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<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AIDS</td>
<td>Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANC</td>
<td>Antenatal care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BPfA</td>
<td>Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAADP</td>
<td>Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEDAW</td>
<td>Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CGEP</td>
<td>Country Gender Equality Profile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSO</td>
<td>Civil society organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DRRR</td>
<td>Disarmament, demobilization, rehabilitation, and reintegration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DV</td>
<td>Domestic violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EVD</td>
<td>Ebola virus disease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FGM</td>
<td>Female genital mutilation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GBV</td>
<td>Gender-based violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross domestic product</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEWE</td>
<td>Gender equality and women’s empowerment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GoL</td>
<td>Government of Liberia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIV</td>
<td>Human immunodeficiency virus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPV</td>
<td>Human papillomavirus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information and communications technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITN</td>
<td>Insecticide-treated nets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMNCI</td>
<td>Integrated management of neonatal and childhood illnesses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDP</td>
<td>Internally displaced person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILO</td>
<td>International Labour Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMF</td>
<td>International Monetary Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IOM</td>
<td>International Organization for Migration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPV</td>
<td>Intimate partner violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IUD</td>
<td>Intrauterine device</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LASIP</td>
<td>Liberia Agriculture Sector Investment Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGBTI</td>
<td>Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LISGIS</td>
<td>Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LWI</td>
<td>Liberian Women’s Initiative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introduction:

As of January 2021, Liberia had a population of 5.12 million, 49.7 percent being female, and 50.3 percent being male.¹ There are 16 major ethnic groups in the country and over 20 indigenous languages are commonly used.² Liberia is bordered by Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Côte d’Ivoire, and its capital is Monrovia. In territorial terms, the country is divided into 15 counties with Montserrado, Nimba, and Bong having the highest concentration of females — 50.8 percent, 50.2 percent, and 50.6 percent, respectively.³ Yet, despite Liberia’s abundant natural wealth — it is rich in iron ore, diamonds, gold, fertile soil, fisheries, and forestry⁴ — the country is among the world’s poorest.

Liberia experienced its first civil war from 1989 to 1997 and the second from 1999 to 2003. The drivers of conflict were diverse, with underlying social and economic inequalities, paired with widespread corruption and nepotism, playing an important role. The first civil war was one of Africa’s bloodiest conflicts in the post-independence era — more than 200,000 people died and a million were displaced.⁵ These civil wars suppressed economic activity and destroyed vital infrastructure in Liberia, including electricity lines, roads, water and sewage systems, and education centers.⁶

Against this backdrop, women and girls suffered the worst consequences from the 14 years of war and subsequent economic crises. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimated that 82 percent of the female population was subjected to multiple forms of violence during the civil war, while 77 percent experienced sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV).⁷ In the post-conflict era, the high incidences of sexual violence did not decrease, and abuse rates remain critical, affecting women’s participation in the labor market to this day.⁸

Recent democratic governments in Liberia have made considerable efforts to improve the realization of women’s and girls’ rights and advance gender equality. President George Weah’s administration has shown commitment toward this goal by launching the five-year Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (PAPD), which is aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including the gender-specific targets identified therein. However, due to the country’s long history of discrimination against women, there are still several existing structural barriers hindering women’s participation in all spheres of public life and activities and preventing them from reaching their full potential.⁹

This issue paper contains a summarized version of the main data and analyses presented in the Country Gender Equality Profile (CGEP) of Liberia, posing the most urgent aspects of gender inequality to address and eradicate from the various spheres that comprise daily life in the country. For a complete and detailed version, please consult the full report of the CGEP.
The State of Gender Equality in Liberia
1.1. Political Context

In recent years, the development of institutional and legal frameworks has led to significant changes advancing women’s rights, opportunities, and equal representation in decision-making activities. This first section details these advances and the remaining gender equality challenges by outlining international and national institutional frameworks for gender equality and women’s rights in Liberia; by analyzing the legal framework and gender-sensitive laws; the role of civil society organizations; and the participation at the macro-level sphere of decision making.

1.1.1. Institutional Framework

The evolution of the international institutional framework for gender equality in Liberia has expanded considerably in the last few decades. Women’s protagonism and advocacy during the civil wars led to a greater visibility of women’s rights and gender equality in Liberia. This, along with general gender mainstreaming, has had a considerable impact in this process, resulting in the inclusion of gender-related international frameworks in the efforts to advance gender equality in the country.

These frameworks include the most relevant treaties for gender equality and the protection of women’s rights, as well as international and regional agendas and action plans that include the obligation to reach specific gender equality goals. A key instrument has been UN Security Council Resolution 1325, which has driven the recognition of the impact of violent conflict on women and girls, as well as their critical role in conflict resolution and peacebuilding. At the national level, the main governmental body focused on gender is the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, as the actor in charge of coordinating the different National Action Plans (NAP), policies and programs being implemented in Liberia. The National Gender Policy - implemented since 2010 and recently reviewed for the 2018-2022 period - is the point of reference of the work of the MGCSP and of the coordination with all governmental and state institutions, civil society, and other stakeholders. At the same time, specific policies have been implemented to address different cross-sectional dimensions of gender, such as the Gender Responsive Planning and Budget Policy (GRPB) for 2019-2023, the Liberian NAP for the Implementation of the UN Resolution 1325 for 2009-2013 and for 2019-2023; and the NAP on the Prevention and Management of SGBV.

Other policies have been implemented with the aim of addressing specific gender gaps in health, the labor market and economic empowerment, education, the protection of children and people with disabilities, and the development of the country.

Thus, the institutional framework for gender equality in Liberia has expanded to cover a wide array of gender-related issues and has incorporated international obligations and principles into the national framework. However, there are important and complex challenges that have hampered the implementation of this institutional framework and, while each policy may face specific obstacles, general patterns have been identified.

These challenges are related to a lack of knowledge of gender and its importance for policy-making, deficient gender-responsive budgets, and a lack of financial resources for the correct and efficient implementation of the policies within the different branches of the State. These institutional challenges, as well as the lack of public confidence and trust in government structures, have greatly hindered efforts to comply with international obligations to ensure the protection of women’s and girls’ rights, and has obstructed the adequate implementation of the institutional framework for gender equality in Liberia.

1.1.2. Legal Framework

The legal framework for gender equality in Liberia is set in a complex judicial system in which both statutory and customary law and practices coexist and interact. The Constitution of Liberia, amended in 1986, recognizes the relevance of customary law in the judicial system and legitimizes “the existence and operation of customary courts in the hinterland” as conflict resolution mechanisms. The recognition and legitimacy granted to customary law are particularly relevant in the aftermath of the two civil wars, as most of the statutory judicial infrastructure was decimated.

Nonetheless, judicial harmonization poses notable challenges, and democratic dialogue between groups has been encouraged to establish common understandings. Among the main priorities in addressing gender inequality...
in Liberia is the need to transform both statutory and customary mechanisms into gender-sensitive judicial systems. This means that both judicial systems need to establish democratic dialogues that effectively protect women and strengthen social cohesion through the equal participation of women in their communities.

Focusing on the statutory legal system, gender-sensitive legislation is a fundamental part of mainstreaming gender considerations, and it refers to “the integration of a gender perspective into all components of the legislative process” in order to achieve gender equality. The Constitution of Liberia establishes a framework for the State to promote the realization of social justice and increase citizens’ access to political and economic participation, and Article 11 cristalizes the principle of non-discrimination in these processes. However, certain pieces of legislation have discriminated against women in overt ways, especially laws that deal with the private sphere. Despite efforts to eliminate gender gaps in legislation (see Table 1.1), provisions that discriminate against women persist.

Focusing on the statutory legal system, gender-sensitive legislation is a fundamental part of mainstreaming gender considerations,20 and it refers to “the integration of a gender perspective into all components of the legislative process”21 in order to achieve gender equality. The Constitution of Liberia establishes a framework for the State to promote the realization of social justice and increase citizens’ access to political and economic participation, and Article 11 cristalizes the principle of non-discrimination in these processes. However, certain pieces of legislation have discriminated against women in overt ways, especially laws that deal with the private sphere.22 Despite efforts to eliminate gender gaps in legislation (see Table 1.1), provisions that discriminate against women persist.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Law</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Brief Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Decedents Estate Law</td>
<td>1973</td>
<td>Accords equal rights to customary wives, both sons and daughters have the same rights to inherit land and non-land assets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alien and Nationality Law</td>
<td>1973</td>
<td>Women are provided the same rights as men to acquire, change, or retain their nationality, whether single or married.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customary Marriage Law</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Brought formal recognition to customary marriages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Law</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Free and compulsory education for all.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children’s Law</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Comprehensively covers children’s rights, prohibiting child marriage, discrimination, and all forms of violence against children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decent Work Law</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td>Promotes the fundamental rights of workers and prohibits discrimination of any kind within the workplace.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Another key challenge is women’s participation in the judicial system, as there is a shortage of female judges and qualified female legal practitioners. To advocate for gender mainstreaming in the judicial system and for the promotion, protection, and advancement of the rights of women and children, the Association of Female Lawyers of Liberia was formed.

Box 1.1. Sexual and Gender-Based Violence in the Judicial System

SGBV was widespread during the civil wars, affecting a considerable proportion of the population. The issue is thus a salient phenomenon in Liberian society and must be addressed by the judicial system.

Indeed, there is consensus at the national level to reform the justice system and commit to addressing this complex issue. In 2008, the Liberian Legislature established a Sexual Offenses Court known as Criminal Court E to tackle SGBV, and in 2009, The Ministry of Justice established the Sexual and Gender-Based Violent Crimes Unit to provide rapid responses to complaints of rape and other sexual offenses against children. Likewise, gender-sensitive laws such as the Domestic Violence Act have advanced the country’s legal framework by establishing domestic violence as a criminal offense.

However, due to social and cultural perceptions, as well as difficulties in accessing the statutory system, SGBV in Liberia is heavily underreported and the conviction rate is low. Distance and costs of travel to police stations or victim support centers impose barriers to accessing justice, while the dual system of statutory and customary legal frameworks further nuance individuals’ choices, taking into account social and community concerns. Specifically, many
women would prefer to pursue justice through the statutory legal system “if it functioned the way it was intended” and they could access it; but when faced with the dysfunctions of the system and peer pressure, women turn instead to the customary system. Thus, despite efforts to address legal and institutional gaps in the elimination of SGBV, challenges regarding access to and implementation of these policies remain.

1.1.3. Civil Society

Civil society in Liberia is diverse, consisting of over 1,500 formal organizations registered under the umbrella of the National Civil Society Council of Liberia (NCSCL), and numerous informal organizations. Civil society organizations (CSOs) were of key relevance during and after the civil wars and continue to play important roles in fostering peace and security and advancing gender equality in the country. To strengthen the role of women’s organizations to promote peace and gender equality, the Women’s NGO Secretariat of Liberia (WONGOSOL) was established, with the aim of coordinating their activities and instilling capacity-building processes to give gender-related CSOs more incidence in public issues.

However, there are complex challenges for the work and sustainability of CSOs in the country, which significantly affect women’s initiatives in civil society. The majority of CSOs are underfunded and reliant on donors, which can lead to a drift in their mission, and there is a vast human resources gap that disadvantages peri-urban and rural CSOs. To address this, an accord was signed in 2016 to ensure an enabling environment for civil society to operate, and more opportunities for participation in governance and peacebuilding processes.

1.1.4. Representation of Women in Decision Making: Macro-level

Key Facts:
- The post-conflict era, peacebuilding processes and the election of Ellen Johnson Sirleaf as president are particularly relevant moments for the macro-level representation of women.
- However, women’s political participation is far from reaching parity in government positions, political representation bodies, and political processes.

Key Data:
- Data from 2014 shows less participation in electoral processes. There is a 10 percent gap in voter registration, 14 percent gap in voting, and 17 percent gap in participation in campaign activities.
- Women hold 15.8 percent of cabinet posts, comprise 24.5 percent of deputy ministers, and 25.9 percent of assistant ministers.
- In 2020, only 20 of the 118 eligible candidates in the Special Senate Elections were women.

The representation of Liberian women in decision making processes has evolved over Liberia’s history, with the most significant advances being achieved after the civil wars. The participation and empowerment of women in peacebuilding and advocacy led to the foundation of CSOs and feminist movements that seek to establish peace, encourage national reconstruction, and achieve gender equality, creating a new precedent for the representation of women in macro-level political processes. At the same time, the election of Ellen Johnson Sirleaf as president in 2005 and reelection in 2011 ignited a political and social transformation toward greater participation of women in decision-making processes, despite the patriarchal structures that persist nationwide. The first female president on the African continent appointed a considerable number of women to administrative positions and advances were made in the legal and institutional frameworks for the pursuit of gender equality.

Despite the achievements made, women are far from reaching gender equality in political processes, government positions, and political representation bodies. In terms of their participation in political processes, for example, there are considerable gaps in women’s registration to vote in elections, and in their participation in political campaigns. Women are also underrepresented in both legislative and executive decision-making bodies; the causes are linked to a lack of educational qualifications required for various job positions, sexism, and discrimination. To address these barriers, an Electoral Reform Bill has been proposed to create a gender quota for candidate lists and the leadership of political parties and coalitions, but it is yet to be passed.
1.2. Sociocultural Context

During the last few decades, Liberian women and girls have begun to enjoy stronger protection of their rights, thanks in part to evolving social and cultural norms. This second section details these changes and the remaining challenges by analyzing the current state of women’s access to health and education, the main ways in which cultural norms shape and reinforce gender inequality, and women’s participation in micro-level decision making.

1.2.1. Women and Health

Key Facts:
- The two civil wars destroyed much of the healthcare infrastructure and supply of trained personnel in the country, creating major difficulties in the provision of healthcare services.
- The Ebola virus disease (EVD) strained the Liberian healthcare system and caused a setback in the improvement of different health services.
- International partners and the Government of Liberia (GoL) have developed several initiatives to provide basic health supplies such as insecticide-treated nets (ITNs) and contraceptive methods.

Key Data:
- Births attended by skilled health staff rose from 61 percent in 2007 to 84 percent in 2019.
- Neonatal deaths dropped from 71 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2007 to 54 deaths in 2013 but then rose to 63 deaths in 2019.
- There remains a high rate of 742 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births in girls and women aged 15 to 49.

Liberia’s health sector has suffered greatly because of the civil wars’ legacy of destruction and resulting shortage of health workers. In 2011, the Ministry of Health (MoH) created the National Health and Social Welfare Policy and Plan for 2011-2021 to fulfill the collective goal of a secure, prosperous, and healthier Liberian population. In the decade since, many health indicators in Liberia have improved. The share of births attended by skilled health staff rose from 61 percent in 2007 to 84 percent in 2019. The percentage of teenagers who had begun childbearing decreased from 38 in 2013 to 30 in 2019, while contraceptive use increased from 20 percent in 2007 to 24 percent in 2019.

However, the EVD epidemic caused the health sector to suffer significant setbacks and struggle to perform its basic duties. For example, neonatal deaths — which had dropped from 71 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2007 to 54 deaths in 2013 — increased to 63 deaths in 2019. Other worrying indicators include the under-5 mortality rate, which only experienced a slight decrease from 94 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2013 to 93 deaths in 2019, and maternity mortality, which remains high, with 742 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births in women aged 15 to 49. When compared by region, the North Central region of Liberia stands out as having the lowest rate of under-5 mortality per 1,000 live births. Disparities between regions may be explained by the varying levels of access and financial support each one receives. While the North Central region has received considerable amounts of financial support from external development partners, the Southeastern and Northwestern regions have received limited support due to the challenges in reaching these regions and their heavy reliance on government support, which is much more limited and does not always come on time.

To address the different health issues and deficiencies in the Liberian health system, the GoL and international development partners have set out many initiatives, including the creation of the Family Planning 2020 partnership to ensure contraceptive services at all levels of the healthcare delivery system. There have also been initiatives from international donors and the GoL to provide insecticide-treated nets (ITN) to children under 5 years old as well as the provision of family planning services free of charge nationwide. However, the challenges to Liberia’s healthcare system persist. While health care and health infrastructure are inadequate in most regions, there is a pronounced disparity in access to health care services between rural and urban areas. Additionally, other factors such as traditional practices (including early marriage and female genital mutilation), the use of solid fuels for cooking, and the overload of care work increase women’s risk of illness in comparison to men.
1.2.2. Women and Education

Key Facts:
• Different governmental efforts from the Sirleaf and Weah administrations have tried to create policies to improve women’s and girls’ access to quality education and prevent high dropout rates and incidents of sexual violence in schools.
• Both primary and secondary education completion rates and literacy rates remain low, especially amongst the rural female population.
• Women’s participation as educators remains very limited, although it is higher at the primary level.

Key Data:
• About one-third of the population in Liberia has no access to education.
• Girls in rural areas have a net attendance rate of 35 percent for primary and 13 percent for secondary levels, versus 53 percent and 34 percent for girls in urban areas, respectively.
• Only 33.5 percent of rural women are considered literate, in contrast to 63.2 percent of urban women.

The civil wars and the economic crises that have sprung from different health emergencies — particularly the EVD epidemic and the COVID-19 pandemic — have led to the persistence of obstacles that hinder girls’ and women’s access to and participation in education. To combat the low levels of education, the Sirleaf administration (2005-2018) created in 2005 the National Policy on Girls’ Education, aiming to improve girls’ access to quality education. In 2019, the Weah administration helped to develop the Beijing+25 National Review Report, which narrates the effort made by the GoL, and in particular the MGCSP, in terms of budget allocation for educational facilities and services, efforts to combat sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) in school, and support for female students to continue their education. Despite these efforts, education and literacy levels in Liberia remain low.

As of 2019, around one-third of the Liberian population had no access to education, 31 percent attended primary school, and only 36 percent had completed some secondary or tertiary education. Boys and girls living in rural areas had a lower net attendance ratio compared with those in urban areas. Girls in rural areas of primary school age had a 35 percent net attendance ratio while those in urban areas had a 53 percent ratio; at the secondary level, a mere 13 percent of rural girls attended school versus 34 percent of girls living in urban areas. The main reasons accounting for the differences in net school attendance between rural and urban areas are threefold: rapid urbanization in the country, availability of teachers and long distances to get to schools. Low levels of literacy for women and girls also persist and are especially significant in rural areas, where only 33.5 percent of women are literate in contrast with 63.2 percent of urban women. In terms of women’s participation as instructors in the education sector, there is a higher percentage involved in primary education, at 18 percent, while the percentage for secondary education remains quite low, at only 6 percent. There are several reasons for this low participation, including low levels of literacy and precarious working conditions that prevent or discourage women from becoming instructors.

1.2.3. Gender and Cultural Norms

Key facts:
• Several traditional gender norms persist in the sociocultural context of Liberia, which are rooted in social power relations dynamics and have profound consequences for the daily lives of women and girls.
• These gender norms contribute to the persistence of several harmful practices, including child marriage, and the acceptance of violent child punishment and intimate partner violence.
• Religious beliefs are one of the key forces that shape the structure and type of relationships women have within families and communities.

Key data:
• The median age for first marriage increased from 18.4 in 2007 to 21.2 in 2019-20.
• 89 percent of children aged 1 to 14 have experienced some sort of discipline method that included the use of violence.
• 37 percent of girls and women aged 15 to 49 believe it is acceptable for a man to hit his wife for any of the following five main reasons: going out without telling the husband; arguing with him; neglecting the children; burning the food; or refusing sex.

Liberia is marked by several traditional gender norms rooted in the dynamics of social power relations and that affect the daily lives of women and girls in a number
of different ways. In terms of land access, according to patrilocal customs, women may only own land and resources through their husbands.48 The American-settler society in Liberia followed very traditional ideas on gender roles, confining women’s role to the private sphere, where they should be economically dependent on their husbands’ provision.49 One traditional yet harmful practice that has persisted over time is child marriage. Many low-income families marry off their daughters in exchange for dowries that could help them to obtain food.50 However, as a result of several massive campaigns to abolish early and forced marriage in the country, the median age for first marriage increased from 18.4 years in 2007 to 21.2 in 2019-20.51 The proportion of women aged 20 to 24 who were married before turning 18 has also decreased in recent years, with the portion of girls married by the age of 18 being 35.9 percent in 2013 and decreasing to 24.9 percent in 2019-20.52 The portion of girls married by age 15, similarly decreased — from 8.8 percent in 2013 to 5.8 percent in 2019-20.53 However, the rate of first marriage varies widely between rural and urban areas. For rural women, the median age of first marriage is 19.1 while for urban women it is 23.3; the age of first sexual intercourse is 15.8 for rural girls and 16.2 for urban ones.54 Other harmful traditional practices include physical punishment for children and intimate partner violence. According to the Liberian Demographic Health Survey, 89 percent of children aged 1 to 14 have been subjected to some sort of discipline method that included the use of violence, versus only 7 percent of children for this age group that experienced nonviolent discipline, with little variation by gender.55 Likewise, aggressive behavior of husbands against their wives is still seen as acceptable by a large part of the female population, with 37 percent of girls and women aged 15 to 49 (versus 25 percent of men) agreeing that it is justified a husband beating his wife if she commits any of the following five supposed transgressions: going out without telling the husband; arguing with him; neglecting the children; burning the food; or refusing sex.56 Although this perception has decreased over the years, intimate partner violence continues to be a serious issue in Liberia.57 Religious beliefs are an influential force underpinning these traditional cultural norms that shape the structure and type of relationships women have within families and communities.

In Liberia, homosexuality is classified as a sexual offense under section 14.74 of the Penal Code, which classifies it as “voluntary sodomy,” punishable by up to one year of imprisonment.58 In 2012, several bills sought to replace this sentence with the death penalty. However, the proposals were not approved.59 In Liberian society, homosexuality is not accepted and LGBTQIA+ people suffer persecution, stigmatization, harassment, and violence. The hostile environment in their communities affects their quality of life and prevents them from accessing public services such as health care.60 Intolerance was exacerbated when the end of the armed conflicts brought about increased migration to cities, bringing along conservative values from rural areas. According to these prevailing ideas, homosexuality is un-African and immoral. Such conservative positions enjoy the support of many Americo-Liberians.61 Intolerance of sexual diversity is associated with other types of violence, such as violence against women. A Human Rights Watch study found that intolerance, fear, and aversion are recurrent against people considered transgressors of cultural and gender norms in Liberia.62 There are also groups dedicated to persecuting sexual diversity, such as the New Citizens Movement (NCM), in which some religious leaders participate. This phenomenon is all the more worrying given that these groups’ activities include mass protest, which could devolve into uncontrollable violence against those perceived to be lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer.63 Finally, persecution and stigmatization also discourage and threaten activists who consider the defense of LGBTQIA+ rights to be one of the riskiest areas of work.64

Lack of data: Data regarding violence against the LGBTQIA+ community and denial of access to services is limited, given the fear that reporting could lead to further aggression. Existing information comes from anonymous interviews with international organizations that monitor and document the situation of the LGBTQIA+ community.
1.2.4. Representation of Women in Decision Making: Micro-level

Key Facts:
- A shift in gender roles during times of conflict led to the empowerment of women in micro-level decision making out of necessity; this has increased in the post-conflict setting, thanks to women’s advocacy efforts.
- Women are increasingly involved in controlling and spending their own cash earnings, either solely or jointly with their husbands.
- However, the participation in decisions at the household level, such as women’s own health care, major household purchases, and visits to family, is still considerably low.

Key Data:
- Across all education and wealth categories, at least eight out of 10 married women participate in decisions about their own earnings.
- Women have slightly more decision-making power regarding major household purchases (28 percent) than visits to their family or relatives (22 percent) or about their own health care (20 percent).
- The portion of women who did not participate in any of the three decisions mentioned above increased from 9 percent to 12 percent.

During the war, women took on increased responsibilities as breadwinners and heads of households, incidentally catalyzing the transformation of women’s roles within the home, community, and even the economy. On a micro level, the trends related to women’s participation in decision making regarding their personal lives and their decision power in a married relationship are mixed.

This transformation has increased the role women play in deciding how the money they earn is spent. Among married women who have cash earnings, 89 percent reported deciding alone or making decisions jointly with their husbands on how to use their earnings, while only 11 percent of married women would let their husbands make the decisions.65 This improvement applies to women in all education and wealth categories.66 In a society where men have traditionally been in charge of making decisions in their communities and households, this increase shows an improvement in the way women’s points of view and bargaining power are conceived inside the marriage.

However, for decisions regarding a woman’s own health care, major household purchases and visits to family, the panorama is not as promising. Around 69 percent of married women participate alone or jointly with their husbands in all three of the specified decisions,67 a slight increase from previous years; however, there has also been an increase from 9 percent to 12 percent in the women who did not participate in any of the three decisions.68 This is a concerning situation, as it shows mixed trends in women’s empowerment, which also vary in terms of education, employment, and relationship status. The percentage of women who take part in all three specified decisions increases considerably as their educational level increases, and the same occurs when women are employed.69 At the same time, unmarried women tend to experience more empowerment, particularly when making decisions about personal issues such as their own health care.70

1.3. Economic Context

The empowerment of women and their equal participation in Liberian society is key in addressing the remaining gender equality challenges and the economic barriers that women face presents a number of obstacles for women’s full and equal participation in the formal labor sector. This third section details these obstacles and their connection to the remaining gender equality challenges by analyzing the access and participation of women in financial services; the issues women face in order to participate in the formal economy; and the current situation most Liberian women face in the informal economy.

1.3.1. Women and Financial Services

Key Facts:
- There are three main financial service modalities in Liberia: commercial banking, mobile banking, and informal community-based credit rotations.
- Women’s opportunities to access formal financial services such as commercial and mobile banking are very limited, leading them to mostly rely on their community’s informal financial organizations for loans.
• Informal micro-financing institutions such as village saving loans and susu clubs are used mostly by marginalized groups such as women to procure significant amounts of money.

Key Data:
• Only 12 percent of women in Liberia have a bank account, in comparison to 21.3 percent of men.
• 27.2 percent of the population in Liberia is unable to meet account opening documentation requirements and out of this percentage, 53.1 percent are women.
• Women make up 98 percent of Liberians using non-banking microfinance institutions, with nearly 310,000 active borrowers.

Access to financial services in Liberia can be gained through three main channels: commercial banking, mobile banking, and informal community-based credit rotations. However, women’s opportunities to access formal financial services such as commercial and mobile banking are very limited, leading them to have unequal participation in the financial sector that mostly relies on their community’s informal financial organizations. Only 12 percent of women in Liberia have a bank account, in comparison to 21.3 percent of men. The restricted access to formal financial services is rooted in the small range of available banking options, individuals’ inability to meet opening documentation requirements, and the lack of options for low-income earners and small and medium-sized enterprises. For example, the Central Bank of Liberia shows that 27.2 percent of the population is unable to meet account opening documentation requirements and out of this percentage, 53.1 percent are women. For mobile phone financial services, the picture is not much different. Only 24.4 percent of women use their mobile phones for financial transactions, slightly lower than the 30 percent of men who do. There is also a discrepancy in banking between rural and urban women. The percentage of rural women who own a mobile phone (23 percent) or have a bank account (6 percent) is much lower than for urban women, 61 percent and 16 percent, respectively.

Due to these limitations in accessing formal financial services, women are left to resort to non-banking microfinance institutions (MFI), such as village saving loans or susu clubs. These organizations work by pooling money on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis that is collected at a fixed amount from the members of the susu club and is distributed to one person at a time. This system has become the main source of financial services for women who make up 98 percent of Liberians MFIs’ active borrowers (about 310,000 users), with more than $5.5 million in loans.

1.3.2. Women and The Formal Economy

Key Facts:
• Most women participating in the formal economy of Liberia are self-employed.
• The sectors where women have the most participation in the formal economy are sales, agriculture, and services.
• There is no national policy against workplace sexual harassment, which continues to be a significant obstacle preventing women from holding influential positions in Liberian society.

Key Data:
• Women comprise 47.3 percent of the total labor force.
• 91.6 percent of women in the formal sector are self-employed and only 8.4 percent are salaried workers, in comparison to men in the formal sector, of whom 67 percent are self-employed and 33 percent are salaried workers.
• Approximately 34 percent of women work in the sales and services sectors while 24 percent work in agriculture.

Women’s participation in the formal economy in Liberia is still very limited and the vast majority of women in the formal sector are self-employed. Although there has been a positive trend in women’s share of the labor force, the total value (47.5 percent) still does not represent an equal proportion in comparison to men. When examining the composition of the female workforce it can be noted that 91.6 percent women in the formal economy are self-employed and only 8.4 percent are salaried workers, in comparison to 67 percent of self-employed men and 33 percent salaried men workers. Women thus have few opportunities to be immersed in the formal economy; most of the female population works in the informal economy. Inside the formal market, the activities concentrating the highest portion of young men and women are sales and agricultural work. About 34 percent of women work in the sales and services sectors, while 24 percent work in agriculture. Unemployment rates remain higher for men
(3.5 percent) than for women (2.2 percent), however, when breaking it down into age categories it appears that young females have the highest unemployment rate, comprising 41.3 percent of unemployed individuals. Data from 2013 shows that this condition on average lasts more than one year in 60 percent of the cases. Unemployment is more prevalent in rural areas; only 57 percent of rural women are employed versus 67 percent of urban women. Women also face additional challenges in the workplace due to harassment or discrimination — phenomena that are addressed neither in the Decent Work Act nor the Liberia National Gender Policy. Therefore, there is a lack of comprehensive sexual harassment policies in national legislation and workplace behavior manuals.

### 1.3.3. Women and The Informal Economy

**Key Facts:**
- Women who work in the informal economy have higher employment vulnerability than those working in the formal sector.
- The informal sector is the main source of income and coverage of living expenses and support for children’s education for Liberian families.
- The GoL is advancing many initiatives to work on the transition from informal to formal employment for women in Liberia.

**Key Data:**
- 93.4 percent of the Liberian population is employed in the informal sector.
- The informal economy represents the main sector where women participate in the economy, with about 96.7 percent of women working informally.
- 32 percent of children aged 5 to 17 are involved in child labor, with 30 percent of child workers operating in highly dangerous conditions.

The vast majority of the Liberian population (93.4 percent) is employed in the informal sector. The informal sector also concentrates the majority of working women, with about 96.2 percent of females working informally. This situation puts women in a position of high employment vulnerability in which they may lose their jobs without any type of financial or health care protection. Children are also affected by the lack of regulation in the informal sector, as 32 percent of those aged 5 to 17 are involved in child labor. Out of this percentage, 30 percent of children work in dangerous conditions that can affect their well-being and prevent them from having a healthy childhood and education. The prevalence of informal work as the main economic sector in Liberia even affects women with higher educational backgrounds. About 41 percent of university-educated women work informally in comparison to 24 percent of men. This means that the informal sector is Liberian families’ main source of income, covering living expenses and supporting children’s education. However, if women and the broader Liberian population transitioned to the formal sector, there would be less employment vulnerability, increased gender equality, and more opportunities for women to be empowered.

To work toward a transition to the formal sector, the GoL has created several initiatives to improve Liberian women’s economic potential. One such initiative is a partnership between the National Petty Trader Union for Women and the Central Bank of Liberia to create a credit facility enabling women traders to access small loans. The GoL also reached an agreement between local authorities and the union of street vendors in Monrovia where street vendors gained access to work licenses, thus assuaging their fears of authorities confiscate their goods. Recently, the government also implemented the Recovery of Economic Activity for Liberian Informal Sector Employment project, aiming to increase access to income-earning opportunities in response to the COVID-19 crisis.
2

Gender Sectoral Analysis and Cross-Cutting Issues
2.1. Post-Conflict and Peacebuilding

Key Facts:
- In the context of armed conflict, Liberian women joined forces in a movement aimed at ending the war while simultaneously creating organizations and initiatives to address gender-based violence.
- Peacebuilding and post-conflict recovery have been central aspects of the efforts aimed at the country’s stabilization, development, and prosperity.
- The peacebuilding process that followed the conflicts in Liberia is notable for being one of the first to consider gender as a cross-sectional issue.

Key Data:
- Between 1989 and 2003, Liberia suffered two civil wars during which the population suffered from human rights violations. The wars are estimated to have claimed approximately 150,000 lives and rendered 850,000 people refugees.

2.2. Women and Agriculture

Key Facts:
- Due to the damaging economic consequences of the civil wars, the GoL created in 2008 a Food and Nutrition Strategy aimed at enhancing food availability by addressing constraints in small-scale farmers’ production, processing, and marketing.
- In 2018, the Ministry of Agriculture developed the second phase of the Liberian Agriculture Sector Investment Program (LASIP) for 2018-2022.
- Agriculture is considered to be Liberia’s economic bedrock, as it is the source of employment, earnings, food, and livelihood security for most of the population.

Key Data:
- Agriculture contributes over 60 percent of the gross domestic product and provides a source of livelihood for more than two-thirds of the population.
- 70 percent of the workforce in Liberia derive a portion of their cash income from an agriculture-related activity.
- In 2019, 38 percent of women were employed in agriculture.
- Women employed in agriculture are more likely than women employed in non-agricultural work to not receive payments: 74.9 percent of women earn cash payments for non-agricultural work, whereas only 22.6 percent of women working in agriculture earn cash payments.
- It is estimated that less than 20 percent of the total land in the country has a proper title and is registered.
- Of the 16 percent of women and men who own land, 76 percent of women and 78 percent of men do not have a title or deed of ownership for it.

The civil wars led to large waves of migration to cities—a rural exodus in search of urban opportunities. Consequently, women consider working in sales and services more appealing, leading to a decline in women’s participation in agriculture. Women’s main contribution to the agricultural labor force is in food crop production.
percent), marketing and trade (85 percent), and farm labor (80 percent).96

However, women’s additional responsibilities, such as household chores, limit the time available for agricultural work, affecting their food security and that of their children.97

Moreover, land ownership is a complicated matter due to the lack of organization and officiality of titles and deeds for land. In 2018, the government established the Land Rights Act, giving women equal protection and provision for recognized land rights.98 However, gaps in the law mean that young, unmarried women who move to their partners’ communities do not fully benefit from the law.

2.3. Women and Infrastructure

Key Facts:

• The demand for better facilities ranges from mobility to working conditions inside and outside the home — infrastructure that may improve women’s quality of life.
• Better infrastructure can reduce the gender gap in labor participation.
• Lack of safe water affects sanitation, health, food, security, and economic opportunities.
• When women lack access to essential infrastructure services, such as transport, water, and electricity, they allocate more of their time to household chores than do men.

Key Data:

• 74 percent of the de jure population has access to drinking water, while 10 percent has only limited access.

2.4. Women and Energy

Key Facts:

• In 2009, the Liberian Ministry of Land, Mines and Energy created the National Energy Policy and Agenda for Action and Economic and Social Development.
• In 2016, the Ministry of Mines and Energy developed the Rural Energy Strategy and Master Plan for Liberia until 2030.
• Women, who generally bear households’ primary responsibility for cooking, risk developing health conditions when solid cooking fuels are used and when proper infrastructure is lacking.

Key Data:

• In terms of access to electricity, there has been a considerable increase in the last few years, going from 1.9 percent of the population with access to it in 2009 to 26.7 percent in 2019.

Women’s participation in the energy sector is limited and there is an absence of concrete policies to foster their inclusion. Women’s involvement in this sector and equal access to clean and renewable energy sources are vital to empowering them and protecting their human rights. Moreover, the lack of data in this regard makes it impossible to measure gender equality in the energy sector and understand which areas need improvement. At a micro-level, lack of access to electricity and the use of solid cooking energy pose major challenges for women and girls and result in disadvantages with regard to health, living standards, and educational advances.102
2.5. Women’s Entrepreneurship and Economic Empowerment

Key Facts:
• Educational gaps and lack of financial literacy lead to the exclusion of women from financial services.
• A central prerequisite for accessing formal credit is the ownership of assets such as real estate, as they serve as collateral required by financial institutions.

Key Data:
• Women’s entrepreneurial activity in Liberia is mainly in informal retail and trade businesses. Women are primarily self-employed (69 percent compared to 56 percent of men) and many own entirely informal businesses (60 percent of women compared to 45 percent of men).
• According to data from 2010, only 20 percent of management positions were held by women.

Women’s participation in the economy is characterized by their prevalence in the informal sector and their reliance on informal financial services, leading to unstable living conditions. The lack of social protection and financial services presents barriers to the economic inclusion of women. Despite women entrepreneurs being on the rise, there are significant challenges that hinder the establishment and management of their enterprises.

In formal employment, women’s participation in decision-making bodies leads to their empowerment and has a considerable effect on the work environment and their communities, but the participation rate is still considerably low and unstable.

2.6. Women and Technical Vocational and Educational Training

Key Facts:
• Women’s gender roles, early marriage, teenage pregnancy, and women’s training opportunities being limited to certain fields, such as hospitality and cosmetology, are some of the leading causes that prevent them from acquiring competitive job skills.
• Training programs are concentrated in Monrovia and Montserrado, thus excluding much of the rural population from these opportunities.
• Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields are dominated by males.

Key Data:
• In Sub-Saharan Africa, 30 percent of tech industry workers are women, slightly above the global average of 28 percent.

Liberia’s occupational gender segregation impedes women’s economic progress, personal and professional development, and deprives the nation of women’s professional and intellectual potential. Equal participation in diverse professional sectors is essential if Liberia’s economy is to recover and grow. Many technical and vocational education and training (TVET) areas are geared toward and dominated by male participation.

Increasing women’s participation requires that the more advanced regions support others that have not yet developed the necessary infrastructure to draw more women to this sector.
2.7. **Women, The Environment, and Climate Change**

**Key Facts:**
- Like most countries in West Africa, Liberia is highly vulnerable to climate variability because of the country’s heavy dependence on economic activities from agriculture, forestry, and fisheries, as well as the fragility of government institutions, lack of financial resources, and low technical capacity to adapt and respond to climate change.
- In Liberia, women are disproportionately grouped in the least productive sectors, increasing their vulnerability to climate change and environmental hazards.
- In 2012, the GoL developed a Climate Change Gender Action Plan (CCGAP) to provide a framework for enhancing gender equality in both climate adaptation and mitigation. However, in-depth analysis of impacts of climate change on women and the extent to which they have been included in relevant decision-making processes is not feasible due to the absence of sex-disaggregated data.

**Key Data:**
- In terms of rising sea levels, this is particularly concerning because Liberia’s coastline is home to approximately 58 percent of the country’s population and is essential for agricultural and fishing activities.
- One of the main climate variability challenges faced by women is water stress. In Liberia, women and girls have the primary responsibility to manage household water supplies, sanitation, and health. However, lack of data on water stress limits further analysis to identify the extent of this issue in the country.
- In Liberia, awareness about climate change is higher among males than females (67 percent for males in comparison to 41 percent for females).

West Africa has one of the world’s richest natural resource reserves, covered by a continuous block of dense tropical rainforest as well as easily accessible freshwater and marine resources. However, the region is highly vulnerable to climate shocks, particularly in terms of recurrent drought and rising sea levels. This is particularly concerning because, according to a recently published report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the impacts of climate change are expected to increase exponentially over the next few years.

It is expected that by 2100, Liberia’s sea levels will rise 0.6-1.0 meters, all but eradicating several sources of livelihood — particularly agriculture and fisheries — and forcing mass displacement of the coastal population to other regions in the country.

In addition, according to a predictive study produced by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) in 2013, climate change is expected to entail considerable temperature rises and precipitation changes in Liberia, which may cause substantial losses to the production of rice, the country’s staple food crop.

In order to tackle the impacts of climate change, it is critical to acknowledge women’s greater vulnerability to suffering from the adverse effects of environmental hazards. In 2012, the government of Liberia developed a Climate Change Gender Action Plan (CCGAP) to provide a framework for enhancing gender equality in both climate adaptation — the process of adjusting to current or expected climate change shocks and effects — and mitigation — the process of tackling the causes of climate change in order to minimize the possible impacts of environmental hazards. However, the lack of sex-disaggregated data and official statistics in Liberia does not allow for further analysis of the impacts of climate change on women and the extent to which they have been included in decision-making processes on climate change adaptation and mitigation. As a result, this prevents a holistic discussion on the aforementioned key areas such as water availability, agriculture, forestry, and fisheries.
2.8. Gender-Based Violence and Human Trafficking

Key facts:

- Gender-based violence continues to be one of the major issues reinforcing gender inequality in Liberia.
- In 2019 Liberian government approved the Domestic Violence Bill, which seeks to abolish all forms of violence against women, children, and men and provides for assistance to and protection of victims of violence.

Key data:

- 85.2 percent of children aged 1 to 14 in Liberia have experienced at least one type of physical punishment and/or psychological aggression by caregivers.
- Around 85 percent of the population of Liberia is made up of Sande practicing ethnic groups, which are known for initiating girls into adulthood by rituals that include female genital mutilation (FGM).
- In 2019, 60 percent of women aged 45 to 49 had been subjected to FGM.
- 60 percent of women have experienced at least one form of physical violence since age 15, according to 2019-20 data.

The legacy of gender-based violence (GBV) is primarily attributed to the context of the civil wars, in which combatant groups violently targeted women. There are several available services for women who have been victims of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), including two government-operated shelters and two hotlines for reporting SGBV-related crimes. However, despite this range of services, there are still several limiting factors that prevent victims of GBV from receiving help. Among these factors are the fact that most of these services are centralized in urban regions; there is a predominant focus on sexual violence — at the expense of other types of violence — and there is a shortage of trained staff. Together, these factors lead to high levels of underreporting. Concerning intra-marital violence, one of the most common marital controlling behaviors reported by ever-married women (66 percent of them) is jealousy or hatred if they talk to other men, followed by their husbands’ insistence on knowing where they are at all times (63 percent).

With regard to human trafficking, data explaining patterns or trends are scarce. According to the Counter-Trafficking Data Collaborative (CTDC),111 91 percent of Liberian human trafficking victims are women and half of the victims are trafficked to Lebanon. The majority (88 percent) of the victims are adults, with nearly 35 percent in their mid-20s.

2.9. Women, Migration, and Displacement

Key facts:

- The reintegration of conflict-affected communities such as Liberian refugees is key, yet women and girls are often not considered in these processes.
- Internal displacement due to environmental disasters is an important issue that needs to be addressed.
- The role of women in prevention and disaster risk reduction is critical, yet they are still largely excluded from formal planning and decision making.

Key data:

- By the end of 2012, more than 155,000 Liberian refugees had returned to Liberia.

Since the end of the second civil war, thousands of Liberian refugees and migrants have returned to the country; this phenomenon has elicited calls for protection of these communities, especially women and girls. Despite the support given by international development partners, such as UNIDO’s skills training program, situations such as the Ebola crisis have delayed the returning population’s entry into the labor market.
2.10. Women, COVID-19, and Other Epidemics’ Impact, Response, and Recovery Implications

Key facts:

- The EVD epidemic hit Liberia in March 2014.
- Six years later, Liberia reported its first case of COVID-19 in the context of a global pandemic.
- Education suffered significant setbacks as schools were shut down for months at a time during the EVD and COVID-19 crises and, when reopened, parents faced economic obstacles in sending their children back to school.

Key data:

- There were 10,678 reported cases of EVD and 4,808 deaths.
- As of July 12, 2021, 1,031 coronavirus cases and 28.47 deaths from COVID-19 were confirmed per million people.
- 83.8 percent of households reported that they were worried about not having enough food due to lack of resources and 75.1 percent reported having adults skip a meal during the COVID-19 pandemic.

A positive legacy from the EVD epidemic was the creation of the Incident Management System, which elaborated a strategy to increase the efficiency and sustainability of the COVID-19 response. Liberia’s experience with EVD led to two main health priorities: first, to ensure rapid recognition and containment of resurgent diseases; and second, to restore health services to address vaccine-preventable diseases (measles) and malaria.

To address the shocks of the COVID-19 pandemic, the GoL carried out a series of measures, which included a $25 million stimulus package to provide food distribution in households, give support in electricity and water expenses, and grant loans provided under the Market Women and Small Informal Petty Traders Bank Programme (benefiting at least 85,000 petty traders, including market women).114
Policy Recommendations
3.1. Political Will and Gender-Responsive Budgeting

The analysis of the previous two chapters show how the GoL has been sustaining political will to address gender disparities in the country over time. Since the end of the second civil war, the country has adopted and/or ratified several international treaties, resolutions, and protocols, as it has been developing and putting into practice national policies and action plans to mainstream gender equality in different sectors (see Chapter 1). However, these actions must be accompanied by clear financial planning and strategic budgeting, so that the established commitments are properly fulfilled.

In Liberia, for over 10 years, development actors have been supporting government officials to gain skills and knowledge in gender-responsive planning.\textsuperscript{115} Political will and gender-responsive planning and budgeting are two sides of the same coin: they complement and rely on each other to be effectively accomplished. In 2018, 25 staff members of the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP) of Liberia were trained in the area of gender mainstreaming in the context of planning;\textsuperscript{116} yet, when they were assessed at the end of the training, nearly 80 percent of the staff revealed that there is no gender mainstreaming strategy in the Planning Division, and 85 percent stated that the development plans drafted and implemented by the Ministry are not gender-sensitive.\textsuperscript{117}

In response, the MFDP developed the Gender-Responsive Planning and Budgeting Policy\textsuperscript{118} (GRPB), in order to “provide guidance to the planning and budgeting processes of the GoL for advancing gender equality to contribute to equitable service delivery and inclusive growth.”\textsuperscript{119} However, despite the GRPB laying out clear strategies for how financial resources can and should be allocated to bring greater visibility and response to gender inequality issues, several challenges continue to impede the implementation of this policy. Cultural attitudes, perceptions and practices, which continue to oppress and marginalize Liberian women, remain major barriers for the country’s successful realization of gender equality. The specific strategies and key entry points for achieving gender equality in Liberia presented below need to be considered in conjunction with the budgetary challenges listed here, as both parts are complementary and indivisible.

3.2. Gender-Sectoral Recommendations

3.2.1. Post-Conflict and Peacebuilding

**Problem:** Key roots of the initial conflict remain, and there has been little consideration for those who have historically been excluded, such as women with disabilities, rural women, and girls.

**Action(s):** Establish working groups with women with disabilities, rural women, and girls as a central element of the different peacebuilding and peace strengthening programs and policies.

**Actors Involved:** Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MGCSP); Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA); development partners; Peace Huts; and other peacebuilding and grassroot women’s organizations.

3.2.2. Women and Agriculture

**Problem I:** A key reason for the vulnerability of employment in the agricultural sector is the lack of due payment in return for work, mainly due to informality.

**Action(s):** Create a mechanism through which employees can report when their rights are violated. In this sense, a district-level labor inspector can verify and provide a decision on the consequences for the employer infringing the law.

**Actors involved:** Ministry of Agriculture (MoA); Ministry of Labor (MoL); labor inspectors; and Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MGCSP).
Problem II: Women face many challenges when it comes to land ownership, from lack of representation in decision making to lack of deeds or official titles.

**Action(s):** Implement educational campaigns to convey the different parameters of the Land Rights Act (LRA) — particularly stressing the importance of respecting women’s rights to land ownership — and to set a time frame to address the community’s concerns.

**Actors involved:** Liberia Land Authority (LLA); Ministry of Agriculture (MoA); Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MGCSP); Community Land Management and Development Committees (CLMDC).

Problem III: One of the biggest burdens preventing women from engaging in productive activities is unpaid domestic work.

**Action(s):** Identify an updated and comprehensive set of indicators that measure on one hand the time spent in different domestic tasks (including time spent fetching water or fuel) disaggregated by sex, and on another hand on the conditions of domestic and care workers working in the informal economy. Incorporate the 3R approach (recognition, reduction, and redistribution of unpaid care work) into the development agenda and policy design.

**Actors involved:** Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MGCSP); Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP); and Ministry of Labor (MoL).

3.2.3. Women and Infrastructure

**Problem:** There is a lack of participation of women in the designing, planning, and evaluation processes of public services and facilities.

**Action(s):** Hold workshops and working groups where women participate in these processes; conduct assessments, monitor, and track social programs and availability of services; and collect feedback on how these could improve women’s quality of life.

**Actors Involved:** The Ministry of Agriculture (MA); Ministry of Transport (MoT); Ministry of Public Works (MPW); Ministry of Justice (MoJ); Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications (MoPT); Ministry of Youth and Sports (MoYS); Ministry of Health (MoH); Ministry of Education (MoE); the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA); Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP); and Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection (MGCSP) – as well as non-governmental organizations such as Citizens United to Promote Peace & Democracy in Liberia (CUPPDL), Women’s NGO Secretariat of Liberia (WONGOSOL), and the Center for Transparency and Accountability in Liberia (CENTAL).

3.2.4. Women and Energy

**Problem I:** The energy sector is one of the sectors with the fewest indicators regarding women’s role and representation in decision making.

**Action(s):** Conduct a thorough and complete analysis of women’s involvement in the energy sector needs to be conducted, mapping women in decision-making positions inside the energy sector, the total number of women participating in government and at the civil society level, and the total number of women being trained in a specific energy program.

**Actors Involved:** Ministry of Mines and Energy (MME) and Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MGCSP).

**Problem II:** Access to electricity in Liberia is considerably low, despite a steady increase in the past couple of years, and there are high costs and barriers which disadvantage poor and rural households.

**Action(s):** Establish working groups with grassroots community organizations to assess the viability of community ownership models across the country and understand the specific electricity needs. Design and implement a national-level policy with the objective of expanding access to electricity in rural communities.

**Actors Involved:** Ministry of Mines and Energy (MME); Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MGCSP); and development partners.

**Problem III:** The lack of access to electricity requires more effort to access solid cooking fuels, such as wood or charcoal, which have noxious health effects for people.

**Action(s):** Implement a national campaign educating people on the negative impacts of cooking fuels such as wood or charcoal, with special consideration for the role women and children play in gathering fuels and cooking.

**Actors Involved:** Ministry of Health (MoH); Ministry of Mines and Energy (MME); Ministry of Gender, Children and
3.2.5. Women’s Entrepreneurship and Economic Empowerment

**Problem I:** There are barriers regarding women’s economic independence and empowerment, which are widened by the high rate of illiteracy and low understanding of the general concepts and workings of finance.

**Action(s):** Include financial education specifically in vocational training programs, as well as at least give attention to financial literacy in the general education curriculum. Women who already participate in the financial sector can be part of financial education workshops and training.

**Actors Involved:** Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP); Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MGCSP); Ministry of Education (MoE); development partners; and susu clubs and village saving loans.

**Problem II:** Formal and commercial banking services are often inaccessible to women, either because they do not meet the documentation requirements to open a bank account, they do not meet the collateral requirements to access the credit market, or the banks simply do not lend to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) or low-income earners.

**Action(s):** Conduct further mapping of the documentation requirements and collateral requirements that still pose barriers to accessing bank accounts and credit loans; regulate access to commercial banking services and create legislation penalizing discrimination or the denial of access to credits due to gender.

**Actors Involved:** Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP) and Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MGCSP).

**Problem III:** The few women who are included in the formal economic sector are often excluded from senior positions and from decision-making bodies, generally due to cultural and social gender norms that put them at a disadvantage, or due to gender-based violence and discrimination in the workplace.

**Action(s):** Thoroughly evaluate the reforms implemented in the labor sector in 2015, making sure that a gender perspective is integrated into the entirety of the design, data collection, and analysis of Liberia’s work environments.

**Actors Involved:** Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP) and Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MGCSP).

3.2.6. Women and Education: TVET

**Problem I:** Gender occupational segregation and male prevalence in STEM fields impede women’s economic advancement and exclude them from full participation in the country’s technological development.

**Action(s):** Establish vocational guidance programs and work placements for female students; provide educational activities that promote female leadership and women’s interest in technology and engineering; and grant scholarships for female students, including and those who are young mothers.

**Actors Involved:** Ministry of Education (MoE); Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MGCSP); Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI); Ministry of Labor (MoL); Ministry of Youth and Sports (MoYS); organized civil society actors and associations such as SMART Liberia, Women in Tech Liberia, and Girls Aid Liberia; as well as private sector actors.

**Problem II:** The working conditions of Liberian women teachers do not take into account the extra responsibilities women have. In addition, working conditions make women’s work more precarious and discourage participation in the education sector.

**Action(s):** Implement assistance programs for female heads of households that provide:
- Women with childcare services.
- Financial vouchers to cover transfer costs when relocated to new workplaces.
- Wage parity with their male counterparts.

In addition, educational authorities should implement flexible training programs to enable women to access administrative and other positions, for example, as secondary school teachers.

**Actors Involved:** Ministry of Education (MoE); Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MGCSP); and Ministry of Labor (MoL).
3.2.7. Women, the Environment, and Climate Change

Problem I: Sea-level rises, in combination with Liberia’s heavy dependence on agriculture and fishery, constitute one of the major challenges posed by climate change.

Action(s): Promote open dialogues and workshops with community leaders and members of coastal communities in order to raise awareness of such risks, as well as to understand their specific needs and concerns regarding coastal adaptation, considering that communities may feel threatened by some adaptation measures because their homes are often the most significant material and financial asset they possess. A gender perspective should be integrated into such dialogues, considering that men and women in these zones face different barriers and have differentiated needs.

Actors Involved: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) of Liberia; Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MGCSP); Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP); international development partners; and non-governmental climate-focused organizations.

Problem II: In Liberia, women are disproportionately concentrated in the least productive sectors, with almost 90 percent employed in the informal sector and agriculture, which increases their likelihood of suffering the most adverse consequences of climate change.

Action(s): Increase women’s participation in the formal sector, through a planned and structured transition away from the informal sector, and investment in overall education and TVET-specific activities so that women’s vulnerability to climate change shocks is minimized.

Actors Involved: Ministry of Education (MoE); Ministry of Labor (MoL); and Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MGCSP).

Problem III: The scarcity of sex-disaggregated data and official statistics in Liberia presents an obstacle to further analysis of not only the impacts of climate change on women, but also the extent to which they have been included in decision-making processes for both climate change adaptation and mitigation.

Action(s): Target investments and increase sex-disaggregated data collection processes that seek to identify the differentiated impacts of climate change on men and women, as well as their inclusion in climate change mitigation and adaptation decision-making processes.

Actors Involved: Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MGCSP); Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP); Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) of Liberia; and the Liberia Institute for Statistics and Geoinformation Services (LISGIS).

3.2.8. Gender-Based Violence and Human Trafficking

Problem I: Violence against children is one of the most widespread forms of violence, in a country where most of the population was raised in a context of armed conflict. FGM is commonplace and child marriage still takes place in some regions of the country.

Action(s): Employ gatekeeper-centered approaches, via government and civil society partnerships, at low-income and grassroots levels, with a particular focus on fostering gender and social norm changes. The topic of FGM should be included in the education curriculum and in the public forum, by describing how these practices are detrimental to girls’ and women’s development. Moreover, funding and capacity building should be afforded to CSOs and community development associations to implement and institutionalize the prevention of early marriage and FGM.

Actors Involved: Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MGCSP); Ministry of Education (MoE); Ministry of Health (MoH); international development agencies; and grassroot civil society organizations, including traditional local leaders.

Problem II: Violence against women (VAW), particularly violence perpetrated by intimate partners, is still commonly accepted by communities, including women.

Action(s): Establish strategies to prevent violence and create policies that guarantee the empowerment and the construction of women’s autonomy, their human rights, accountability for aggressors, and qualified assistance to women in situations of violence. This integrated system must aim to accomplish the following four axes of action: 1) combating VAW; 2) preventing VAW; 3) assisting victims of violence; and 4) guaranteeing their rights (CPAG).

Actors Involved: Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection; Ministry of Education (MGCSP); Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP); non-
governmental agents (women’s organizations, feminist NGOs, women’s movements, women’s rights councils, other social councils, etc.) that monitor and execute policies aimed at women; services and programs aimed at holding aggressors accountable; universities; government agencies at the national, regional and municipal level responsible for guaranteeing women’s rights; and specialized and non-specialized services to assist women in situations of violence.

**Problem III:** In terms of human trafficking, the lack of statistical data prevents an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon in Liberia.

**Action(s):** Invest in data collection mechanisms focused on documenting the dynamics behind the practice.

**Actors involved:** Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MGCSP); Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP); Liberia Institute for Statistics and Geo-Information Services (LISGIS); and centers for combating the trafficking of women and girls.

### 3.2.9. Women, Migration, and Displacement

**Problem I:** There is not enough data to understand the complexities faced by returned Liberian migrants, refugees, and internally displaced persons.

**Action(s):** Carry out a national mapping of returned Liberian refugees and migrants — including gender-disaggregated data — to better understand the dynamics of the reintegration process in Liberian society, the challenges returnees face, and the conditions that have improved or worsened their living conditions.

**Actors Involved:** Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA); Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MGCSP); Ministry of National Defense (MoD); and Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services (LISGIS).

**Problem II:** Forced internal displacement due to environmental disasters is a growing risk for Liberian communities and, although women are key actors in disaster risk reduction processes, they are often excluded from decision-making spaces regarding this issue.

**Action(s):** There needs to be a conscious initiative to include grassroots women’s organizations in disaster risk reduction decision-making bodies; including, for example, women from Peace Huts, who already have experience with conflict resolution and often, forced displacement.

**Actors Involved:** Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA); Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MGCSP); and Ministry of National Defense (MoD).

**Problem III:** There is not enough data to understand the complexities faced by migrant and refugee women and girls, as most of the information is not sex-dissaggregated.

**Action(s):** Carry out a national survey of refugees and migrants — including gender-disaggregated questions — to better understand the dynamics of the integration process in Liberian society, the challenges they face, and the conditions that have improved or worsened their living conditions.

**Actors Involved:** Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA); Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MGCSP); Ministry of National Defense (MoD); and Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services (LISGIS).

### 3.2.10. Women and Health — COVID-19 and Other Epidemics’ Impact, Response, and Recovery Implications

**Problem I:** Maternity death rates continue to be high in Liberia, due to the lack of access to health facilities and lack of previous knowledge of maternity healthcare, especially for women who live in rural areas.

**Action(s):** Invest significantly to provide adequate health facilities in all districts of Liberia (rural and urban), with trained personnel for maternity related consultations. Encourage use of maternity services and consultations and improve the accessibility of key information regarding maternity care.

**Actors Involved:** Ministry of Health (MoH); Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MGCSP); Ministry of National Defense (MoD); local hospitals; development partners; and antenatal workers.

**Problem II:** Many Liberians have suffered economic and social impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly women who, comprising a large part of the workforce in the informal economy, saw their incomes in danger.

**Action(s):** To address the need for secure and reliable information on assistance programs, create a public online resource with detailed information on the money
expected to be used for each special government program or initiative to address the COVID-19 pandemic. The portal should include a section on the various programs’ requisites, procedure, and expected timeline for receiving help. When selecting beneficiaries of the programs, the most vulnerable, such as single head of household mothers, should be prioritized and assistance should be easily accessible.

**Actors involved:** Ministry of Health (MoH); Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MGCSP); local hospitals; development partners; and antenatal workers.
Endnotes

2. ACAPS, 2015.
8. UN Women, 2014.
9. As outlined by the Spotlight Initiative (2018, pp. 8): “[…] weak and inadequate representation of women in national and local decision-making processes; insufficient and unequal access to natural and economic resources; strengthening of gender discriminatory relations within the society and family, and a poorly developed community infrastructure, which tend to increase feminization of poverty.”
26. Women’s NGO Secretariat of Liberia [WONGOSOL], n.d.
27. EU Roadmap Support Facility, 2017; Krawczyk, 2021.
34. Liberia DHS 2019-20.
42. GoL, 2019a.
44. Liberia DHS 2019-20.
47. Stromquist, Lin, Corneille, Klees, Choti, & Haugen., 2013.
51. UNFPA, 2014.
52. OCHA (n.d.) Data retrieved on 2021-06-17 [Original source: The World Bank and with data from Liberia DHS 2019-20].
64. Liberia DHS 2019-20.
69. OCHA (n.d.) Data retrieved on 2021-06-17 [Original sources: The World Bank and Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS)] 57.
70. Murendo & Murenje, 2018.
85. OCHA (n.d.) Data retrieved on 2021-06-17 [Original source: International Labour Organization (ILO)].
86. OCHA (n.d.) Data retrieved on 2021-06-17 [Original source: International Labour Organization (ILO)].
98. Louis et al., 2020.
100. EBRD, 2015.
105. WBG, 2020a.
111. Counter Trafficking Data Collaborative, n.d.
112. Counter Trafficking Data Collaborative, n.d.
116. UN Women, 2011.
117. UN Women, 2018b.
Annex
### Table I. Chapter 1 Main Indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SDG</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Total (Rank)</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>General</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Population of Liberia</td>
<td>2.51M (49.7%)</td>
<td>2.54M (50.3%)</td>
<td>5.05M</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>World Bank(^1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Human Development Index (HDI)</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>0.48 (175)</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>UNDP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gender Inequality Index (GII)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.65 (156)</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>UNDP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GINI index</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>35.3(^a)</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>World Bank(^2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Multidimensional poverty headcount</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>62.9</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>UNDP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GNI per capita (2017 PPPP US$)</td>
<td>1,242</td>
<td>1,275</td>
<td>1,258</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>UNDP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1.1</td>
<td>Employed population below international poverty line, Age 15+. (%)</td>
<td>47.30</td>
<td>43.10</td>
<td>45.10</td>
<td>n.d.</td>
<td>UN Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2.1</td>
<td>Proportion of population living below the national poverty line (%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>50.90</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>World Bank(^3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4.1</td>
<td>Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>UNDP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Women’s Participation in Decision-Making: Macro-level</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.7.1</td>
<td>Ratio for female members of parliaments (Ratio of the proportion of women in parliament in the proportion of women in the national population with the age of eligibility as a lower bound boundary), Lower Chamber or Unicameral</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>n.d.</td>
<td>UN Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.7.1</td>
<td>Ratio for female members of parliaments (Ratio of the proportion of women in parliament in the proportion of women in the national population with the age of eligibility as a lower bound boundary), Upper Chamber</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>n.d.</td>
<td>UN Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.5.1</td>
<td>Proportion of seats held by women in national parliament</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>OCHA(^1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage of employers by sex (modeled ILO estimate)</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>OCHA(^2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.5.2</td>
<td>Proportion of women in managerial positions</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>n.d.</td>
<td>UN Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.5.2</td>
<td>Proportion of women in senior and middle</td>
<td>20.10</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>n.d.</td>
<td>UN Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>management positions</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Health

#### 3.1.1 Maternal mortality ratio

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>742</th>
<th></th>
<th>2019-20</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### 3.1.2 Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>80</th>
<th></th>
<th>2019-20</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### 3.2.1 Under-5 mortality rate c

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>91</th>
<th>96</th>
<th>93</th>
<th>2019-20</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### 3.2.2 Neonatal mortality rate c

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>30</th>
<th>45</th>
<th>37</th>
<th>2019-20</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### 3.3.1 Number of new HIV infections per 1,000 uninfected population by sex and age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0.49</th>
<th>0.43</th>
<th>0.46</th>
<th>n.d.</th>
<th>UN Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### Contraceptive use of currently married women aged 15-49 (any modern method)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>24</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>2019-20</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### 3.7.1 Proportion of women of reproductive age (aged 15-49 years) whose need for family planning satisfied by modern methods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>47.8</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>2019-20</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### 3.7.2 Adolescent birth rates per 1,000 women (age 15-19 years)

|   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| a) Girls aged 10-14 years d | 4  |   |   |
| b) Women aged 15-19 years e | 128 |   |   |

### Education

#### Literacy rate, aged 15-49 years (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>52</th>
<th>75</th>
<th></th>
<th>2019-20</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### Children out of primary school (Number of primary-school-age children not enrolled in primary or secondary school)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>77,218</th>
<th>82,261</th>
<th></th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>OCHA¹</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### Share of female teachers (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education level: Primary</th>
<th>18</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>OCHA¹</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### Share of female teachers (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education level: Secondary</th>
<th>6</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>OCHA¹</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### 4.0.4.1 Proportion of teachers who have received at least the minimum organized teacher training (e.g., pedagogical training), pre-service, or in-service required for teaching at the relevant level in a given country and education level (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education level: Primary</th>
<th>74</th>
<th>69</th>
<th></th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>OCHA¹</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### 4.2.2 Participation rate in organized learning one year before the official primary entry age (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>78.73</th>
<th>78.86</th>
<th>78.80</th>
<th>n.d.</th>
<th>UN Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Cultural norms

#### 5.2.1 Proportion of ever-partnered women and

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>45.6</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>2019-20</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.3.1</td>
<td>Proportion of women aged 20-24 years who were married or in a union before age 15 and before age 18</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a) before age 15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b) before age 18</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3.2</td>
<td>Proportion of girls and women aged 15-49 years who have undergone female genital mutilation/cutting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.2.1</td>
<td>Percentage of children aged 1-17 years who experienced any physical punishment and/or psychological aggression by caregivers in the past month</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage of women and men aged 15-49 who agree that a husband is justified in beating his wife for any of the five reasons</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Women’s Participation in Decision-Making: Micro-level**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5.6.1</th>
<th>Proportion of women aged 15-49 years who make their own informed decisions regarding sexual relations, contraceptive use and reproductive health care</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage of currently married women who participate alone or jointly with their husbands in decisions about the use of their earning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Financial Services**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>8.10.2</th>
<th>Proportion of adults (15 years and older) with an account at a bank or other financial institution or a mobile-money-service provider</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.b.1</td>
<td>Proportion of individuals who own a mobile telephone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.8.1</td>
<td>Proportion of individuals using the Internet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Formal Employment**

| Labor force, female (% of total labor force) | 48 | - | - | 2019 | OCHA |
### Labor Force Participation Rate (%) of Female/Male Ages 15 and Above (Modeled ILO Estimate)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Percentage Female</th>
<th>Percentage Male</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>80.3</td>
<td>OCHA²</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Wage and Salaried Workers (% of Female/Male Employment) (Modeled ILO Estimate)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Percentage Female</th>
<th>Percentage Male</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>8.41</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>OCHA²</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Unemployment Rate (% of Total Labor Force) (Modeled ILO Estimate)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Percentage Female</th>
<th>Percentage Male</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>World Bank⁴</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Proportion of Youth (Aged 15-24 Years) Not in Education, Employment, or Training (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Percentage Female</th>
<th>Percentage Male</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>UN Women</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Youth Unemployment Rate (Relaxed Definition)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Percentage Female</th>
<th>Percentage Male</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>41.3</td>
<td>28.3</td>
<td>SWTS Liberia</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Informal Employment

#### Proportion of Informal Employment (% of Total Employment by Sex)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Percentage Female</th>
<th>Percentage Male</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>96.7</td>
<td>90.3</td>
<td>ILO</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Proportion of Informal Employment in Non-Agriculture Employment (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Percentage Female</th>
<th>Percentage Male</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>95.2</td>
<td>85.5</td>
<td>ILO</td>
</tr>
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</table>

#### Proportion of Time Spent on Unpaid Domestic Chores and Care Work (All Locations)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Percentage Female</th>
<th>Percentage Male</th>
<th>Source</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N.D.</td>
<td>6.30</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>UN Women</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Proportion and Number of Children Aged 5-17 Years Engaged in Child Labor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Percentage Female</th>
<th>Percentage Male</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2019-20</td>
<td>34.3</td>
<td>29.3</td>
<td>DHS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Notes:

- a Data are based on primary household survey data obtained from government statistical agencies and World Bank country departments. For more information and methodology, please see PovcalNet (research.worldbank.org/PovcalNet/index.htm).
- b The total is calculated as the simple arithmetic mean of the percentages in the columns for males and females.
- c Expressed in terms of deaths per 1,000 live births for the 5-year period preceding the survey.
- d Equivalent to the age-specific fertility rate for girls aged 10-14 years for the 3-year period preceding the survey, expressed in terms of births per 1,000 girls aged 10-14 years.
- e Equivalent to the age-specific fertility rate for women aged 15-19 years for the 3-year period preceding the survey, expressed in terms of births per 1,000 women aged 15-19 years.
- f Data is available for women and men aged 15-49 years who have used the internet in the past 12 months. The total is calculated as the simple arithmetic mean of the percentages in the columns for males and females.
- g Data is available for women and men aged 15-49 years only.
- h Data is available for women and men aged 15-49 years who have used the internet in the past 12 months. The total is calculated as the simple arithmetic mean of the percentages in the columns for males and females.
- i Data is available for children aged 1-14 years only.
- j The five reasons correspond to when 1) She argues with him; 2) She burns the food; 3) She goes out without telling him; 4) She neglects the children; or 5) She refuses sex with him.

Sources:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SDG</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Total (Rank)</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Employment in Agriculture (% of total employment by sex)</td>
<td>45.6</td>
<td>42.4</td>
<td></td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>AfDB^1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.2</td>
<td>Prevalence of severe food insecurity in the adult population (%)</td>
<td>89.50</td>
<td>86.70</td>
<td></td>
<td>n.d.</td>
<td>UN Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.1</td>
<td>Prevalence of stunting among children under 5 years of age (%)</td>
<td>27.90</td>
<td>31.80</td>
<td>29.80</td>
<td>2019-20</td>
<td>DHS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.2</td>
<td>Prevalence of malnutrition among children under 5 years of age (%)</td>
<td>7.40</td>
<td>8.20</td>
<td>7.80^a</td>
<td>2019-20</td>
<td>DHS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.1.1</td>
<td>Proportion of population with access to electricity ^a</td>
<td>24.7</td>
<td>23.6</td>
<td></td>
<td>2019-20</td>
<td>DHS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.1.2</td>
<td>Proportion of population with primary reliance on clean fuels and technology ^a</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td></td>
<td>2019-20</td>
<td>DHS</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Women, Business and the Law Index score</td>
<td>83.75</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>World Bank^1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Firms with female participation in ownership (% of firms)</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>2017</td>
<td>World Bank^2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Firms with female top manager (% of firms)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>2017</td>
<td>World Bank^2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.c.1</td>
<td>Proportion of teachers who have received at least the minimum organized teacher training (e.g. pedagogical training) pre-service or in-service required for teaching at the relevant level in a given country and education level (%) Education level: Primary</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>69</td>
<td></td>
<td>2017</td>
<td>OCHA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Share of female teachers (%) Education level: Primary</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>2017</td>
<td>OCHA^1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Share of female teachers (%) Education level: Secondary</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>2017</td>
<td>OCHA^1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.2.2</td>
<td>Detected victims of human trafficking for other purposes, by age and sex (number). Age: All ages</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>n.d.</td>
<td>UN Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.2.3</td>
<td>Proportion of population aged 18-29 years who experienced sexual violence by age 18 (% of population aged 18-29).</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>n.d.</td>
<td>UN Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>New Internal displacements due to disaster</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3,700</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>IDMC</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>International migrant stock at mid-year (Country of destination Liberia)</td>
<td>37,253</td>
<td>50,694</td>
<td>87,947</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>UNDESA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Notes:

- Based on the sex of the household head.

Sources:


OCHA (n.d.) Data retrieved on 2021-06-17 [Original source: The World Bank].


References


Counter Trafficking Data Collaborative (n.d.) Global Dataset. [Online] Available at: <https://www.ctdatacollaborative.org/map/ctdc> (Consulted July 9, 2021)


Government of Liberia (2019b) *Liberia’s Second Phase National Action Plan on Women, Peace and


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LIBERIA
Country Gender Equality Profile
August 2021