From the "Jack-o'-lantern" K-Diablo Public School in Waisue Town, Joe went to G.W. Gibson Elementary and junior High School in Sinyeah Town for his elementary education. He attended Gboveh Junior High School to complete his Junior education, and finally enrolled at the G.W. Gibson High School on the Capitol Bye-Pass where he obtain his high school certificate. He's a prospective graduate of the Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida (IBB) Graduate School of International Studies for a Master's Degree (MA) in International Relations, University of Liberia. He also holds a BA Degree in Sociology , Minor in Demography and Elective in Anthropology, University of Liberia, and several other trainings including Leadership Advancement Program (LAP) at the Ministry of Finance (now MFDP), Taxation for Income Tax Administration.

Joe's desire to be an impactful public servant was birthed in childhood. At a tender age in primary school, he began to give signals of the selfless and God-fearing servant leader he would grow up to become----always standing up for others, lowering his personal quest for material possession and focusing more on progressive growth by humbly



pursuing mentorship that would prepare him become the committed public servant and team player he is today. He became class president as early as in 4th grade at G.W. Gibson Elementary and Junior High School in Bong County and also served as justice minister in the student council government at Junior High in Bong county.

Joe got into politics in 1987, serving the late Edward Kommo Sackor, Minister of Internal Affairs (now Ministry of Local Government) as a messenger (page), mainly between the office of the Internal Affairs Minister and the Executive Mansion. On this role, he travelled with Minister Sackor severally but one travel particularly remains in memory---a trip to Nimba County as part of efforts to resolve the conflict between Nimbaians and the Grand Gedeans prior to the outbreak of the full-scale war launched by the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL).

Prior to joining the Liberia Land Authority, Joe served as National Vice Chairman for Political and Governmental Affairs of the Rainbow Alliance (RA); Training Officer, Revenue Department, Ministry of Finance; Tax Analyst & Tax Officer, Ministry of Finance; Labour Consultant, Holiday Inn Hotel; Labour Inspector, Ministry of Labour; Research Officer, Ministry of Internal Affairs (Local Government).

When Joe joined the management team at the Liberia Land Authority in 2024, driven by his history of people-centered advocacy and teamwork, he, as the principal deputy, has advocated for, among other things, workers' welfare, community engagement in creating awareness on land rights and legal approach to land crises/disputes. He has also remain a supportive deputy to Chairman Samuel F. Kpakio and other dedicated members of the LLA team, duly executing the mandate of the Land

Authority which is to, amongst other things, develop policies on a continuous basis, undertake actions and implement programs in support of land governance, including land administration and management, as well as control and manage effectively, impartially, and in the interest of equitable development, access to and use of public land and government land, except reserves, protected areas, proposed protected areas, and diplomatic missions, as of the Effective Date of the LLA Act.

Joe is married with several children. He's a devout Christian, a member of the Seven Day Adventist Church, Camp Johnson Road. He's a passionate football (soccer) fan, domestically an Invincible Eleven (IE) supporter and internationally a Barcelona and Arsenal supporter.



Agriculture Ministry Reports Major Gains, Seeks Stronger Backing to Sustain Sector Reforms

By HardFacts Magazine

Nearly two years after the launch of the government's ambitious agricultural reform agenda, the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) has reported significant progress in expanding food production, strengthening agricultural infrastructure, attracting private investment, and laying the policy foundation for long-term sector transformation. However, the Ministry has warned that inadequate funding, limited technical capacity, and weak rural infrastructure continue to threaten the pace of progress.

The Ministry presented its Progress and Challenges Report (2024–2026) to Cabinet on June 11, providing what officials described as a comprehensive assessment of achievements recorded under the National Agriculture Development Plan (NADP) 2024–2030, popularly known as the "Liberians Feed Yourselves Agenda." The report also outlined key policy recommendations and sought Cabinet approval for measures aimed at accelerating agricultural modernization.

Agriculture remains one of Liberia's most important economic sectors, employing a majority of the country's population and serving as a critical source of food and rural livelihoods. Despite its vast agricultural potential, the sector has historically faced numerous challenges, including low productivity, limited mechanization, poor infrastructure, inadequate financing, and heavy dependence on imported food. The current administration identified agriculture as a national development priority and launched the Liberians Feed Yourselves Agenda to reverse these trends by increasing domestic production and strengthening agricultural value chains.

Since the launch of the initiative, the Ministry reported that considerable progress had been made in developing the policy framework needed to guide the sector. Among the most notable achievements were the completion of the National Agriculture Development Plan, the Ministry's Five-Year Strategic Plan (2025–2030), Liberia's Food and Nutrition Crisis Preparedness Plan,

and the establishment of the Seed Development and Certification Agency (SDCA). According to the report, these policy instruments are expected to improve planning, strengthen seed quality assurance, and build resilience against future food and nutrition crises.

The report noted that the National Agriculture Development Plan places particular emphasis on strategic value chains with the greatest potential to improve food security, generate employment, and increase exports. These include rice, cassava, cocoa, coffee, rubber, cashew, livestock, fisheries and aquaculture, as well as high-value fruit crops such as avocado, citrus, papaya, mango, and banana.

To translate policy into measurable results, the Ministry established ambitious production targets over the next five years. These include developing 20,000 hectares of mechanized maize farms, establishing 25,000 hectares of new cocoa plantations, expanding coffee cultivation by 15,000 hectares, developing 10,000 hectares of cashew



BEFORE



AFTER





plantations, increasing vegetable production by 2,000 hectares, and improving rubber cultivation on 20,000 hectares. Achieving these targets, according to the Ministry, will require an estimated investment of US\$717.8 million, financed through contributions from the Government of Liberia, development partners, private investors, and farmers' organizations.

Beyond policy development, the report highlighted tangible improvements in agricultural production. Lowland rice production expanded in Gbedin and Fuamah as irrigation systems were rehabilitated to support year-round farming. Mechanized cluster cassava production also gained momentum, allowing farmers to increase productivity and improve access to commercial markets.

Tree crop development emerged as another area of notable progress. During

the reporting period, more than 14,400 hectares of hybrid cocoa plantations were established across producing communities. To ensure the long-term availability of improved planting materials, the Ministry also established a 19.5-hectare National Cocoa Seed Garden in Beeplay, Nimba County. In addition, thousands of improved seedlings—including 50,000 hybrid coconut seedlings, 10,000 avocado seedlings, 10,000 citrus seedlings, and 30,000 pawpaw seedlings—were prepared for distribution to farmers across several counties.

Infrastructure development also featured prominently in the Ministry's report. Approximately 200 kilometers of farm-to-market roads were constructed in Bong, Lofa, and Nimba Counties, improving farmers' access to markets and reducing post-harvest transportation costs. Five modern agricultural markets equipped with

solar power, water systems, warehouses, and sanitation facilities were completed along the Ganta–Zwedru corridor. The Ministry also established 13 agricultural mechanization hubs across six counties to improve farmers' access to modern equipment and rehabilitated irrigation infrastructure capable of supporting 825 hectares of irrigated rice production.

The report further pointed to growing investor confidence in Liberia's agricultural sector. Mainland Group began construction of a US\$10 million cassava starch processing factory and announced plans for a US\$10 million rice production and processing facility in Fuamah, Lower Bong County. The company also proposed a US\$36 million investment in rubber production and processing. Meanwhile, JR Farms announced plans to invest US\$60 million in Liberia's coffee industry, reinforcing expectations



that private-sector participation will play an increasingly important role in expanding agricultural value chains and creating employment.

Recognizing that sustainable agricultural growth requires skilled human resources, the Ministry also strengthened partnerships with educational institutions. During the reporting period, collaboration agreements were signed with eight universities and colleges to support agricultural research, innovation, and youth training. The Ministry also worked with the Ministry of Youth and Sports to rehabilitate the Tumutu and Bentol Youth Agricultural Training Centers, while expanding international cooperation through partnerships with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA). Liberia also joined the FAO's One Country One Priority Product Programme, focusing on Liberica coffee, and the Hand-in-Hand Initiative, aimed at attracting greater agricultural investment.

While acknowledging these achievements, the Ministry cautioned that several longstanding constraints continued to slow the pace of agricultural transformation. Chief

among them were shortages of qualified technical personnel, inadequate budgetary allocations, deteriorating county infrastructure, and limited operational funding for regional offices. According to the report, these challenges have affected programme implementation and reduced the Ministry's ability to deliver extension services to farming communities across the country.

Budgetary constraints featured prominently in the presentation. The Ministry reported that approved allocations remained significantly below requested amounts over the reporting period, limiting investments in infrastructure, staffing, and programme implementation. Officials argued that without increased financing, many of the objectives outlined in the National Agriculture Development Plan could be delayed.

To address the technical capacity gap, the Ministry requested funding to recruit 348 additional technical personnel, including Clan Technicians, Regional Specialists, and District Agriculture Officers, at an estimated annual cost of US\$2.36 million. It also recommended increased financial support for county and regional offices

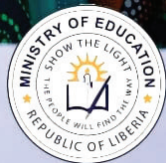
and the rehabilitation of aging ministry facilities throughout the country.

Among the major policy proposals submitted to Cabinet were the establishment of the Agriculture Enterprise Development Bank (AEDB) as a public-private financial institution to improve access to affordable financing for farmers and agribusinesses, as well as the procurement of 100 farm tractors to accelerate mechanized farming nationwide.

The Ministry concluded that although substantial progress had been made in strengthening Liberia's agricultural sector between 2024 and 2026, achieving the full objectives of the Liberians Feed Yourselves Agenda would depend on sustained government commitment, stronger financial investment, increased private-sector participation, and continued support from development partners. With agriculture remaining central to Liberia's economy and food security, the Ministry argued that continued investment in the sector would not only improve rural livelihoods but also contribute significantly to national economic growth and long-term development.



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION STEPS UP EFFORTS TO GET CHILDREN BACK TO SCHOOL



By HardFacts Magazine

The Ministry of Education in August of 2026 embarked on its school feeding and the Back to My Classroom campaign including free primary school registration aimed at returning 250,000 children to school by 2029.

As part of these efforts, the Government has signed a new three-year memorandum of understanding with the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) to strengthen and sustain the national school feeding programme.

Under the agreement, the Government will assume greater responsibility for planning, financing and implementing school feeding, while WFP will continue to provide technical and institutional support.

Education Minister Jarso Maley Jallah highlighted that school meals

are important to keeping children in school, improving attendance and concentration, and supporting learning. The Ministry also plans to expand its School Connect digital platform to more than 300 schools to improve real-time monitoring of meal deliveries and strengthen accountability.

WFP Country Director Agbessi Komla Amewoa described the agreement as the formal start of the 2026/27 school feeding programme and reaffirmed WFP's commitment to supporting the country. The partnership is expected to help strengthen national systems and increase government ownership and financing of school feeding over time.

Free Primary School Registration

Alongside the school feeding initiative, the Government is removing registration fees for

children enrolling in public schools from kindergarten through Grade 6.

Minister Jallah said the policy is intended to remove a major financial barrier to school enrollment. Schools will receive support to cover costs associated with the policy through direct school financing under the Liberia EXCEL Project, the Equitable Funding Formula and the Government's longer-term Education Investment Strategy.

The minister also warned public schools against replacing registration fees with unauthorized charges. To ensure compliance, the Ministry of Education is deploying 160 monitoring and evaluation interns across the country. Working with district and county education officials and other relevant institutions, the interns will help identify and report violations.



The measure is designed to expand access while ensuring that schools continue to receive the resources required to operate effectively.

Bringing 250,000 Children Back to School

These interventions form part of the Government's broader effort to address the barriers keeping children out of school. President Joseph Nyuma Boakai has renewed his administration's commitment to the Back to My Classroom campaign, which was launched in 2024 with a goal of returning 250,000 children to school by 2029.

The first phase, being implemented in 2026, targets 80,000 children across seven priority counties. At a mid-term review of the campaign's national steering committee, President Boakai stressed that achieving the target would require sustained collaboration among government institutions, local authorities, communities, families, schools, civil society organizations and development partners.

He also endorsed the expansion of the strengthened campaign model to six additional priority counties, following the establishment of



the first county-level structure in Gbarpolu.

Minister Jallah noted that enrolling children is only the beginning. Poverty, long distances to school, disability, lack of birth certificates and inadequate school facilities remain significant barriers to enrollment, regular attendance and retention.

The Back to My Classroom campaign therefore brings together the education, health, gender, children and social protection, local government, finance and development sectors, along with national statistics

officials, international partners and civil society organizations.

Since its launch, the initiative has drawn lessons from a pilot in Grand Bassa, established a county steering committee and secretariat in Gbarpolu, and developed systems for referrals, individual child tracking and monitoring continued attendance.

The ultimate goal of these initiatives however, is not simply to bring children into classrooms, but to create the conditions that enable them to remain in school and succeed.



Strengthening Liberia's Democracy:

How UNDP's LESP+ is Helping Build a More Inclusive, Transparent, and Accountable Future

By HardFacts Magazine

A Democratic Journey Built on Resilience and Hope

When Liberians go to the polls, they are participating in a story that extends far beyond the choice of political leaders. Each election represents years of determination, resilience, and collective effort to rebuild a nation and strengthen the foundations of peace and democracy. The moments when citizens freely express their choices, when power changes hands peacefully, and when communities engage in shaping their future reflect the progress Liberia has made and the continued commitment of its people to building a more inclusive and accountable society.

That progress, however, has not happened by chance. Over the past two

decades, Liberia has worked to rebuild public institutions, strengthen the rule of law, and restore confidence in democratic governance. Elections have become a regular feature of national life, citizens are increasingly engaged in public affairs, and democratic institutions continue to evolve in response to changing expectations. These achievements represent important milestones, but democracy remains a continuous journey—one that requires institutions to adapt, citizens to participate, and leaders to uphold their responsibilities.

Beyond Elections: Building Stronger Democratic Institutions

Strengthening democracy today means more than organizing successful elections. It means ensuring that public institutions have the capacity to serve effectively, that citizens have confidence

in the systems created to represent them, and that women, young people, and marginalized communities have meaningful opportunities to contribute to national decision-making.

It also requires creating space for peaceful political competition, constructive dialogue, civic participation, and institutions that can respond to the needs of the people with transparency and integrity.

It is within this broader democratic transformation that the Liberia Elections Support Project Plus (LESP+) continues to make an important contribution. Implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in partnership with the Government of Liberia and a broad network of national and international partners, LESP+ supports long-term democratic development by strengthening electoral institutions, promoting inclusive participation, improving governance systems, and contributing to peacebuilding efforts.

Since its launch in September 2020, with implementation continuing through December 2026, the project has adopted an electoral cycle approach—recognizing that democracy is built not only during elections but through the continuous work that takes place before and after them.

Strengthening Electoral Systems and Public Confidence

Strong elections do not begin on Election Day. They are built through years of preparation, institutional strengthening, public engagement, and trust-building. Electoral institutions require skilled personnel, effective systems, reliable planning, and the confidence of citizens.

Communities need access to accurate information and opportunities to participate meaningfully in public life. Political actors need platforms for constructive engagement, while institutions must have the ability



to manage challenges fairly and transparently. These everyday efforts determine whether elections become isolated events or part of a stronger democratic culture.

Much of Liberia's democratic progress has depended on strengthening the institutions responsible for protecting and managing electoral processes. Working closely with the National Elections Commission (NEC), LESP+ has provided technical assistance, institutional capacity development, and operational support aimed at improving electoral administration and reinforcing public confidence.

These efforts have contributed to stronger planning, improved coordination among election stakeholders, enhanced communication systems, and greater institutional readiness.

Supporting Credible and Peaceful Elections

The value of this support became particularly evident during the 2020 Special Senatorial Election and Constitutional Referendum and the 2023 Presidential and Legislative Elections.

During these electoral periods, LESP+ supported initiatives that

improved preparedness, strengthened coordination among stakeholders, expanded public information efforts, and contributed to addressing misinformation and disinformation. These interventions formed part of a wider national effort to promote peaceful, credible, and inclusive electoral processes.

Yet elections represent only one part of a much larger democratic process. Between electoral cycles, democracy depends on citizens remaining engaged, institutions remaining responsive, and communities having opportunities to influence decisions that affect their lives.

Expanding Participation and Inclusion

Through civic education, dialogue platforms, and partnerships with civil society organizations, political parties, community leaders, and other stakeholders, LESP+ supports efforts to deepen democratic participation beyond the ballot box.

Expanding political

Inclusion remains central to building a representative democracy. Women and young people bring valuable perspectives, ideas, and leadership to Liberia's future, yet social, economic,

and structural barriers continue to affect their participation.

Through leadership initiatives, civic engagement activities, and policy dialogue, LESP+ contributes to creating opportunities for broader participation and supporting a political environment where more Liberians can play an active role in national development.

Strengthening Accountability and Responsive Governance

As public participation grows, democratic institutions must also become more accountable and responsive. Strong governance depends not only on elections but on institutions capable of exercising oversight, promoting transparency, and ensuring that public decisions are subject to meaningful scrutiny.

Through its support to Liberia's Legislature and Legislative Secretariat, LESP+ contributes to strengthening legislative capacity, improving oversight functions, enhancing budget analysis, and encouraging collaboration among lawmakers, civil society organizations, and the media.

These efforts help promote informed public discussion and reinforce citizens' confidence in democratic institutions.



Peace as a Foundation for Democratic Progress

Peace remains a central part of Liberia's democratic progress. Elections are strongest when political competition is peaceful and disagreements are addressed through dialogue rather than division.

Working with government institutions, security actors, ECOWAS, United Nations agencies, political parties, and civil society organizations, LESP+ supports conflict prevention initiatives, early warning mechanisms, and platforms for peaceful engagement.

During the 2023 elections, these efforts complemented commitments made under the Farmington Declaration and contributed to maintaining a climate of political tolerance and peaceful participation.

Partnership for a Stronger Democratic Future

None of this progress would be possible without partnership. Liberia's democratic journey has been shaped by the collective efforts of national institutions, development partners, civil society organizations, the media, and citizens themselves.

Support from Ireland, Sweden, the European Union, Germany, and UNDP has enabled LESP+ to invest in stronger electoral systems, more capable institutions, inclusive governance approaches, and sustainable peacebuilding initiatives.

Liberia's democratic future will continue to depend on the strength of its institutions, the participation of its citizens, and the partnerships that support its ongoing transformation. The experience of LESP+ demonstrates that democratic progress is not achieved through single moments or individual interventions.

It is built gradually through

institutions that earn public trust, systems that promote accountability, and citizens who remain engaged in shaping their country's future.

Building a Democracy That Serves All Liberians

Democracy will ultimately be measured not only by the holding of elections but by the quality of governance that follows—the ability of institutions to serve citizens, the inclusion of diverse voices in national conversations, and the resilience of systems designed to protect peace and stability.

Through continued collaboration and shared commitment, Liberia is building a democratic foundation that is more transparent, more inclusive, and better prepared to meet the aspirations of present and future generations.



Reginald Goodridge Sr.

KING SUAKOKO, REGINALD GOODRIDGE SR. SEEKS NEW PARADIGM FOR LIBERIAN AND AFRICAN DIPLOMACY

By HardFacts Magazine

Diplomacy today goes beyond protocol and official ceremonies. For Liberia, it is increasingly an instrument for protecting national interests, attracting investment, building strategic partnerships and competing for opportunities in a changing global environment.

Recognizing this shift, the Gabriel L. Dennis Foreign Service Institute (FSI), under the leadership of Director General Hon. Reginald Goodridge, is

repositioning diplomatic training to prepare Liberians for the economic, political and strategic demands of modern diplomacy.

Goodridge brings extensive government, academic and communications experience to the task. He previously served as Minister of Information, Culture and Tourism and Deputy Minister of State for Public Affairs and Press Secretary to the President. He has also lectured in diplomacy, geopolitics,

telecommunications management and diplomatic communications. His approach combines professional competence with patriotism, discipline, national pride and an appreciation of Liberia's history.

Established in 1946 and given legislative backing in 1951, the FSI was created to prepare Liberian diplomats and Foreign Service personnel for assignments abroad. Today, under his leadership, the Institute is expanding its mandate through research, area studies, economic diplomacy and professional development.

A major focus is economic diplomacy. While President Joseph Nyuma Boakai Jr. provides the broader direction of foreign policy under the ARREST Agenda for Inclusive Development, the Director General believes diplomats must be equipped to translate international engagement into tangible opportunities for the country.

FSI training therefore covers agriculture, tourism, education, investment, international trade and national security, equipping diplomats to identify opportunities, build partnerships and connect Liberia with markets, capital, technology and institutions.

The effort also seeks to strengthen Liberia's ability to compete for positions in international and regional organizations. Goodridge argues that the country has lost opportunities because it lacked professionals with specialized expertise, pointing to Ghana, Sierra Leone, Nigeria and Kenya as countries that have developed stronger pipelines for international careers.

To address this gap, the FSI operates two principal training tracks: an orientation and refresher program for ambassadors and senior officials, and an intensive 11-month academic program leading to a postgraduate diploma. The curriculum is being updated to include climate change, international finance, geopolitics and area studies. The Institute has also recruited 18 professors,

including 13 with PhDs.

The vision extends beyond Liberia. The FSI has established partnerships with diplomatic academies and foreign-service institutions in Ghana, Guinea, Cameroon, Egypt and Morocco, supporting its theme, “Setting a New Paradigm for African Diplomacy.”

For Goodridge, Africa must examine how it conducts diplomacy and ensure that its practices reflect the continent’s own history, interests and realities.

“We need to begin looking at diplomacy from an African perspective,” he said.

That perspective is particularly relevant to Africa’s natural resources. The continent possesses significant deposits of critical minerals and rare-earth elements, yet much of its wealth continues to be exported in raw or minimally processed form. Goodridge advocates greater local processing, investment in laboratories and technical education, and the development of industries capable of moving African economies higher up the value chain.

“Why should Africa continue to export its resources in raw form?” he asked.

The question, he argues, is both economic and diplomatic. Greater local processing could create jobs, strengthen technical capacity and allow African countries to retain more value from their natural resources while negotiating from a stronger position internationally.

Professional character is another important part of the training philosophy. The FSI emphasizes emotional intelligence, discipline, communication, etiquette, personal presentation and professional conduct. As Goodridge puts it, “Every action can reflect on Liberia.”

Language training is also expanding, with English and Spanish currently offered, Arabic being introduced and Chinese under consideration. The Madame Suakoko Program is strengthening women’s participation in diplomacy, with 18 women graduating



from the previous cohort and 22 enrolled in the current program.

The transformation is also evident in technology and institutional capacity-building. Four classrooms have been added to the Institute’s original one, while academics, linguists and other specialists have been recruited. In another significant initiative, 178 employees of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs have benefited from computer-literacy and secretarial science training.

An Ambassadorial Lecture Series, plans for a Zoom technology center, electronic administrative processes and digital grading are further modernizing the Institute and expanding access to international expertise.

The academic agenda is also being strengthened through efforts to establish a master’s degree program in diplomacy in partnership with the University of Liberia. The proposed arrangement could allow postgraduate diploma graduates to transfer credits toward

advanced studies.

The FSI has also secured approximately 5.2 acres of land associated with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for a proposed new headquarters and international conference facilities. The project could increase Liberia’s capacity to host major international events while providing a permanent home for diplomatic education, research and engagement.

The next challenge is to ensure that these reforms translate into lasting institutional capacity and tangible national gains. Under Goodridge’s leadership, the FSI is moving beyond its traditional role as a diplomatic training center and developing into a platform for producing professionals capable of representing Liberia effectively, pursuing international opportunities, protecting national interests and engaging Africa and the wider world with knowledge, confidence and strategic purpose.



Hon. Sekou Dukuly

NPA PUSHES REFORM AGENDA AS LIBERIA'S PORTS RECORD PROGRESS

By HardFacts Magazine

The National Port Authority (NPA), under the leadership of Managing Director Hon. Sekou Dukuly, says the port sector recorded significant progress during the first six months of 2026, driven by increased container traffic, faster vessel handling and investment in infrastructure and technology.

The progress is part of the NPA's RESET Strategic Plan 2025–2030, which seeks to improve revenue collection, operational efficiency, safety and security, environmental management and digitalization. The NPA oversees the Country's four main ports and plays a critical role in the movement of goods into and out of the country.

Record vessel call

A major milestone came on 9 June when the CMA CGM Springs became the largest vessel ever to berth in Liberia.

The 234.86m vessel arrived at the Freeport of Monrovia carrying about 43,000 tons of cargo in approximately 3,000 containers. The NPA said the ship was discharged within two days, with handling rates reaching nearly 60 container moves per hour. Beyond the single vessel call, container traffic also rose, accounting for more than 40% of total throughput in the first half of 2026, compared with about 24% in 2024.

Freeport Operations and Automation

Meanwhile, the Freeport of Monrovia continued operating around the clock. The NPA says the arrangement has helped reduce vessel waiting times and improve the reliability of shipping schedules.

At the same time, the authority is exploring greater competition in terminal operations, including separating general cargo from container handling and attracting a second terminal operator. Technology is also playing a growing role. In May,

Liberia introduced its first automated digital gate system at the Freeport.

The system, which is being implemented in phases, uses facial recognition for pedestrians, automatic number-plate recognition for vehicles and radio-frequency identification technology. The NPA expects the system to reduce congestion, speed up cargo movement, improve revenue collection and strengthen compliance with international port-security standards. Security personnel will continue to oversee access and operations.

Dredging and Port Development

Alongside these operational changes, the NPA is preparing for major dredging at the Freeport, where sediment accumulation has reduced the channel depth from its designed 15m to about 11m. Restoring the channel is expected to improve access for larger vessels and support the port's ability to handle increased traffic.

Development is also continuing at other ports. In Buchanan, preparations are under way for a new NPA headquarters, while redevelopment plans remain linked to the authority's partnership with Morocco's Tanger Med.

Further south, renovation work has progressed in Greenville, while planned improvements in Harper are aimed at attracting regional cargo currently passing through San Pedro in neighboring Ivory Coast.

International Cooperation

To support these developments, the NPA has continued to strengthen its international partnerships.

In March, discussions with HAROPA PORT in France focused on smart-port technology, automated terminal operations, infrastructure, staff training and environmental sustainability. The authority has also engaged with the Port of Antwerp and held preliminary discussions with

potential partners in the United Arab Emirates and Nigeria. Through these partnerships, the NPA says Liberia can gain access to international expertise and technical knowledge in modern port management.

Tariff and Concession Reforms

On the commercial side, the authority says tariff reforms have increased revenue while making charges clearer and more predictable for businesses using the ports. The NPA is also reviewing the main container-terminal concession and renegotiating agreements covering marine services and cargo tracking. The aim, according to the authority, is to create more opportunities for Liberian companies to provide services traditionally handled by foreign firms.

In June, the NPA launched the MPA initiative, which it says is intended to promote transparency, trade facilitation and public communication.

Safety and Local Skills

While modernization remains a focus, safety and security continue to be central to the reform program. The NPA says it has maintained compliance with international ship and port facility security standards while strengthening efforts to combat illegal fishing in Liberian waters.

Environmental sustainability is also incorporated into the RESET plan, particularly in infrastructure and modernization projects. At the same time, efforts to build local maritime expertise are gaining momentum. During the first quarter, Liberia certified its first locally trained marine pilot and tugboat captain. The NPA estimates that about 500 Liberians are employed across its operations nationwide and says it is working to reduce reliance on foreign maritime personnel.

LMC Pier Rehabilitation

Another major project is the rehabilitation of the LMC Pier at the Freeport. A joint Liberian and



Moroccan engineering team has been installing heavy-duty mooring bollards to strengthen the quay and improve berthing safety.

The work is being carried out by Moroccan port operator Marsa Maroc under a five-year agreement with the NPA. Once completed, the facility is expected to improve bulk and clinker handling, increase berth productivity and help reduce congestion.

In a separate workforce decision announced in July, the NPA said contractors working for the authority would be employed directly. Management said the move would improve job stability and staff welfare.

Priorities for the rest of 2026

Authority says its priorities include the Freeport dredging programme, continued cooperation with HAROPA PORT and the review of the main container-terminal concession. The authority also plans to strengthen its workforce, modernize port infrastructure and expand Liberia's export capacity.

The measures form part of the NPA's broader effort to make Liberia's ports more efficient, competitive and secure while increasing their contribution to the national economy.



A LIGHT LONG AWAITED:

WHY BUCHANAN MUST NOW GUARD WHAT TOOK 34 YEARS TO REGAIN

By Engr. Dehyu C. Zangar

I was born into darkness - not metaphorical, but literal, unbroken darkness. In 1992, one year before I took my first breath, the lights of Buchanan went off. They stayed off through my birth, my childhood, my university years, and the beginning of my career as an electrical engineer - a cruel irony I have carried like a stone in my chest for as long as I can remember. I built my entire professional life around a force I had never once seen illuminate my own city. I studied power systems and automation while my neighborhood lay in darkness, the night lit only by flickering candles.

For 34 years, the people of Buchanan carried this darkness not just in their streets, but in their spirits. Children were born, grew old, and had children of their own without ever knowing what it meant

to flip a switch and watch a room fill with light. Grandparents told stories of a Buchanan that once glowed at night - stories my generation dismissed as legend.

And then, it happened.

Today, lights blazed once more across Buchanan, from Sugarcane Farm Community to Lower Hardlandville. When I first saw them, I wept - not polite tears of professional satisfaction, but the raw tears of a man watching a ghost story become real. This is not simply infrastructure returning to a city. This is resurrection!

But I will not let sentiments blind me to the truth: this fragile new dawn could still be extinguished. And I refuse to let that happen.

A Community Reconnecting with Light

Let me tell you what light means after thirty-four years without it. It means a mother no longer sends her son walking

miles through the dark to charge a phone that might save a life. It means a shopkeeper, who watched his father shutter the family store at dusk for 34 years, can finally keep his lamp burning and imagine growth. It means a girl who once studied by flicker of a dangerous kerosene lamp can now read after sunset without fear.

I remember that girl. I was that boy.

Streetlights now push back a darkness that once concealed danger and fear for every market woman and every commuter walking home with her heart in her throat. That fear is beginning to lift. But this miracle is fragile - a candle flame cupped against the wind. While the Liberia Electricity Corporation (LEC) and its partners have fought valiantly to restore what darkness stole, a quiet enemy still stalks this progress: power theft and illegal connections. Left unchecked, this corrosion could drag us back into the darkness we just escaped.



The Persistent Challenge of Power Theft

This enemy wears many faces: poverty disguised as desperation, misinformation spreading like smoke, and distrust hardened by broken promises. In Buchanan, that distrust has legitimate roots - in billing confusion, inaccessible meters, and complaints that vanish into bureaucratic silence. When a family's cry for help goes unanswered long enough, an illegal connection stops feeling like theft and starts feeling like survival. I understand this, because I have watched my own neighbors wrestle with it. Infrastructure alone will never be enough. We must fight for trust with the same ferocity LEC used to restore the wires.

A Community Engagement Roadmap: The Battle for Trust

Restoring trust requires presence, honesty, and relentless communication. Town halls must sweep across Buchanan with plain-spoken answers about billing, metering, and complaints - answers residents have been denied for 34

years. These gatherings must include community leaders, women's groups, youth, marketers and shopkeepers alike. Every neighborhood must raise its own Community Power Committee - residents trained by LEC and trusted by their communities, proving this light belongs to the people. We must wage an unrelenting campaign against power theft through radio, theater, and real stories from real families. Statistics do not break hearts; stories do.

When residents cry out for help, someone must answer quickly and humanely - through hotlines, WhatsApp channels, and mobile service booths. Every delayed response is a small betrayal of what this light represents. Our young people deserve special urgency. What if we trained the boys who might otherwise tap illegally into a line, turning potential saboteurs into fierce protectors? Youth-led watchdog groups, paired with real jobs, could transform an excluded population into the backbone of Buchanan's electrical future.

Finally, let residents claim this victory through friendly competition - a "Best Compliance Community" award that makes responsible electricity use a badge of honor, with local businesses as sponsors of this shared triumph.

Running Power Operations in a City Where Poverty Runs Deep

Buchanan is not Monrovia. Any strategy borrowed from wealthier cities will fail here, and failure means darkness again. We need a tariff structure with a heart - a lifeline rate keeping a single bulb burning in even the poorest household, while asking heavier users to shoulder a fairer share. Prepaid metering must give families the dignity of controlling their own spending, rather than facing bills that become an excuse for illegal reconnection.

Where industry is scarce, let electricity become the engine of opportunity: a refrigerator for a fish seller, a tailor's shop opens past dusk, a phone-charging stall and a beauty salon. Let residents themselves become meter readers and apprentices - active builders, not passive



recipients. And let LEC fight relentlessly against loss, so the burden of sustainability never falls entirely on families with almost nothing left to give.

Reliability, affordability, and trust cannot compete against each other here. They must stand together, or the whole structure collapses.

Community Ownership: Guarding What We Bled to Regain

Infrastructure arriving after 34 years of darkness is not a gift. It is an inheritance, paid for in generations who lived and died without ever seeing their city lit. Every pole, transformer, and meter must become sacred to the people beside it. When someone tampers with a transformer at night, that is an assault on a mother's ability to protect her child and a shopkeeper's hope for a better year. Silence in the face of this threat is complicity. When a neighbor sees cables stripped under moonlight and says nothing, that silence writes the next outage into existence. Guard the ground around every pole as fiercely as your own doorstep. Keep children away from live wires. Demand that only trained, authorized hands touch this system. Pay your bills not out of obligation, but

reverence for what that payment protects.

Speak proudly of this victory to every visitor and skeptic. Do not let anyone normalize the theft of what we fought 34 years to reclaim. This is the spirit Buchanan must carry forward - a people who do not merely receive light, but stand guard over it, so no child born here again asks, "What does it feel like when the lights come on?"

A Call for Collective Responsibility

Electricity has returned to Buchanan, but this is not yet a victory secured. It is a fragile beginning that depends on whether we choose, together, to protect it and that must be concerning to everyone. This burden belongs to every mother, every child studying by bulb instead of flame, every shopkeeper counting earnings under electric light for the first time in living memory. It belongs to me - a son of Buchanan who dreamed of this moment and now stands, disbelieving and determined, in the light he never thought he would see. If Buchanan rises to meet this moment together, the darkness that swallowed 34 years of our history will finally be over - not just for us, but for

every child born after this day, who will never have to know what it means to wait for the lights to come home.

About the Author

Engr. Dehyu C. Zangar is an electrical engineer with eight years of experience in designing and optimizing advanced power systems. Born in Grand Bassa County in 1993, he grew up in a city without electricity - an experience that fuels his dedication to expanding reliable energy access across Liberia. He holds a master's degree in electrical and electronics engineering, specializing in power systems and automation, a field essential for ensuring reliable, efficient, and modern electricity delivery. He lectures at the University of Liberia, Faith University College, and Grand Bassa University, where he promotes advanced energy knowledge and community-centered solutions. His work focuses on improving electricity availability, strengthening community partnerships, and raising public awareness to support sustainable national energy development.

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By HardFacts Magazine

Grand Bassa County, renowned for its rich history and strategic location, has long embodied both the promise and the persistent challenges of Liberia. Today, the county stands at a pivotal moment. Deep-seated divisions within its politics and society threaten to hinder its progress, yet these same challenges offer a unique opportunity: the chance to forge a new path toward inclusive, accountable, and sustainable development. Seizing this moment will require not only a clear vision, but also practical actions grounded in successful African and Liberian models.

Healing Divisions: Building Trust through Inclusive Governance

The most urgent task is to address the deep-seated divisions that have hindered Grand Bassa's progress. Political rivalries and generational divides have too often turned the county's diversity into a source of weakness rather than strength. To overcome this, Grand Bassa must institutionalize inclusive governance.

A County Development and Accountability Forum (CDAF) could serve as the cornerstone of this new approach. By bringing together local government, traditional authorities, civil society, youth, women's groups, and the private sector, the CDAF would create a regular, transparent space for dialogue and decision-making. This model draws inspiration from Nimba County's "County Sitting," where participatory budgeting has given citizens a direct voice in allocating development funds.

A similar example is Zambia's Constituency Development Fund (CDF), introduced in 1995 to decentralize development and ensure communities have direct access to funds for local projects. By empowering local leaders and citizens to identify priorities and oversee implementation, the CDF has helped bridge political and social divides, foster accountability, and deliver tangible improvements in health, education, and infrastructure. Grand Bassa can adapt this approach

to ensure that development resources are managed transparently and that all communities - regardless of political or ethnic affiliation - have a stake in the county's progress.

In South Africa, multi-stakeholder forums have helped bridge post-apartheid divides and ensure that local development reflects the needs of all communities. For Grand Bassa, such a forum would not only improve accountability but also foster a sense of shared purpose and mutual respect.

Empowering Youth: Turning Frustration into Innovation

Grand Bassa's youth are its greatest asset, but also its most vulnerable group. High unemployment, limited educational opportunities, and political patronage have left many young people feeling marginalized and frustrated. Yet, across Africa, youth-led innovation is transforming economies and societies.

To harness this potential, Grand Bassa



should establish a Youth Skills and Entrepreneurship Center in partnership with local businesses, NGOs, and international donors. This center would offer vocational training, digital literacy, business incubation, and access to micro-grants for youth-led enterprises. Liberia's Youth Opportunities Project (YOP) has already demonstrated the impact of such interventions, providing thousands of young people with the skills and resources to start their own businesses or find meaningful employment. In Rwanda, the "YouthConnect" initiative has connected young entrepreneurs with mentors, investors, and government support, leading to the creation of thousands of jobs. By adapting these models, Grand Bassa can transform its youth from political bystanders or instruments of division into engines of development and social change.

Fostering Community Reconciliation Social Dialogues Cohesion: and

No development strategy can succeed

without social cohesion. The wounds of past conflicts and political rivalries must be addressed openly and constructively. Grand Bassa can draw on both local and international models to foster reconciliation.

Structured community dialogues, facilitated by neutral and respected leaders, can provide a platform for honest conversation and collective problem-solving. Rwanda's National Unity and Reconciliation Commission has used "dialogue clubs" to bridge ethnic and political divides, while Liberia's own "Palava Hut" tradition offers a culturally resonant mechanism for conflict resolution. In Sierra Leone, "Fambul Tok" (Family Talk) has brought communities together to discuss grievances and chart a path forward after civil war. By institutionalizing such dialogues, Grand Bassa can begin to heal its divisions and build the trust necessary for sustainable development.

Ensuring Transparency: Citizen-

Led Infrastructure Monitoring

Corruption and mismanagement have eroded public trust and wasted precious resources in Grand Bassa. To reverse this, the county must embrace transparency and citizen oversight.

Zambia's CDF offers a valuable lesson here as well. The fund's success has depended on robust mechanisms for community participation and oversight, including public meetings, project monitoring committees, and transparent reporting. These practices have helped ensure that resources reach intended beneficiaries and that local leaders are held accountable.

A public infrastructure monitoring platform - whether digital or community-based - can empower citizens to track the progress of roads, schools, clinics, and other projects. Nigeria's BudgIT initiative has shown how digital tools and grassroots engagement can expose stalled projects and hold officials accountable. In Ghana, radio campaigns



like “Citi FM’s Fixing the Country” have mobilized public pressure to complete long-delayed infrastructure. For Grand Bassa, even low-tech solutions such as community notice boards, radio updates, and regular town hall meetings can make a significant difference. When citizens are informed and engaged, it becomes much harder for resources to be diverted or projects to be abandoned.

Driving Economic Growth: Diversification and Value Addition

Grand Bassa’s economy remains heavily dependent on extractive industries, with little value added locally. This leaves the county vulnerable to global price shocks and limits job creation. To build a more resilient and inclusive economy, Grand Bassa must prioritize diversification and value addition.

Supporting cooperatives and small businesses to process local resources - such as cassava, palm oil, timber, rubber, and fish - before they leave the

county can create jobs and increase incomes. The Ganta United Methodist Women’s Cooperative in Nimba County has shown how local processing and packaging can open new markets and empower women. Côte d’Ivoire’s investment in cocoa processing has allowed the country to capture more value from its exports, benefiting farmers and entrepreneurs alike. Grand Bassa can replicate these successes by providing technical assistance, access to finance, and market linkages for local producers.

Unlocking Tourism: Public-Private Partnerships for Sustainable Development

Tourism offers a largely untapped opportunity for Grand Bassa. With its beautiful coastline, historical sites, and vibrant culture, the county is well-positioned to attract both domestic and international visitors. However, realizing this potential requires investment in infrastructure, marketing, and local entrepreneurship.

A Grand Bassa Tourism Task Force, composed of government, private sector, and community representatives, can identify key sites for development, improve basic infrastructure, and promote the county as a destination. Robertsport in Grand Cape Mount County has successfully leveraged its natural beauty and surfing culture to attract visitors and investment, while The Gambia’s community-based tourism initiatives have empowered local people and preserved cultural heritage. By offering incentives for local entrepreneurs to develop guesthouses, tour services, and cultural events, Grand Bassa can ensure that tourism benefits the entire community and supports broader development goals.

A New Social Contract: From Division to Development

The journey from division to development is neither quick nor easy. It requires a new social contract - one based on inclusion, accountability, and shared responsibility. Grand Bassa’s leaders,



civil society, traditional authorities, and private sector must come together to set clear targets, assign responsibilities, and review progress publicly and regularly.

Examples from Liberia, Zambia, Nigeria, South Africa, and across Africa show that transformation is possible when communities are united, youth are empowered, and citizens are engaged. By embracing these lessons and committing to action, Grand Bassa can turn its history of division into a future of hope and prosperity. The time to act is now.

Liberia and Ethiopia Forge Strategic Partnership in Innovation and Education
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia – April 14, 2026

Liberia and Ethiopia, two nations with deep historical ties and shared commitments to African unity, are strengthening their partnership through new agreements that reflect both countries' long-standing vision for continental progress. Rooted in a legacy of cooperation dating back to the founding of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), now the African Union (AU), both nations have

consistently championed independence, solidarity, and development across Africa. Ethiopia's historic victory at the Battle of Adwa, a symbol of resistance against colonialism, resonates strongly with Liberia's own identity as Africa's first republic. Against this backdrop, President Joseph Nyuma Boakai, Sr.'s recent state visit to Ethiopia marks a significant step in advancing mutual priorities.

During the visit, President Boakai was received with full state honors at the National Palace in Addis Ababa. His engagements included a private meeting with his Ethiopian counterpart, followed by expanded bilateral discussions involving senior officials from both governments. These talks focused on enhancing cooperation in education, science, technology, and particularly Artificial Intelligence (AI)—areas seen as vital for driving sustainable growth and innovation.

The highlight of the visit was the signing of Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) between the two nations, formalized by their respective Ministers of Foreign Affairs. These agreements aim

to foster collaboration in AI, science, technology, and education, reflecting a shared vision of harnessing knowledge and innovation to build stronger societies.

Beyond diplomacy, President Boakai's itinerary showcased Ethiopia's advancements in key sectors. He laid a wreath at the Adwa Victory Memorial Monument, honoring Ethiopia's historic triumph and touring the adjoining museum. He also visited modern irrigation-based urban agricultural facilities, underscoring Ethiopia's strides in sustainable farming, and toured the Ethiopian Air Force Base, highlighting the breadth of cooperation between the two nations.

This state visit underscores Liberia's proactive efforts to forge strategic international partnerships that promote innovation, capacity-building, and sustainable development. For Ethiopia, it reaffirms its role as a hub of technological and agricultural progress in Africa. Together, the two nations are charting a path toward deeper collaboration, driven by shared history and a common vision for the future.



LIBERIA'S SILENT EMERGENCY:

Bringing **Mental Health** Out of the Shadows

By HardFacts Magazine

Source: WHO

On a humid Wednesday morning in Monrovia, a young man named Emmanuel rode in the back of a taxi, arguing heatedly with someone no one else could see. The driver glanced into his rear-view mirror, turned up the Afrobeats, and kept his eyes on the road - a familiar strategy for avoiding uncomfortable situations in the city. When the taxi pulled up in front of John F. Kennedy Medical Center, Emmanuel stepped out, straightened his shirt, and tried to lighten the mood before anyone could judge him.

"People think I'm crazy," he said with a half-joking, half-defensive laugh. "But if you saw what I saw during the war, you'd know I'm already doing very well."

Those nearby laughed politely, but their faces betrayed unease rather than amusement. That moment captured a central reality of mental health in Liberia: it is visible and widespread, yet still deeply misunderstood, stigmatized,

and chronically underfunded.

The Culture of Silence and Stigma

If you ask many Liberians about mental health, familiar answers emerge. Some say it is witchcraft. Others say it is the work of the devil. Many insist it is an issue affecting "those people"—never "us." People living with obvious mental illness are dismissed as "crazy." Young men who use drugs are mocked. Relatives who stay in bed for weeks are labeled "lazy" or accused of "thinking too much." Jokes and ridicules often fill the space where informed discussion and empathy should be. The loudness of the jokes reflects the discomfort behind them.

That discomfort has roots in a painful history. Fourteen years of brutal conflict turned children into combatants and neighborhoods into battlefields. The Ebola epidemic left families grieving, communities traumatized, and many people fearful of hospitals. Daily pressures of poverty, unemployment,

and uncertainty stretch both household budgets and emotional resilience.

Research by the World Health Organization and others up to at least 2024 suggests that Liberia carries a heavy burden of depression, anxiety, post traumatic stress disorder, and substance use disorders. Recent national figures must come from new surveys and updated reports by Liberia's Ministry of Health and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, but health workers already see the trend: more people are struggling, and services are not keeping pace.

Blessing's Story: A Private Battle Behind a Public Smile

In Paynesville, 23 year old Blessing presents a different image in public than she feels in private. By day, she seems on a promising path: she attends university, participates actively in her church, and runs a small but growing nail business. On Instagram, her life appears bright, neat, and full of potential.

At night, alone in her room, the picture changes. “There are days I wake up, and it feels like somebody is sitting on my chest,” she explains. “I can’t breathe properly, but nothing is wrong with my body. I just feel... finished.” At first, she interpreted her symptoms through a familiar lens: spiritual warfare. She fasted and prayed. She sought deliverance. When the heaviness did not lift, she turned to her family.

“They told me, ‘You are young; you have food; you are in school. People are in war somewhere, and you say you are sad?’” she recalls. One uncle said she needed “small beating and fasting,” implying discipline and prayer, not medical care. She began to wonder whether she was simply weak.

A friend quietly suggested she visit a nurse at a nearby clinic “who talks to people with that kind of problem.” In a small consultation room, the nurse listened, asked questions, and then offered a simple explanation that changed everything. “She told me depression is real,” Blessing says. “I almost cried. All this time, I thought I was just weak.”

The nurse was not a psychiatrist. She had received mental health training organized by the Ministry of Health and an international partner. She could not offer a quick cure, but she could recognize Blessing’s condition, give it a name, and outline a way forward. “Come back next week,” she said. “We’ll keep talking. And if it gets worse, we’ll refer you to someone at JFK.” Blessing left with the same life challenges, but with a new understanding: she was not cursed or weak; she was ill—and there was at least some help.

A System Under Construction and Under Strain

Behind the stories of Emmanuel and Blessing stands a national mental health system still under construction. A small and overworked group of mental health clinicians, psychiatric nurses, and a few psychiatrists and psychologists are trying to build something durable from limited resources.

Over the past decade, Liberia’s Ministry of Health has laid important foundations. It developed mental health policies and strategic plans, created a Mental Health Unit, and trained nurses and physician assistants in basic mental health care. It has worked to integrate mental health into primary care, so that mental illness is not treated as an obscure specialty in the capital, but as a routine part of health services across the country.

Yet in some counties, a single mental health clinician covers vast populations. “In our whole county, we have only one mental health clinician,” one health officer explains. “When she goes on leave, we all just pray nothing happens.”

In major facilities such as JFK Medical Center, doctors sometimes adjust treatment based on what is actually on the pharmacy shelves. “Sometimes I write a prescription and then immediately go to check with the pharmacist,” one doctor says. “If the medicine is not there, I have to change the plan. I can’t treat someone with hope alone.” When essential psychotropic medications run out, families turn to private pharmacies, where prices are often far beyond their reach. People with schizophrenia or bipolar disorder may receive regular treatment for a time, only to stop abruptly when money or medicine runs out, increasing the risk of relapse and family breakdown.

Beyond the formal health system, another reality exists largely out of sight. Some people with severe mental illness are tied up in back rooms or confined in sheds. Others are taken to unregulated “prayer camps,” where conditions vary widely and are rarely monitored. Many families, fearing stigma, simply hide relatives from public view. Liberia’s current legal framework does not fully protect these individuals, and the health system rarely reaches them.

Drugs, Youth, and a Shifting Regional Landscape

Liberia is also navigating a changing regional drug landscape. For years, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime has described West Africa as both a major transit corridor and a growing consumption zone for illicit drugs. Cocaine from Latin America moves through the region toward European markets. Synthetic substances are appearing in new places, and cannabis remains widespread.

Liberia is part of this picture. Cannabis use is common and often regarded as relatively harmless, especially among young men. Misuse of pharmaceutical drugs such as tramadol has been reported across West Africa, and Liberia is unlikely to be exempt.

Law enforcement officials worry about rising drug related crime and youth gangs. Health workers see more young



Source: The Seattle Times



people with signs of addiction, agitation, and psychological distress. UNODC estimates suggest that across the region, only a small fraction of people living with drug use disorders receive adequate treatment. Liberia appears to follow that pattern. Even without precise numbers, the reality is visible: young men and women caught between unemployment, boredom, peer pressure, and easy access to unregulated substances, with very few safe, affordable treatment options.

Liberia at a Crossroads

Liberia stands at a quiet but important crossroads. One path maintains the status quo. On that path, Emmanuel continues to shout in the back of taxis while people pretend not to notice. Blessing continues to interpret her depression as weakness because no one explains it. Families keep hiding relatives out of shame, and health workers continue to improvise with limited training, irregular medicine supplies, and minimal specialist support. Young people drift into drug use and addiction while the system responds slowly, or not at all.

The other path builds on what already exists and on lessons from other countries. In this alternative future, the Ministry of Health's mental health policies are backed by a clear budget line. Every county has at least a small team able to manage mental health and substance use disorders. Community health

workers, teachers, pastors, imams, and traditional leaders receive basic training to recognize mental health problems, reduce stigma, and guide people to care rather than isolation or punishment. Laws protect people with mental illness from abuse and neglect and regulate any facility that houses them. International partners such as WHO and UNODC provide technical support and resources to help Liberia develop prevention and treatment programs that reflect Liberian realities and values.

In that future, people like Emmanuel and Blessing are not symbols of national failure. They are ordinary citizens who faced health challenges, accessed care, and improved—perhaps not perfectly, but substantially. Their stories become examples of what is possible when a society takes mental health seriously.

A Human Measure of Progress

Mental health in Liberia is not only about “those people” on the street. It is about the father who cannot sleep because of what he saw during the war; the market woman who thinks of stepping into traffic because her debts feel unbearable; the law student who drinks himself to silence every night; the nurse who hears everyone else's pain and quietly burns out, with nowhere to take her own.

It is also about a nation that has

already done very hard things: ending war, enduring Ebola, and rebuilding from devastation. Constructing a humane and effective mental health system is demanding, but no more impossible than challenges Liberia has already overcome.

The starting point is a simple but profound idea: the man talking to himself in the back seat of a taxi is not a joke. He is a neighbor. He is a citizen. He is one of “us.” If Liberia chooses to care for mental health with the same seriousness it applies to roads, elections, and investment, then one day Emmanuel's story could sound very different.

“People used to think I was crazy,” he might say. “Now I got help. I have my life back. And I'm helping others do the same.”

That future is not guaranteed. But it is possible. The decision about whether to remain silent or to bring mental health out of the shadows rests with Liberia itself.





PATRIOTISM AND LOVE FOR COUNTRY:

A National Imperative for Liberia Making the Case for a New Civics Agenda

By HardFacts Magazine



Liberia stands at a defining moment. The country has emerged from war, survived Ebola, weathered COVID 19, and continues to confront economic hardship, corruption, unemployment, and fragile institutions. Yet behind these visible challenges lies a deeper question: Do Liberians truly love Liberia enough to put country above tribe, party, and personal gain?

Patriotism and love for country are not abstract ideas. They are powerful forces that shape how citizens behave, how leaders govern, and how nations rise or fall. For Liberia to realize its promise, patriotism must move from slogans and songs into daily practice and Civics education must help lead that transformation. This article argues that Liberia needs a deliberate, structured effort to cultivate patriotism rooted in honesty, service, responsibility, and respect for the rule of law and that “Patriotism and Love for Country” should become a central topic in Civics at all levels of education. Along the way, we draw lessons from Ghana and other countries where love for country has become an engine of progress.

What True Patriotism Really Is

Many people confuse patriotism with blind loyalty or noisy displays of national pride. True patriotism is more demanding. It means loving your country enough to tell it the truth. A patriotic Liberian criticizes corruption, poor leadership, and bad policies not because they hate Liberia, but because they want it to be better. It means putting the national interest above personal or group interest. Patriotism asks, “Is this good for Liberia?” before “Is this good for my tribe, party, church, or family?”

It also involves respecting the rule of law and public property. A patriotic citizen does not steal from the state, cheat on taxes, vandalize public infrastructure, or bribe officials. Patriotism requires service and sacrifices: the teacher in a remote school who does not abandon students; the nurse who stays on duty during an outbreak; the police officer who refuses a bribe; and the market woman who insists on honest business. It also means defending the country’s unity and dignity, avoiding hate speech, tribalism, and actions that tear the country apart, and protecting Liberia’s image at home and abroad. Patriotism is not a feeling alone. It is a disciplined practice. Without it, no constitution, no



president, and no donor funding can build a stable and prosperous Liberia.

Liberia's Patriotism Gap

Liberians demonstrate pride in many ways: Independence Day celebrations, the Lone Star football team, the resilience of our people, the symbolism of being Africa's oldest republic. But pride does not always translate into patriotic behavior.

Political competition often becomes a zero sum game where parties treat each other as enemies, not partners in nation building. Loyalists defend "their side" even when leaders do wrong, and some wish failure on the government just to gain political advantage. The real loser is Liberia. Corruption has become normalized, justified by the idea that "government money is nobody's money" or "everyone is eating." This mindset drains funds from health, education, and infrastructure, and proves that self interest is stronger than love of country.

Too often, public offices are seen as opportunities to "make it" rather than to serve. Citizens litter, damage public facilities, or break laws because they believe "nothing will happen." Liberia's diversity is a strength, but when tribal or sectional loyalty undermines fairness,

merit, and justice, the nation suffers. Patriotism demands that we value ethnicity without letting it dominate our decisions. At the same time, many young Liberians feel excluded and powerless. When they see the system reward dishonesty, they lose faith in the idea that contributing positively to the country makes sense. These attitudes cannot be reversed by speeches alone. They require a long term strategy to build a culture where loving Liberia is the norm, not the exception.

Ghana's Example: Putting Country First

Ghana offers important lessons on how love for country can translate into stability and progress. Since the 1990s, Ghana has held multiple competitive elections, with power changing hands peacefully between parties. Political leaders and citizens often accept electoral outcomes because they value national stability over partisan victory. That reflects a patriotic commitment to Ghana's survival beyond any individual or party.

Ghanaians also proudly identify with their flag, anthem, and national colors, and schools teach these symbols and their meanings. The sense of "we are

Ghanaians first" has helped hold the country together across ethnic and regional lines. Ghanaian teachers, health workers, and public servants operate in challenging conditions but frequently demonstrate strong commitment to their roles. In times of crisis such as cholera outbreaks or COVID 19, many stepped forward as volunteers, embodying love for country. Ghana's media and civil society organizations actively hold leaders accountable. This is not anti patriotic; it is a patriotic defense of Ghana's future. The belief that Ghana belongs to all, not just the powerful, has fueled this activism. Liberia can learn from Ghana's steady insistence that, despite political differences, Ghana comes first.

Patriotism as a Development Strategy: Global Lessons

Other countries show how sustained efforts to build patriotism can transform nations. After the 1994 genocide, Rwanda invested in a powerful national narrative: "Never Again." Through national dialogue, community service days (Umuganda), and a strong emphasis on unity over ethnicity, Rwandans have built a culture where national interest is heavily emphasized. Patriotism there means rebuilding together and rejecting



division.

In the 1960s, Singapore was a small, vulnerable state with few natural resources. The government emphasized integrity, hard work, and national loyalty. Civic education, national service, and highly visible anti corruption measures taught citizens that Singapore's survival depended on their discipline and honesty. The result is one of the world's most efficient and trusted public sectors. In the United States, despite deep divisions, generations have been shaped by the ideal that citizens must contribute to the common good, whether through

military service, volunteerism, or civic engagement. The idea that patriotism requires sacrifice remains deeply embedded.

South Korea, devastated by war in the 1950s, embraced a fierce commitment to national development. Patriotism fueled long working hours, investment in education, and collective discipline. In one generation, South Korea moved from aid recipient to aid donor. These examples prove that patriotism is not a luxury; it is a development strategy. In each case, love for country was deliberately cultivated through schools,

laws, national narratives, and leadership by example.

Why Liberia Needs Patriotism Now

Liberia's future depends on choices made today by leaders and ordinary citizens, and patriotism is urgently needed in several areas. In governance and the rule of law, patriotism demands that leaders serve honestly and that citizens respect the law. A patriotic public official does not steal public funds, and a patriotic citizen does not offer or accept bribes. The more Liberians see government as "our own," the less they will tolerate corruption and abuse.



For national the sake of unity and peace, Liberia cannot afford another conflict. Patriotism calls on citizens to reject hate speech, political violence, and tribal manipulation. It reminds us that when Liberia burns, no tribe wins. Economic transformation also depends on patriotic behavior. Investors, both local and foreign, seek stability, predictable rules, and trusted institutions. A patriotic workforce is punctual, productive, and ethical. Entrepreneurs pay taxes, obey regulations, and support local industry. This environment attracts investment and fuels growth.

Patriotism matters as well for the protection of public assets and the environment. Schools, hospitals, roads, power lines, and water systems belong to the nation. Vandalizing them is an attack on Liberia itself. Similarly, patriotism means protecting the forests, rivers, and coastline that sustain life now and future generations. Youth empowerment and hope also require a patriotic foundation. If young Liberians believe that hard work and honesty will never be rewarded, they will abandon the idea of serving the country. Building a culture of patriotism, where service and integrity are honored and rewarded, can restore faith and reduce the appeal of crime, drugs, and violence.

Making Patriotism a Core Topic in Civics

Patriotism will not appear by magic. It must be taught, discussed, and practiced. That is why “Patriotism and Love for Country” should become a core topic in Liberia’s Civics curriculum from primary school through university.

Such a Civics module should begin by helping students understand Liberia’s story: the founding of Liberia, its promises and contradictions, the civil wars causes, consequences, and lessons and heroes and heroines of different eras who put country first. It should then clarify what it means to be a Liberian citizen, including rights and responsibilities under the Constitution, the importance of voting, obeying laws, paying taxes, and participating in community life, and why “national interest” must guide personal and group decisions. Students should also learn the difference between patriotism and blind loyalty, discuss how to disagree without destroying the country, and examine case studies of citizens who challenged injustice as an act of love for country.

A strong Civics curriculum on patriotism should draw explicit lessons from Ghana, Rwanda, Singapore, South Korea, and others, encouraging classroom discussions that compare Liberia’s experience with these countries and group projects on how those nations

built patriotism and what Liberia can adapt. It should connect patriotism to daily life through school based community service such as clean ups, literacy tutoring, visiting hospitals, and tree planting; through student pledges of integrity and service; and through debates and essays on “What I can do for Liberia.” Finally, Civics should help students understand and celebrate national symbols and values, teaching the meaning of the flag, motto, anthem, and coat of arms, and revamping national ceremonies to highlight ordinary patriot’s teachers, farmers, nurses, and others who serve quietly. Civics classes should not be dry memorization of facts. They should be interactive, practical, and linked to real community projects, with the goal of shaping character, not just passing exams.

Leadership by Example: Patriots at the Top

No civics curriculum will succeed if leaders behave in ways that contradict its message. Patriotism must be visible at the top. Leaders should demonstrate integrity in public office by declaring assets, rejecting corruption, and accepting accountability. When leaders are punished for wrongdoing, citizens see that Liberia’s laws are real.

Inclusive governance is also essential. Decisions must consider all regions and communities, not just the politically connected. When citizens feel seen and heard, their love for country deepens. Political competition should remain respectful, with parties offering ideas rather than insults. After elections, winners should govern for all, and losers should support stability while offering constructive opposition. Government and civil society should actively honor national heroes and heroines, highlighting stories of Liberians who sacrificed for the nation across ethnic and political lines. This builds a shared sense of ownership. Patriotism spreads when citizens see leaders living the values they preach.

The Role of Ordinary Liberians

Building a patriotic culture is not only the job of government or schools.

Every Liberian can contribute. Parents can teach children honesty, respect for public property, and pride in being Liberians. Teachers can model punctuality, diligence, and fairness. Religious leaders can preach love of country as a moral duty, condemning corruption and violence. The media can highlight positive stories of service and expose abuses, framing both as acts of patriotism. Youth groups can organize clean ups, literacy clubs, peace dialogues, and advocacy campaigns that put Liberia first. Business leaders can pay fair wages, obey laws, and support community projects. Every time a Liberian chooses integrity over dishonesty, unity over division, and service over selfishness, patriotism grows.

Toward a New Liberian Patriotism

Patriotism is not about declaring that Liberia is already great. It is about working to make Liberia greater than it is today. Liberia needs a new generation of patriot students who refuse to cheat, civil servants who refuse bribes, politicians who refuse to inflame division, and business people who refuse to exploit the vulnerable. It needs citizens who understand that “my country” is not just a place of birth, but a shared project that demands commitment.

Making “Patriotism and Love for Country” a central topic in Civics is more than a curriculum reform. It is an investment in the national soul. It is a bet that if Liberians truly understand their history, their responsibilities, and their power, they will choose to build rather than destroy.

Ghana shows that steady commitment to peace, institutions, and national symbols can transform political culture. Rwanda shows that even after tragedy, a nation can rebuild unity. Singapore and South Korea show that disciplined, patriotic citizens can turn small, fragile countries into global success stories. Liberia can write its own version of that story but only if Liberians decide that loving Liberia is more important than loving power, tribe, or quick profit. The choice is ours. The time is now.



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HON. GBEME HORACE-KOLLIE

MINISTER OF GENDER
CHILDREN AND SOCIAL PROTECTION
REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA

SOLIDIFYING LIBERIA'S FUTURE:

Gender Ministry Steps Up Support for Vulnerable Children and Women

By HardFacts Magazine

In Liberia, many families struggle to afford the basics—food, school, healthcare and a safe home for their children. For some, the hardship is so severe that children end up on the streets, while women and other vulnerable people struggle to find the support they need. Addressing these realities is at the center of the work of the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MGCSP).

Established in 2001 by an Act of the National Legislature, the Ministry is responsible for promoting the welfare and protection of women, girls and children, as well as persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups. Over the years, the Ministry has taken on a range of issues, but its recent work has placed particular emphasis on children living in street situations, gender-based violence, social protection and the economic empowerment of women.

Bringing children back to their families

One of the most difficult issues facing the Ministry is the growing number of children living and working on the streets.

A 2022 study by the Government of Liberia and UNICEF highlighted the scale of the problem, including the number of children living without direct parental care. In August 2024, the government launched the Street Child Project, under the theme “*Save a Child, Secure the Future*”, to remove children from the streets and help reconnect them with their families, schools and essential services.

The Ministry says 5,479 children have so far been removed from street situations, traced to their families and reunified. Of these, 1,405 children are now enrolled in 19 public and 28 private schools across Montserrado County. But the Ministry has found that getting children off the streets is only one part of the problem. For many families, poverty is what brought the children there in the first place. Parents, especially mothers struggling to provide for their households, may depend on their children to help earn money or meet basic needs.

The government has therefore combined the child protection program with assistance for caregivers. Some 1,685 caregivers have been identified for economic support. The Ministry reports that 395 have already received small business grants, while 1,290 are being processed. Another 150 caregivers are enrolled in technical and vocational training to acquire skills that can help them earn a living.

The Ministry has also enrolled 128 children attached to 49 caregivers in family-strengthening and livelihood programs under a five-year arrangement. The government says it wants to reach another 7,500 children over the next 18 months, using community outreach, family

tracing, reunification and other support services. The task will not be easy. The problem is closely tied to poverty, and the resources available to respond to it remain limited.

Tackling violence against women and girls

The protection of women and girls is another major part of the Ministry's mandate.

Gender-based violence remains a serious problem in Liberia. While the country has made progress in developing laws, policies and services to address violence, many survivors still face difficulties reporting cases and obtaining help. Poverty, stigma and social attitudes can make the situation even harder for survivors.

To make it easier for people to seek assistance, the Ministry established the 116 GBV Call Center. The center provides information, receives reports and helps callers understand where they can find support. In the first quarter of 2025, the Ministry says it received 166 calls from 13 counties. Of these, 39% were related to gender-based violence, while 61% concerned other issues. The figures provide only part of the picture. Many cases are never reported, meaning the actual scale of violence is likely to be greater than official figures suggest.

For the Ministry, strengthening the referral system and ensuring that survivors can reach appropriate services remain important priorities.

Building a stronger social protection system

The government is also working to improve the way assistance reaches people who need it most. One of the main developments has been the operationalization of the Liberia Household Social Registry, a digital system designed to identify vulnerable households and help government agencies coordinate social protection programs.

The Ministry is also leading an update

of the National Social Protection Policy, with the aim of making the system more inclusive and better suited to Liberia's current economic and social conditions.

Cash assistance is an important part of that system.

The Social Cash Transfer programme is being implemented in Grand Bassa, Grand Kru, River Gee and Rivercess Counties, targeting households facing high levels of poverty and food insecurity. By May 2025, 9,996 households had been enrolled against a target of 16,000. Women accounted for 80.39% of primary cash recipients. The program also encourages couples to plan their finances together. Participating households receive mobile phones to support communication and financial management.

The government is also seeking to ensure that social protection beneficiaries obtain national identification cards, which can make it easier for them to access public services and other opportunities.

Helping women earn and grow

For many families, however, social assistance can only provide temporary relief. A more lasting solution is to help people earn a reliable income. This is one of the objectives of the Liberia Women Empowerment Project (LWEP), implemented by the Ministry with support from the World Bank. The project provides grants and other assistance to women-led businesses and savings groups. It has already supported women in Bomi, Grand Cape Mount, Gbarpolu and rural Montserrado and is now expanding to Rivercess and Grand Gedeh.

In the two counties, US\$718,100 is being disbursed to 258 women-led enterprises, with the program expected to reach more than 6,000 people across 12 districts. In Rivercess, US\$404,600 is being provided to 155 women-led enterprises. In Grand Gedeh, US\$313,500 is being disbursed to 103 women-led enterprises, comprising 29 Village Savings and Loan Associations

and 74 individual businesses.

The first tranche of funding was disbursed in August 2026. The aim is straightforward: give women the resources to strengthen their businesses, increase household incomes and contribute more to the economies of their communities. Beneficiaries are also receiving SIM cards to help them access their funds and carry out business transactions.

More than programs

The different initiatives may appear separate, but they are closely connected.

A child living on the street may be there because a parent cannot afford to provide for the family. A woman may struggle to leave an abusive relationship because she has no income of her own. A household receiving cash assistance may still need a livelihood that can help it become financially independent. This is where the Ministry's broader approach to social protection becomes important.

Taking children off the streets must be followed by support that helps families keep them at home. Responding to gender-based violence requires not only a telephone number, but services that survivors can actually reach. And empowering women requires more than a grant; it requires opportunities to build businesses that can survive.

The Government of Liberia has made these issues part of its social protection agenda, and the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection is responsible for turning many of those commitments into action.

There is still much to do.

The real measure of these programs will be their impact on people's lives: children returning to school and home, mothers able to support their families, and survivors of violence able to access help and protection.

That is what will show whether Liberia's social protection efforts are making a lasting difference.



COOKING ON THE EDGE:

The Hidden Health Risks of Locally Made Aluminium Pots

By HardFacts Magazine

Aluminium pots are common in many homes. They are affordable, lightweight, and heat up quickly. In many communities, locally made aluminium pots are especially popular because they are readily available and cost less than stainless-steel and other types of cookware.

But concerns about their safety are worth taking seriously. Can aluminium from a pot get into food? Does a damaged pot release more metal? And what happens when cookware is made from recycled aluminium of uncertain quality? The answer is not as simple as saying that aluminium cookware is either safe or dangerous.

Health authorities generally agree that normal use of aluminium cookware is not a major source of aluminium exposure for most people. Small amounts of aluminium can, however, migrate from cookware into food. How much gets into food depends on several factors, including the condition of the pot, the type of food being cooked, cooking time, temperature, and the acidity or salt content of the food. For locally made cookware, there is another concern that deserves attention: what other metals may be present in the material used to make the pot?

How Aluminium Gets into Food

When food is cooked in an aluminium pot, small amounts of aluminium can move from the surface of the pot into the food. This

is known as leaching or migration.

The process can increase when certain foods are cooked in aluminium. Acidic foods, in particular, can react more strongly with the metal. This includes foods containing tomatoes, citrus, vinegar, and other acidic ingredients. Highly salted foods can also increase the amount of aluminium that migrates into food. This does not mean that tomato stew, citrus-based dishes, or other acidic foods are unhealthy. The concern is the combination of acidic or salty food with aluminium cookware, particularly when the food is cooked for a long time or left in the pot after cooking.

Research reviewed by the World Health Organization has found that aluminium migration can be higher when acidic foods are cooked in aluminium cookware.

A Damaged Pot Is a Different Matter

The condition of the pot also matters.

With repeated use, aluminium cookware can become scratched, worn, or pitted. Harsh scrubbing and abrasive cleaning materials can damage the surface, while metal spoons and other utensils can leave scratches. A damaged surface may allow greater contact between the food and the underlying metal. Health Canada recommends avoiding damaged aluminium cookware and limiting its use with highly acidic or salty foods.

For households that have used the same pot for years, this is something worth checking. If a pot is deeply scratched, heavily pitted aluminium cookware can allow greater transfer of aluminium into food.



LIBERIA AND MOROCCO:

From Diplomatic Ties to Economic Partnership

By HardFacts Magazine

Liberia and Morocco are moving towards a closer economic relationship, building on years of diplomatic, educational and development cooperation.

The relationship has gained momentum in recent years. In January 2025, the two countries signed 15 agreements and memoranda of understanding during the third session of their Joint Cooperation Commission. The agreements covered education, vocational training, industry, youth empowerment, mining, justice and tourism, while both governments called for stronger trade, investment and private-sector cooperation. Morocco's embassy in Monrovia, which reopened in 2024, has provided another channel for advancing that agenda.

The priority now is to turn political commitments into projects that can attract investment and deliver jobs, skills and economic opportunities in Liberia.

Agriculture offers a practical starting point

Agriculture is one of the clearest areas for cooperation. Liberia has substantial land and water resources, but farmers continue to face limited access to machinery, irrigation, storage, processing facilities and agricultural inputs. Morocco has considerable experience in irrigation, agricultural technology, research, fertilizer production and agricultural value chains.

The two countries have already cooperated in agriculture. Agreements signed in 2020 included agriculture, higher education and research, and health, alongside expanded scholarship opportunities

for Liberians. The next step could be commercial investment. Moroccan companies could work with Liberian farmers and businesses on irrigation, demonstration farms, input distribution, processing and technical training. Rice, cassava, vegetables, cocoa and coffee offer potential, provided projects are based on viable markets.

Increasing production alone, however, will not be enough. Liberia also needs better storage, processing, packaging and distribution so that farmers can earn more from what they produce.

From minerals to greater value

Fertilizer provides another link between the two economies. Morocco is a major phosphate and fertilizer producer, while Liberia needs more reliable access to agricultural inputs if it is to raise productivity and reduce its dependence on imported



food. Mining presents a separate opportunity. Liberia has significant deposits of iron ore, gold and bauxite, but much of its mineral wealth is exported with limited processing at home.

Moroccan expertise could support Liberia in areas such as geological services, mineral processing, technical training and technology transfer. The aim would be to build more industrial capacity locally rather than simply increase exports of unprocessed minerals.

Building a fisheries industry

Liberia's coastline also offers considerable potential. The fisheries sector remains constrained by limited infrastructure and processing capacity. In October 2025, a Moroccan investment delegation met Liberia's National Fisheries and Aquaculture Authority to discuss opportunities in fishing ports, fish processing, aquaculture, vessel production and related infrastructure.

Investment in landing facilities, cold storage and processing could help create jobs, improve food supplies and

generate more value within Liberia. Aquaculture could provide another source of production. In the case of Liberia, the wider objective would be to develop fisheries as part of a broader blue-economy strategy rather than treating the sector mainly as a source of raw exports.

Ports and logistics matter

Better infrastructure will be essential if these ambitions are to succeed. Liberia's Atlantic location gives it access to West African and international markets. Morocco, meanwhile, has developed substantial expertise in ports and logistics. The 2025 joint communiqué identified possible cooperation between the Port of Monrovia and Morocco's Tangier port. The relationship could extend to port management, customs, maritime services, logistics training and digitalization. Improvements in these areas would make it easier for Liberian businesses to move goods and reach regional and international markets.

Tourism and services

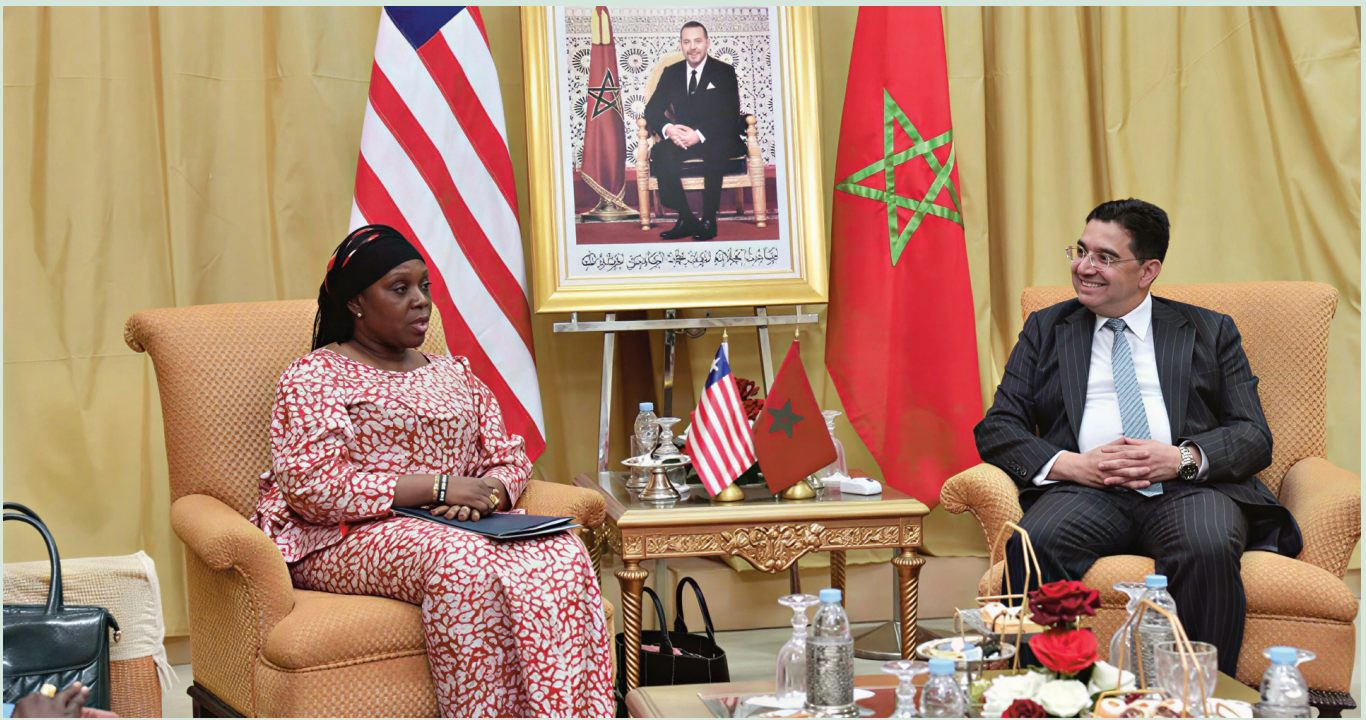
Tourism is another area where Moroccan experience could be useful.

Liberia has beaches, forests, wildlife and historical sites, but the industry remains relatively small. Morocco has built a large tourism sector with experience in hospitality, destination management, cultural tourism and international promotion. Liberia would not need to copy that model. It could adapt relevant lessons while investing in roads, accommodation, sanitation, security, air links and hospitality training.

Skills will determine what Liberia can build

Education has long been part of the relationship and could become more closely linked to Liberia's economic priorities. Scholarships and academic exchanges could be expanded in fields such as engineering, agriculture, mining, medicine, information technology, logistics and tourism. Vocational training is particularly important. Liberia will need technicians, engineers, construction specialists, mechanics and agricultural experts if it is to expand its industrial and infrastructure base.

Morocco's experience in technical and vocational education could



support partnerships between Liberian institutions and Moroccan universities and training centers.

Security and economic development

Cooperation is also extending into security. In March 2026, a Liberian National Police delegation visited Morocco for talks with Moroccan security authorities on training, technical exchanges, intelligence and institutional development. Further cooperation in areas such as border management, cybersecurity, counter-trafficking and professional training could strengthen Liberia's institutions and help create a more secure environment for people, businesses and infrastructure.

A wider African market

The relationship should also be considered within the African Continental Free Trade Area. Morocco brings industrial and manufacturing experience, agricultural technology, logistics expertise, financial capacity and commercial links with North Africa and Europe. Liberia brings natural resources, agricultural potential, an Atlantic coastline and

access to the wider West African market.

That combination could create opportunities beyond bilateral trade. Moroccan companies investing in Liberia could potentially use the country as a base for reaching markets in the Mano River region and elsewhere in West Africa. Liberian businesses could benefit from Moroccan networks and access to markets further north.

Turning agreements into investment

The biggest challenge is now implementation. The 15 agreements signed in 2025 provide a broad framework, but agreements do not by themselves create factories, farms, processing plants or jobs.

Liberia and Morocco could establish an investment and implementation mechanism bringing together government agencies, businesses, banks and development-finance institutions. The focus should be on a limited number of commercially viable projects with identified investors, financing, timelines and clear responsibilities. Agricultural

inputs, fisheries processing, port cooperation, mining value addition, vocational training and tourism could provide starting points.

A relationship at a turning point

Liberia and Morocco have built a strong diplomatic foundation. Their challenge now is to make the relationship economically meaningful. For Liberia, Morocco offers potential access to investment, technology, expertise, skills and markets. For Morocco, deeper engagement with Liberia could strengthen its economic presence in West Africa while opening opportunities in agriculture, fisheries, mining, logistics and infrastructure. The success of the partnership will ultimately be measured not by the number of agreements signed, but by what follows them.

If the two Countries can turn their commitments into viable businesses, training programmes and infrastructure projects, the relationship could become a practical example of African economic cooperation delivering results on the ground.



SAUDI ARABIA AND LIBERIA: A Partnership that Moves Beyond Aid

By HardFacts Magazine

Saudi Arabia and Liberia are seeking to deepen a relationship that has traditionally been built around development assistance and diplomatic ties. The focus is now shifting towards infrastructure, energy, agriculture, mining, trade and private investment — areas that could give the partnership greater economic significance.

For Liberia, the attraction is clear. The country needs major investment in roads, electricity and productive industries. Saudi Arabia, with its growing financial capacity and investment ambitions, is looking to expand its economic engagement in Africa.

The question is whether the

two countries can turn a series of government-backed projects into a lasting commercial partnership.

Roads lay the groundwork

Infrastructure is already providing the foundation. The Saudi Fund for Development says it has worked with Liberia for more than four decades, financing four projects and programmes through concessional loans worth more than \$58m.

Among the latest is the 81km Gbarnga-Salayea road, completed with Saudi support. Liberia has also announced financing for the remaining 64km of the Konia-Voinjama corridor. The importance of these projects goes beyond transport. Better roads can reduce the cost of moving agricultural products, connect rural communities to markets and

make previously isolated areas more accessible to investors.

The next challenge is to ensure that infrastructure generates economic activity around it — from agriculture and food processing to logistics and manufacturing.

Electricity could be the bigger prize

If roads are laying the groundwork, energy could determine how far the partnership goes. Liberia has long struggled with limited and unreliable electricity. In 2026, the government announced Saudi financing linked to the Botota-Gbarnga-Zorzor transmission line and substation project, part of a wider \$190m regional electricity initiative.

The programme is expected



to extend electricity access to hundreds of thousands of people.

For Liberia, the significance is economic as well as social. Reliable electricity is essential for factories, agricultural processing, cold storage, hospitals, telecommunications and other businesses. For Saudi investors, the country's energy deficit could also create opportunities in power generation, solar energy, transmission, mini-grids and energy services.

Agriculture offers room for commercial growth

Agriculture is another area where the interests of the two countries could converge. Liberia

has considerable potential in rice, cocoa, rubber, oil palm, cassava, fisheries and livestock. Saudi Arabia has a strategic interest in food security and dependable international supply chains.

The opportunity is to move beyond aid towards investment.

Saudi companies could participate in farming, irrigation, storage, processing and distribution. Processing more agricultural products inside Liberia would allow the country to capture greater value before export. That could mean more jobs, higher export earnings and stronger domestic industries.

Mining needs a value-added

approach

Liberia's mineral resources provide another potential source of Saudi investment. Iron ore remains central to the country's export economy, while gold and other minerals offer additional opportunities. But increased extraction alone would not necessarily deliver broad economic transformation.

The greater prize would be investment in processing, refining, logistics and supporting industries. Such projects could create employment, develop local skills and increase the share of mineral value captured within Liberia. That principle will be particularly important as Liberia seeks to attract investment while ensuring that natural-resource projects produce wider national benefits.

The private sector is the real test

Despite the growing political relationship, commercial ties remain modest. Saudi exports to Liberia were valued at about 87m Saudi riyals in 2025. That is small compared with the potential of the two economies. Liberia is already promoting opportunities in agriculture, energy, mining, infrastructure, logistics, healthcare, telecommunications, tourism and manufacturing.

The success of the relationship will depend on whether the agreements now being signed lead to sustained private investment — rather than remaining largely government-to-government projects.



LIBERIA NATIONAL POLICE:

Building Trust in a Changing Liberia

By HardFacts Magazine

For many Liberians, the Liberia National Police (LNP) is the most visible face of the state.

From Monrovia to communities across the country, police officers respond to crime, disputes, emergencies and threats to public safety. Their conduct can shape how citizens view not only the police, but government more broadly.

The history of the LNP is closely tied to Liberia's own political development. Organized policing dates back more than a century. In 1925,

President Charles D. B. King established the Constabulary Police Force. Further reforms followed, including an effort in 1947 to restructure and nationalize the force. The Liberia National Police was formally established in 1956.

Today, the LNP is expected to do more than maintain public order. Its responsibilities include preventing and investigating crime, protecting life and property, maintaining public peace and respecting human rights. The Liberia National Police Act of 2015 established the force as a semi-autonomous agency under the Ministry of Justice, reinforcing the move towards modern, democratic policing.

Community and Accountability

The LNP has placed increasing emphasis on community policing, using neighborhood patrols, school visits and community engagement to build relationships with residents. That relationship matters. Local people often have information about disputes, criminal activity and emerging tensions. Where there is trust, they are more likely to share it with police.

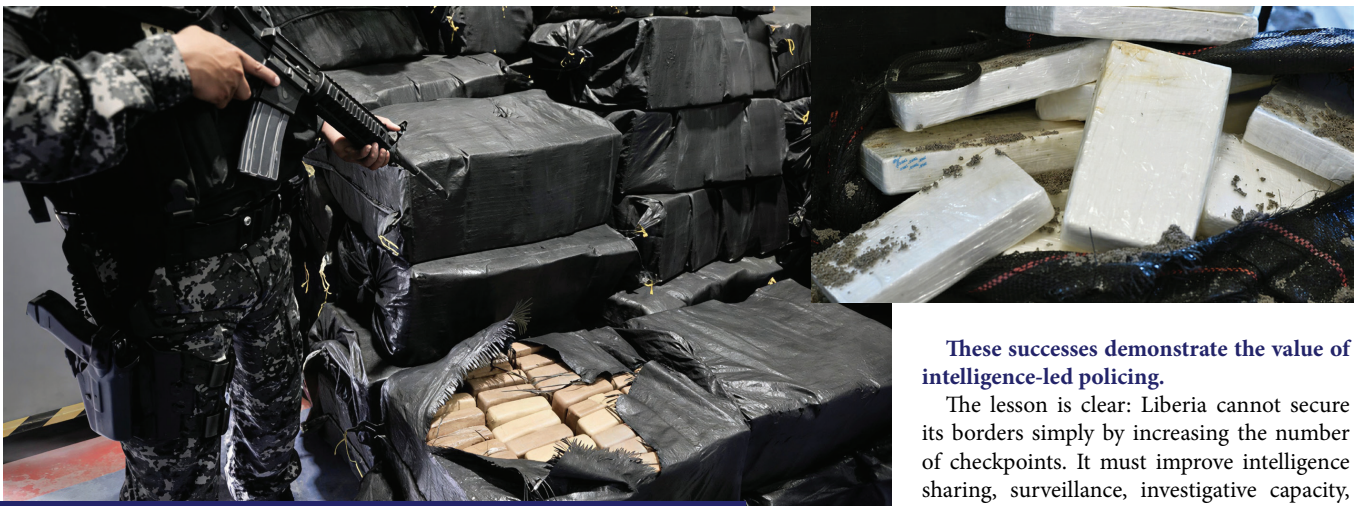
The People Behind the Uniform

Effective policing depends on the officers themselves.

Training, supervision, leadership, equipment and professional development are increasingly important as police confront more complex forms of crime. Modern officers need skills in investigation, intelligence, technology and forensic work, as well as the ability to communicate with the public.

Women make up about 20% of LNP personnel, according to the force. Greater participation by women, including in leadership and specialized roles, could strengthen the police response to cases involving women and children.





DISMANTLING LIBERIA'S DRUG CARTELS:

The Fight for a Safer Republic

By HardFacts Magazine

Liberia's battle against illicit drugs has entered a decisive phase. What was once viewed primarily as a problem of street-level drug abuse is increasingly being understood as a national security, economic, public-health and organized-crime challenge.

The real enemy is not simply the young person selling a packet of drugs on a street corner. Behind the visible street trade can be a much larger ecosystem—suppliers, financiers, transporters, distributors, corrupt facilitators and networks that move money and narcotics across borders. That is why dismantling Liberia's drug cartels requires more than arrests and seizures. It requires the systematic destruction of the networks that make the trade possible.

Beyond the Drug Dealer - Liberia's principal counter-narcotics institution, the Liberia Drug Enforcement Agency (LDEA), is mandated to disrupt and dismantle illicit drug trafficking, protect Liberia's borders, trace drug-related proceeds and suppress both supply and demand. Its current enforcement framework emphasizes tactical operations, intelligence gathering, border security, prosecution and rehabilitation. That mandate points toward a crucial change in strategy.

A kilogram of cocaine seized from a courier is an enforcement victory. But it is not necessarily a strategic victory if the person who financed the shipment remains untouched, the distribution network survives,

the money continues to circulate and another shipment arrives weeks later. Liberia therefore needs to move from arresting individuals to dismantling networks.

Follow the Money - One of the most powerful weapons against organized drug trafficking is financial investigation. Drug cartels survive because narcotics generate enormous illicit profits. Those profits must be collected, transferred, concealed, invested or laundered.

This makes financial intelligence central to the fight. The renewed strategic partnership between Liberia's Financial Intelligence Agency and the LDEA has specifically focused on strengthening cooperation against drug trafficking and money laundering, including the use of financial-crime charges against suspected traffickers. That partnership should become one of the pillars of Liberia's anti-cartel strategy.

The Border Battle - Liberia's geography makes border enforcement particularly important. Land crossings, ports, airports and coastal routes can become attractive corridors for transnational trafficking networks. In 2025, UNODC reported several major LDEA breakthroughs, including Liberia's first controlled delivery involving 772 plates of marijuana, a major tapentadol seizure at Bo Waterside and a 295-kilogram marijuana seizure in Paynesville. The operations were supported by intelligence, training and investigative assistance.

These successes demonstrate the value of intelligence-led policing.

The lesson is clear: Liberia cannot secure its borders simply by increasing the number of checkpoints. It must improve intelligence sharing, surveillance, investigative capacity, customs cooperation and coordination with neighboring countries. Drug networks do not recognize national boundaries, neither should the intelligence used to defeat them.

The Bo-Waterside Warning - Recent enforcement activity illustrates how the drug problem can intersect with other forms of organized crime. In March 2026, the LDEA reported intercepting tapentadol/tramadol at the Bo-Waterside border crossing while discovering approximately US\$1.187 million in cash concealed inside a vehicle. The agency said the investigation remained ongoing.

The significance of such cases goes beyond the narcotics themselves. Large unexplained cash movements, hidden financial assets and cross-border transportation should trigger coordinated investigations involving narcotics investigators, financial intelligence officers, prosecutors, immigration and other relevant authorities. A modern anti-cartel operation must follow the drugs, the money and the people simultaneously.

Corruption Must Be Treated as a Strategic Threat - No serious campaign against organized drug trafficking can ignore corruption. Cartels depend on access—to borders, transportation, information, documents, warehouses, businesses and sometimes officials. That does not mean every law-enforcement officer or public official is corrupt. Far from it. Liberia has officers and investigators risking their lives to fight narcotics trafficking but the system must be designed to identify and isolate those who enable criminal networks.

Recent LDEA operations have demonstrated why internal accountability matters. In one 2026 Sinoe operation, the agency reported arresting an Action Agent alongside another suspect in a narcotics case involving cocaine, Kush and tramadol. Such cases should be investigated thoroughly and



transparently, with due process protected at every stage.

The principle should be simple: A uniform must never become a shield for organized crime.

The Prosecutor Is as Important as the Investigator - A successful anti-cartel campaign does not end with an arrest; it ends with a conviction supported by credible evidence. That requires prosecutors who understand complex organized-crime cases, financial investigations, digital evidence, conspiracy structures, asset tracking and cross-border cooperation. Investigators and prosecutors must therefore work together from the beginning of major cases, otherwise, investigators may collect information that cannot ultimately survive judicial scrutiny. Liberia's Controlled Drugs and Substances Act of 2023 provides the current legal framework under which the LDEA operates. The next step is ensuring that the law is backed by the investigative, prosecutorial and judicial capacity required to enforce it consistently.

Seize the Assets, Not Just the Drugs

The most painful blow to a cartel is often not the seizure of narcotics, it is the loss of its money. Vehicles, properties, businesses, bank accounts and other assets connected to proven criminal proceeds should be pursued through lawful asset-tracing and forfeiture mechanisms. If a trafficker loses a shipment but keeps the money used to finance the next shipment, the organization can recover and also if the organization loses its leadership,

logistics, financial infrastructure and criminal proceeds, rebuilding becomes much harder. That is the essence of **dismantlement**.

Communities Must Become the First Line of Defense - Enforcement alone cannot solve Liberia's drug crisis. The Ministry of Health has emphasized the need for a whole-of-society response, including stronger enforcement, rehabilitation and treatment services, prevention programs in schools and communities, and better national drug information systems. This is essential because every cartel needs a market.

If young people can be prevented from becoming customers, couriers and street-level distributors, the criminal economy becomes less sustainable. Prevention, rehabilitation and law enforcement are therefore not competing strategies, they are interconnected.

A National Anti-Cartel Task Force - Liberia should consider strengthening a permanent, intelligence-led national mechanism bringing together the LDEA, Liberia National Police, Financial Intelligence Agency, Liberia Immigration Service, prosecutors, customs and other relevant institutions. Its mandate should be narrowly focused on **high-value organized drug networks**. The task force should identify priority targets, coordinate investigations, trace financial flows, pursue cross-border intelligence and develop cases against the leadership of trafficking organizations.

The Test of Political Will - Ultimately,

dismantling Liberia's drug networks will require political courage, a serious anti-cartel campaign cannot be selective, it cannot protect politically connected individuals, wealthy financiers, influential businessmen, security personnel or criminal intermediaries because of their status.

President Joseph Nyuma Boakai's administration has already characterized the drug problem as a national emergency and announced a multi-pronged national response. The next test is implementation, Liberia does not need another declaration of war on drugs, it needs a sustained.

The Fight for Liberia's Future - Every young person diverted from addiction represents a victory larger than any single seizure. Liberia has begun building important institutional capacity. The LDEA's recent operations, international partnerships and cooperation with financial-intelligence authorities demonstrate that the country has tools with which to fight back but the country must now move from **episodic victories to sustained network disruption**.

The objective should not simply be to catch the next courier; it should be to make the entire criminal organization impossible to operate.

The real victory for Liberia will come when drug trafficking is no longer a profitable, protected and sustainable business.



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BUILDING LIBERIA. LITERALLY.

The Sethi Brothers Group's Three-Decade Journey of **Industrial Growth and National Development**

By HardFacts Magazine

For decades, Liberia's development story has largely been told through the construction of roads, schools, hospitals, homes, factories, and public infrastructure. Behind many of these projects is an industry that often receives little public attention but remains essential to national progress—the manufacturing and building materials sector.

Among the companies that have played a defining role in this transformation is the Sethi Brothers Group, whose investments have helped reshape Liberia's industrial landscape while creating thousands of employment opportunities and strengthening the country's manufacturing capacity.

From supplying construction materials to producing steel, cement, and plastic products locally, the Group has steadily evolved into one of Liberia's leading industrial conglomerates.

From Humble Beginnings to an Industry Leader

Founded in 1989 in Monrovia, Sethi Brothers Inc. began as a supplier of construction materials at a time when Liberia's building industry was still developing. Over the years, the company expanded beyond trading into manufacturing, becoming one of the country's most recognized names in the supply of steel rods, roofing materials, plumbing and electrical supplies, paints, cement, plastic furniture, and other essential construction products.

Operating from Jamaica Road on

Bushrod Island, the company serves contractors, developers, businesses, and homeowners across Liberia while extending its market to neighboring West African countries.

Its growth reflects more than commercial success—it represents a long-term investment in Liberia's industrial future.

Building More Than Structures

For over three decades, Sethi Brothers has maintained a simple philosophy: quality products, dependable service, and customer satisfaction.

The company's corporate values emphasize integrity, teamwork, accountability, respect, innovation, and excellence. These principles have helped build trust among contractors, engineers, architects, and thousands of Liberian customers who rely on the company's products for projects ranging from individual homes to major infrastructure developments.

Sethi Brothers has invested heavily in local manufacturing well beyond its retail roots, reducing dependence on imported products while contributing to Liberia's economic resilience.

Star Cement: Strengthening Liberia's Infrastructure

One of the Group's most significant investments is Star Cement Corporation, established in 2019 as a locally registered cement manufacturing company.

With an annual production capacity of 600,000 tons, Star Cement has become a major contributor to Liberia's construction industry by producing high-quality Portland cement within the country.

Its presence represents a strategic shift toward local manufacturing, helping reduce reliance on imported cement while ensuring a more reliable supply for infrastructure projects nationwide.

Star Cement's mission also extends to supporting economic growth through job creation, skills development, environmental sustainability, and community empowerment.

Its vision is clear: to become Liberia's leading local cement manufacturer while supporting national development.

Sethi Ferro Fabrik: Forging Liberia's Steel Industry

Perhaps one of the most transformative milestones in the Group's history came in 2016 with the establishment of Sethi Ferro Fabrik (SFF), among the first steel manufacturing companies established in Liberia.

Located at the Industrial Park near the Liberia Petroleum Refining Company (LPRC), the plant manufactures reinforcing bars, BS4449 Grade 500B/500D (or higher) high-tensile TMT steel rods ranging from 8mm to 32mm, UPN/IPN beams, equal & unequal angles, flat bars, galvanized & square hollow tubes, structural sections, wire rods, merchant bars, and other finished



steel products essential for modern construction.

With an installed production capacity of 60,000 metric tons of high-strength reinforcing steel annually, SFF has become a major domestic alternative to imported steel products.

The factory utilizes locally sourced scrap metal as its primary raw material, transforming waste into valuable industrial products through modern manufacturing technologies, including electric arc furnaces, refining systems, billet casting, and rolling mills.

Its products are designed to meet demanding engineering standards, offering high tensile strength, corrosion resistance, superior weldability, and enhanced durability for construction projects.

The company also envisions expanding exports to regional markets, positioning Liberia as a future supplier of quality steel products within West Africa.

Duraplast: Innovation in Plastic Manufacturing

Diversification has been another defining characteristic of the Sethi Brothers Group.

Founded in 2004 by Mr. Rashpal Singh, Duraplast has grown into one of the region's leading manufacturers of household and industrial plastic products.

The company produces a wide range of plastic goods, including industrial packaging, PET preforms, plastic closures, household items, and shopping bags.

Duraplast's operations are guided by internationally recognized ISO 9001:2015 and ISO 14001:2015 certifications, reflecting its commitment to quality management and environmental responsibility.

By combining competitive pricing with continuous product innovation, the company has expanded its presence beyond Liberia, exporting products to neighboring countries while maintaining a strong reputation for reliability and customer satisfaction.

Driving Employment and Economic Growth

The Group's impact extends well beyond its factories and production lines—into the employment opportunities it creates.

Across its various businesses, the Sethi Brothers Group provides jobs



for thousands of Liberians, ranging from engineers and technicians to administrative staff, machine operators, drivers, sales professionals, and skilled laborers.

The Group's investments also support hundreds of local suppliers, transport operators, and small businesses that form part of its wider supply chain.

Such industrial activity contributes to government revenue, strengthens domestic production, and lessens reliance on imported construction materials.

Supporting Liberia's Development Agenda

As Liberia continues implementing major infrastructure projects—including roads, bridges, schools, hospitals, and housing developments—the availability of locally manufactured construction materials becomes increasingly important.

Companies like the Sethi Brothers Group demonstrate how private sector investment can complement national development efforts by improving supply reliability, encouraging industrialization, and creating value within the domestic economy.

The company's long-term investments in manufacturing align with broader goals of economic diversification, import substitution, and sustainable industrial growth.

Looking Ahead

More than three decades after its establishment, the Sethi Brothers Group continues to expand its footprint across multiple industries.

From construction materials and cement production to steel manufacturing and plastic fabrication, the Group has positioned itself as a key player in Liberia's industrial transformation.

Its continued investments reflect growing confidence in the country's economic potential and underscore the important role that private enterprise plays in national development.

As Liberia builds for the future, companies that invest in local production, create jobs, and strengthen industrial capacity will remain central to the nation's development story.

For the Sethi Brothers Group, the journey that began in 1989 has become more than a business success—it has evolved into a lasting contribution to Liberia's growth, demonstrating how industry, innovation, and commitment can help build not only structures, but the foundation of a stronger economy.





LIBERIA'S ONE-STOP DESTINATION FOR BUILDING MATERIALS



A LEGACY OF TRUST. A FUTURE OF STRENGTH.



STRENGTH THAT
BUILDS THE NATION.



SMART SOLUTIONS
FOR TOMORROW.



BUILDING STRONGER
NATION.



IF IT'S FROM **SETHI**,
IT'S GOT TO BE **GOOD**.