



Office of the National Coordinator

# HE FOR SHE CRUSADERS LIBERIA

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Thursday, December 28, 2023

Mr. Peter Musu Collins  
Board Chair  
He For She Crusaders Liberia (HEFOSEL)  
Monrovia, Liberia

Ref: **Submission of Annual Narrative Report to the Board through you.**

Dear Mr. Board Chair and members;

Kindly accept my humble compliments and herewith accept the 2023 activities narrative report in keeping with standard of the Board guideline. Kindly be informed that the financial report will be submitted at a convened board meeting to be arranged by board.

Best regards,

Tamba F. J. Johnson  
Secretary to the Board  
National Coordinator He For She Crusaders Liberia



# HE FOR SHE CRUSADERS LIBERIA (HEFOSEL)

Cong Town Back Road, Behind the Chinese Restaurant  
Montserrado County, LIBERIA



# 2023

## ACTIVITY REPORT

PREPARED BY:

THE ADMINISTRATION HE FOR SHE CRUSADERS LIBERIA (HEFOSEL)

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## **FOREWORD:**

### **Tamba Forkpah Jedidiah Johnson- National Coordinator**



He For She Crusaders Liberia (HEFOSEL) is unwavering towards the fight for social justice, gender equality mostly women, girls, and marginalized/ underprivileged groups' human rights. We are stay strongly committed to ensuring the total eradication of all forms of harmful practices (FGM, child and forceful marriages, sexual exploitation and abuse) including inhumane acts. Our resilient and

commitment also remain fixed towards male mental health, the promotion to Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) education, support for women political participation, respect for the rule of law and mentoring men and boys in positive masculinity and advocating for Social justices and human dignity. We remain unbending on our goal for gender equality and social justice.

Our advocacy initiative calling and reminding government on its international and national obligations to protecting citizens' rights regardless of sex, creed, and status or gender orientation/identity and on policy change remain robust. We did amplify our vigorous advocacy strategy through partnership with both the print and electronic media as well with likeminded civil society organizations (international and national) to engage and advocate against unhealthy laws and practices that threatened human security and undermine national development and stability. With our partnership with the media and international organizations and other CSOs and CBOS, we witnessed the passage of the 2023 drug law, banning of FGM in Liberia, commitment and supports were given to women political participation at all levels, robust response and address were given to SGBV and other violence cases by community members, the local authorities and national leaders. Perpetrators of violence against women, girls and boys in Lofa, Nimba, Grand Gedeh and Montserrado counties were arrested and persecuted.



Photo of some Forerunners and peer educators in Nimba on Positive masculinity

We made significant gains under our Mentorship/ Male engagement program in 2023. We mentored community men, school going boys and traditional leaders on the role and responsibilities of males in promoting and advocating for social justice and gender equality. Over 4,000 men and boys in schools and communities within Lofa, Nimba, Grand Cape Mount, Montserrado, Grand Gedeh, Bong, Margibi counties that have benefited from our interventions and mentorship are now active promoters of gender equality, forerunner for the prevention of SGBV and other abuses. They are actively engaged and involved in reporting cases of violence in schools and communities, this positive behavior of men need to be sustained through more support for the achievement of the SDGS 2023



Boys mentorship on campuses

He For She Crusaders is nearly 6 years. Our stand on advocacy and mentorship as a reputable male led organization in Liberia is remarkable with trackable records. He For She Crusaders Liberia was established in 2017 November, got accredited by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2018 to advocate for the advancement of human rights best practice and human dignity particularly the rights of women, girls, and marginalized/underprivileged groups. He For She Crusaders Liberia had and keep being focus on providing mentorship and awareness in communities and on school campuses on positive masculinity, males' mental health and Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights, we also advocate and provide training on community land ownership and benefits. Eradication of all forms of harmful (FGM and child and forceful marriage amongst other ills) including Sexual Gender Based Violence were key components of our advocacy and mentoring works in 2023.

During the period, we were able to fully achieve our goal through our three core programs:

- 1) **Mentorship/Males engagement**—focuses on Positive Masculinity /Fatherhood mentoring;
- 2) **Awareness Raising & Capacity Building**--focuses on Gender Equality, Toxic Masculinity, Menstrual Hygiene Promotion, SRHR (body autonomy), Promotion of Women Political Participation, Eradication of HPs (FGM) and SGBV, Men and Youth Economic sustainability
- (3) **Advocacy**-- focuses on Human Rights emphasis on Access to Justice, respect for rule of laws (awareness on the protection of human rights actors), Community land ownership and benefits among others, policy change/reform.



The **Mentorship/males engagement**, we were able to provide education/capacity building training on male mental health, positive masculinity, gender equality, SRHR, women political participation/leadership with 3000 men and boys and 1000 women and girls on school campuses and in communities with focus on right to body autonomy, gender equality and dignity, respect for laws and policies (the importance of promoting women political participation and leadership).



With our **Awareness Raising & Capacity Building Program**, the cultural of silence on Menstrual Hygiene was broken in remote communities, we were fully engaged with and witnessed the signing of policy document that banned the practice of FGM in Liberia, partnering with the media on awareness arising on policy change witnessed the passage of the drug law by the 53<sup>rd</sup> members of parliament materialized.



The zest to increase more community ownership on preventing and responding to S?GBV cases, financial supports wereproviding to over 21 schools and communities' men and boys networks in Lofa, Nimba, Grand Cape Mount, Grand Gedeh and Montserrado counties to increase peer education and community engagement.

The clubs are actively engaged and involved in advocating against social injustices at community and school levels.

Furthermore, our **Advocacy program**, we did lobby with many development partners and some stakeholders including the UN Women, the West African Peacebuilding Network (WANEP), RFSU, Men Engage Liberia/Africa, and other actors that collaborated and supported our interventions in Liberia. They provided both technical and financial supports. Those supports meaningfully enhanced our interventions/initiatives in Liberia. Thus, enabling us to have contributed immensely in advocating for the promotion of women/girls peace and security and gender equality as well for improvement of negative policies that undermines citizens' rights mostly women, girls, and marginalized groups. Additionally, our advocacy and awareness arising arouse national consciousness amongst leaders that informed their actions to consider policy reformation, hugely contributing to national stability. He For She Crusaders Liberia was engaged in advocating for "Peaceful Elections" using print and electronic including social media, educating and cautioning Liberians to keep the peace and promote females aspirants. Our advocacy along with others, resulted to the conduct of "Peaceful Elections" in Liberia in October and November of 2023.

### Media engagement & awareness rising on EVAWG



He For She Crusaders Liberia National Coordinator- Tamba Fokrpah Jedidiah Johnson teamed up with the Spotlight Coordinator-Milica Turnic, and two EU Delegations colleagues to create awareness on the Spotlight Initiative interventions in Liberia. Highlights during the media awareness were the erection of four heritage centers by the Spotlights and Economic Empowerment for FGM Practitioners, Male mentorship on positive masculinity, CSOs capacity

Strengthening and grants received amongst other gains. EU future intervention by 2025. The awareness further provided insight on the need to work more on prevention, considering men as valuable partners.

### Global Networks



Internationally, to ensure global partnership to address SGBV and promotion of Gender Equality and Women Empowerment (GEWE), He For She Crusaders Liberia as chair of Men Engage Liberia participated and building more solidarity networks in Africa. Our participation and representation kept Liberia on the leadership of Men Engage Africa. In

our network, we were able to identify and highlight issues that need to be addressed rapidly in response to the prevention of violence and promotion of human rights in Africa. We mentioned that country networks are not adequately prepared to respond to public health threats, there is need for improved sustainability plans for Men Engage African (MEA) network members, the unpredictable political environments that impact human rights needs to be jointly advocated

against in Africa, the threat posed by the lack of accountability from MEA network members to donor funds need to be strengthened to reflect more accountability and responsiveness, and the significance of credibility when accepting new members. We saw the need for to have an improved and holistic on the African continent to provide citizens opportunities irrespective of sex, creeds or orientations to be involved in decision-making processes. Finally, we highlighted the issue of male mental health and psychosocial support, protection and emergency support, public health preparedness, the environment, and the political environment.



Chairing the Spotlight CS NRG in Liberia and a member of the Africa CS NRG, we were invited to attend the “WE RISE 2023 Regional Learning Exchange Program under the UN Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women Program” in Kenya. We were able to share with colleagues our interventions on male engagements in addressing EVAWG through our mentorship on positive masculinity highlighting that

**Abigail UN Trust Fund Chief and Tamba**

our platform that is now over 4,000 men and boys. He For She Crusaders Liberia and members of African Spotlight Initiative Reference Group strongly recommended to the UN Trust and other donors, the need to consider “Male Mental Health and Support to Male Engagement” to ensure a balance advocacy and sustain network to address “Prevention over Response” in the fight of EVAWG.

### **Mentorship and awareness on masculinity with boys, men and women**



**Boys engagement on school campus**



**Dialogue with boys, men, women and girls**



Although He For She Crusaders Liberia activities implementations were greatly challenged in 2023 with the losing of three projects, couple with limited or indirect financial supports, however, the institution continued to be focus and strongminded towards its 5 years strategic plan and 2023 work plan goals. Awareness were carried out in communities and on school campuses in which mentoring of men and boys were done on males’ role to ending sexual gender based violence, male role on promoting menstrual hygiene education to keep girls in schools, the

importance of males supports in providing education on national and international laws and policies that promote gender equality, the benefit for promoting male mental health in schools, community and the family life, at the same time, education/trainings were provided on need to promote SRHR dialogue in communities and families.

He For She Crusaders Liberia also provided intervention in solving Intimate Domestic Violence cases in communities at the same time providing mentorship on school campuses to boys. Moreover, we advocated for the rights of women, girls and marginalized/underprivileged groups through press conferences/releases, and hosting of radio/television talk shows and community forums and stakeholders dialogues.

Due to our resilient and experienced training/mentorship and advocacy, more men and boys are now supporters/promoters of gender equality in toxic communities, such as west Point, Clara Town, Grand Gedeh, Nimba, Robersport City, Lofa, Voinjama city, etc.

### **Safeguarding of Staff, volunteers and beneficiaries.**

Building on lessons learned from the 2022 risks analysis, in the 2023, our staff and volunteers were trained on “**Do No Harm Theory**”. The training provided on the **Do No Harm Theory**, was used on the field to protect our staff, volunteers and beneficiaries. The do no harm theory strategy employed, further enhanced our staff and volunteers enthusiasms to devote themselves towards advocacy, peer education and capacity building. Our awareness arising on policy change, violence as well capacity training provided to local community people, students, and other stakeholders increased beneficiaries’ knowledge on SRHRS and gender equality, menstrual hygiene management, HPs (FGM) and positive masculinity/fatherhood. In 2023, a total of 3,000 men and boys and 1000 women and girls were directly engaged and reached in Lofa, Bong, Margibi, Montserrado, Grand Gedeh, Grand Cape Mount and Nimba under our male engagement and awareness raising programs on school campuses, intellectual centers, in communities as well as in private and public spaces. The age aggregate of men, boys, women and girls engaged were between 14 to 65 years old. Our engagements were held under palava huts, community squares, under trees, in community halls, on school campuses providing education to men and boys on positive masculinity and fatherhood, increasing their understanding on Menstrual Hygiene Management, Human Rights best practices, enlightening their minds on the role of men and boy in ending violence against women and girls at all levels, further deepened their insights on the importance of women political participation and right of women and girls to have access and partake in Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights discussion on their body autonomy and the important to incorporate and advocacy against toxic masculinity and promote male mental health in schools and communities.

He For She Crusaders Liberia provided financial support to men and boys clubs through sub grant received from WANEP/ Spotlight Initiative to support boys and men activities in Lofa, Nimba, Grand Gedeh, Grand Cape Mount and Montserrado counties. Based on the financial support given to those clubs, Informative Education and Communication materials (book bags, Copy books, flyers, stickers, etc) were provided and distributed. These IEC materials further enhanced our visibility and aided our volunteers to educated peers, track cases of Sexual Exploitation and Abuses (SEA) abuse mainly on sex for grades on school campuses. Harmful Practice (FGM) domestic violence cases were reported and follow ups were made at the level of courts,

I am enthralled to further indicate that our Lofa and Montserrado Counties teams conducted sample side perceptual survey on community knowledge on menstrual hygiene management, Male Mental Health and adherence to the ban of FGM. Over 85% of male and female respondents mostly people between the ages of 18-45 strongly agreed that there is need to increase awareness in schools and in the communities on Male Mental Health, FGM ban awareness and Menstrual Hygiene Management to reduce unwanted teenage pregnancy and reduce poverty, while 65% of the respondents strongly agreed that creation of emergency Menstrual Hygiene Centers and equip them with sanitary pads is essential to protect women and girls from warranted embarrassment in public squares and at the same time will protect school going girls from unwanted teenage pregnancy. Providing education on Male mental Health will greatly contribute to fight against all of forms of violence and abuse.

From Lofa and Grand Gedeh Counties, our team reported and follow up on over 30 (thirty ) cases of Harmful Practices, violence against women/girls (compromising of court proceeding on hearing of SGBV cases, early child marriage, beating of women/girls, forceful initiation of girls in to FGM). Our interventions along with the Ministries of Gender and Justice, Frontpage Africa were able to ensure that access to justice was served. Most of the perpetrators are non-serving their sentences. With these milestone achievements however, more need to be done, because behavior change is a gradual process. **We are cognizant of the fact that, we are not there yet, gradually, we will get there.**

Responding to the challenges ahead, He For She Crusaders Liberia needs financial and technical supports to further enhance her drive towards more men engagement, sustained existing chapters, intensify engagement and mentorship to youths in schools on accountability, gender equality, positive masculinity and fatherhood, aimed at developing an independent, confident and successful leaders. To accomplish these, we cannot do it alone. He For She Crusaders Liberia needs the concerted efforts of the Board, like-mind individuals, national and international partners to assist us realize her vision.



**Tamba Forkpah Jedidiah Johnson ---Founder and National Coordinators**

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

May I, on behalf of the Administration and staff, local County Coordinators, and volunteers of He For She Crusaders Liberia, extend our sincere gratitude and appreciation to the Board under the magnificent leadership of Mr. Peter Musu Collins, for providing oversight and motivational roles in the midst of difficult conditions, thus enabling us to have effectively operated in 2023. Indeed, in 2023, we did experience donor and financial squeeze/constraints. Our special thanks goes to these board members Mr. Peter Musu Collins-- Board Chair for his leadership role, Cllr. Benedict F. Sannoh, Atty Korbo Daniels, and Mr. Martin S. Kollie enthusiastic follow-ups on activities of the institution during the year 2023. Sirs, we are forever grateful. Your push kept us focus to deliver.

We also remain evermore grateful to UN Women through WIPNET, RFSU, and Men Engage Liberia/Africa for providing financial supports and technical supports in the year 2023. Those grants and technical supports greatly contributed to our three code programs Advocacy, Awareness Raising and Men/boys engagement. We seek more partnership in 2024.

We are cognizant to the fact that our successes would not have been possible without partnering with alliances. In 2023, did partner a lot. We are grateful to the Media mostly FrontPage Africa, The Liberia Broadcasting Corporation (ELBC 99.9FM), Farbric 101.1FM and Spoon, Sky Television and Radio, The Atlantic Broadcasting Corporation (ABC 105.1FM), The Ecowas Radio 91.5FM. These institution amplified the airing and carrying our press conferences/releases, they also allowed us to conduct talk shows which further contributed greatly to our advocacy. We are also grateful to the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, the Ministry of Justice, human rights division, Men Engage Liberia/Africa, CareFound Liberia (CFL), the National Rural Women Structural of Liberia, the National Traditional Council of Chiefs and Elders of Liberia, the National Tribal Governors of Liberia, the existing Sexual Gender Based Violence secretariat, SRHR-FGM Consultant, West Point Women for Sustainability and Health Organization, for working and partnering with us during the year 2023 in Lofa, Bong, Nimba, Grand Gedeh, Grand Cape Mount, Margibi and Montserrado Counties. Our association with these structures further created wider avenue for information sharing, joint advocacy and better collaboration in ensuring social justice for women, girls and marginalized groups at all levels. Furthermore, we also appreciate our network members mostly the SGBV Alert group being managed by Gender Ministry, the National Civil Society Council of Liberia Chart-room, the Civil Society Network on Sexual Reproductive Health Rights- Female Gender Mutilation and Civil Society Human Rights Platform of Liberia for working over that women, girls and marginalized groups voices are heard and rights restored through justice proceeding.

Once more, to our staff, county coordinators and volunteers, He For She Crusaders Liberia forever remain grateful to all of you for your support and level of professional work. We salute and encourage you to keep up the brilliant job at all times in 2024.

## **OUR ADMINISTRATOR AND COUNTY CHAPTER COORDINATORS**

Miss. Ruth N. Vandii --- Administrator & Finance

Rev. Fr. Richard B. Kepehe ---**Grand Cape Mount Chapter Coordinator**

Mr. Boakai Yamah **Lofa Chapter Coordinator**

Mr. Alex P. Johnson **Bong Chapter Coordinator**

Mr. Jericho W. Zeah **Nimba Chapter Coordinator**

Mr. Alex Yonly Sr. **Grand Gedeh Chapter Coordinator**

Mr. Joshua Toe **Montserrado ( West Point) Chapter Coordinator**

Mr. Bishop Wolah Montserrado (Central Monrovia/ Young People)

Mr. Jeremiah Villizu -- **Margibi County Chapter Coordinator**



### **Mr. Peter Musu Collins-BOARD CHAIR DISPATCH:**

My fellow board members, the founder and national coordinator, the administrative staff, our distinct county coordinators, our donors and partners, the government through ministries of Gender and Justice, our media colleagues, our effective volunteers and alliances, I greet you all. Firstly, may I appreciate God Almighty for His blessings and directions that have kept us going. Indeed, I am thrilled by the level of achievements over the last five years Contributing to policy change and minds transformation. This

noble organization was birthed in November of 2017, accredited by the government of Liberia through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2018 as Non- Governmental, Non- Political, and Non-for Profit male led organization, and we started active work in August of 2018. To date, through the special grace of God, and with our collective efforts, we have established 7 county structures with functioning activities in Lofa, Bong, Grand Gedeh, Nimba, Montserrado, Grand Cape Mount and Margibi counties. Each county has a coordinator and volunteers working tirelessly to ensure that violence is eradicated in Liberia. It is no doubt that our works over the time as He For She Crusaders Liberia (HEFOSE) had contributed and is still contributing extraordinarily towards national peace and stability, human dignity, gender equality, women political participation and access to the rule of law. Our teams in each of the 7 counties are up to the task equally providing training on the negative effect of harmful practices mainly female genital mutilation (FGM) and at the same time, advocating for total adherence to the ban of FGM in Liberia and other harmful practices.

Our successes over the periods came as the result of our hardworking and industrial national coordinator- Mr. Tamba Forkah Jedidiah Johnson. This young gentleman has demonstrative beyond doubt administrative and motivational style of leadership. His resilient and energetic passion is the secret behind our gains. Based on his enabling level of leadership role, our county teams have effectively creating awareness on the importance of male mental health, including Menstrual Hygiene Management -breaking the silence on menstrual flows in counties and erecting and equipping centers with sanitary pads; Our teams in other counties equally conducting capacity building training on positive Masculinity and Fatherhood for boys on school campuses, educating boys/men and women and girls on the importance of SRHR (specially on body autonomy), creating awareness on gender equality, reporting and following up cases on SGBV and other human rights violations at courts and ensuring speedy trails and advocating gender equality mostly for women rights to equal space for political participation. Our advocacy on women political participation had resulted to the huge supports men to women at all levels. These support to me, show that, men support to women is important in ensuring gender equality and increasing women/girls and marginalized groups voices at all levels. **This is what “HE FOR SHE CRUSADERS LIBERIA is working towards ensuring a society free of marginalization, where women, girls, and marginalized groups will enjoy their fundamental freedom”**

I am snooty to further indicate that in the year 2023, He For She Crusaders Liberia (HEFOSEL) through our robust National Coordinator and his teams, under our male engagement and awareness raising programs, reached 3,500 men and boys and 1000 women and girls in Lofa, Bong, Margibi, Montserrado, Grand Gedeh, Grand Cape Mount and Nimba primarily on school campuses, intellectual centers, in communities including the private and public spaces. The age aggregate of men and boys, women and girls reached were between 14 to 65 years old. These engagements enabled our volunteers and staff to farther provide education to men, boys, women



and girls, community leaders on positive masculinity and fatherhood, increased their understanding of Human Rights best practices and the role of men and boy in ending violence at all levels. To this milestone achievements, the Board remains grateful to all of our county chapter coordinators and volunteers.

I am gratified to further indicate that our teams in Lofa and Montserrado counties conducted perceptual survey on community knowledge on male mental health and menstrual hygiene management, over 85% of the respondents mostly strongly agree that there is need to increase awareness in schools and community on males mental health to reduce violence, Menstrual Hygiene Management to reduce unwanted teenage pregnancy and reduce poverty, while 65% of the respondents strongly agree that creation of emergency Menstrual Hygiene Centers equipped with sanitary pads is essential to protect and promote women and girls from unwanted embarrassments in public squares. We reported and follow up on over 30 cases of human rights violation in Grand Gedeh, and Montserrado counties. These cases were sent to courts, adjudicated and the perpetrators punished. We are thankful to the ministers of Gender and Justice for the supports and team work, we were about to achieved these above mentioned milestones together. It is my hope that 2024 will be a better year for us to increase our visibility and further showcase our works by impacting the greater communities.

My profound gratitude goes to our Donors: **UN WOMEN through Women In Peacebuild Network (WIPNET), RFSU and Men Engage Liberia** for the confidence imposed in us to have supported our programs/activities in 2023, I am assured that we didn't misused your confidence imposed in HEFOSEL.

Finally, to the Ministry of Gender, Children and Protection and the Ministry of Justice, thanks for the moral and professional supports and to CareFound Liberia (CF-L), FrontPage Africa, ELBC and other media bodies, He For She Crusaders Liberia forever remain grateful to you and thanks for the partnership. May you be blessed.

**Peter Musu Collins**  
**Board Chairperson**



## **ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND**

He For She Crusaders Liberia (HEFOSEL) was established in November of 2017, accredited/incorporated by the government of Liberia through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2018. Active operational started in August of 2018 as a non-governmental, non-political and non-for-profit male led organization. He For She Crusaders Liberia has three code programs: (1) **Mentorship/Male** engagement--focuses on mentoring on positive masculinity/fatherhood; (2) **Awareness Raising& Capacity Building--** focuses on gender equality, women political participation, HPs (primarily FGM), SGBV& SRHR (right to body autonomy), Male mental Health, etc., (3) **Advocacy--** focuses on human rights, access to justice & respect for rule of laws promotion, women political participation, land ownership and benefits, etc.,

Structurally, He For She Crusaders Liberia has 5 Board Members overseeing the running and activities of HEFOSEL as the highest decision making body. The National Coordinator serves as the head of Administration and secretary to the Board; the Administrative and Finance Officer, Program officer, Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, County chapter Coordinators are senior staff that assist the National Coordinator on the day to day running of the organization, supportive staffs and Volunteers support the achievement of the organization goals.

Currently HEFOSLE is actively working in Lofa, Nimba, Margibi, Grand Gedeh, Grand Cape Mount, Montserrado and Bong counties. We are working with over 4,000 boys and men, women and traditional leaders in schools and at the community levels within the above mentioned counties.

In 2023, under our mentorship/male engagement and awareness raising programs, we provided SRHR education on school campuses and community with focuses on right to body autonomy, Gender Equality awareness and promotion of women political participation. HEFOSEL considers gender equality, women political participation and human dignity (SRHR- right to body autonomy) as essential social tool for sustained national peace and security and empowerment of both women and men. HEFOSEL believes in providing education to all sections especially vulnerable young women, marginalized groups and adolescent girls & boys to explore their opportunities to rise above their challenges and develop into economically independent, confident and successful leaders. He For She Crusaders Liberia is accredited by the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection- MGCSP, and its contribution to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) nationally, our work is directly in support of SDGs 4 (Equality education) and 5 (Gender Equality) and PAPD pillow 1 “ **Power to the People**”.



HEFOSEL envisage a society free of marginalization and violence in which women/girls and marginalized groups can enjoy their human rights to life, justice, alliances and dignities.

**2023 Summary of Projects/Programs Activities:**

<b>Donor:</b> UN Women Through Women Peacebuilding Network (WIPNET) <b>Duration:</b> 3 Months Feb-March 2023 <b>Location:</b> Lofa, Nimba, Grand Cape Mount, Montserrado, Grand Gedeh	
<b>Project A- Title:</b> Enhanced existing Men networks capacity for effective advocacy on promoting women/girls rights and women political participation, promote SRHR and advocate for HPs (FGM) eradication	
<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
1. Conduct capacity building on advocacy and provide seed money for local advocacy	Completed
2. Conduct awareness on SRHR and HPs in communities and schools with students and community members, traditional leaders, zoes and relevant stakeholders	Completed
3. Conduct media engagement on legal instruments that abolished HPs (FGM) practice	Completed
4. Conduct consensual dialogue session with traditional leaders to rally supports to end FGM and promote SRHR and Women political participants in Liberia	Completed
5. Produce reports and submit to Donor on time	
<b>Overall performance :</b> <b>Excellent</b>	
<b>Observance of International Men's Day Support</b> <b>Donors:</b> RFSU, Men Engage Liberia/Africa/ Center For Social Justice and Peace Studies (CJPS)	Completed
<b>Duration:</b> 1 Day November 19 <b>Location:</b> Montserrado	
<b>Project B- Title:</b> Enhanced 100 students, men and women knowledge on Male Mental Health, and Gender Based Violence	
<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
1. Produce and distributed 200 T-shirts	Completed
2. Conduct awareness on Male Mental Health, SRHR and HPs in communities with 100 stakeholders in Montserrado	Completed
3. Produce reports and submit to Donor on time	Completed
<b>Overall performance :</b> <b>Excellent</b>	

**Problems/Constraints:**

During the period under review, HEFOSEL experienced technical and financial problems. However, we managed to work and improvise. Our program and finance teams received technical support/training from WANEP on financial management and reporting as well on programming.

**Conclusion:**

Although we encountered both financial and technical difficulties during the period under review, we can comfortably say that significant progress has been made in projects implementation. Thanks to the team for the sacrifices made.

**Recommendation:**

We hereby recommend the following:

- That the Board kindly consider fun-raising strategies to sustain our office rent payment in Montserrado, Lofa, Grand Gedeh, Bong, Grand Cape Mount and Margibi Counties
- That the Board kindly seek more financial opportunities to ensure buying more office equipment to make our counties more proactive.
- That the Board kindly consider HE For She Crusaders Liberia getting her own land and build its headquarters as a sustainable plan.
- That the Board consider adding two more persons, mostly women on the Board to make it seven (7) instill of the current five (5) members for more strategies and fun raising initiative.



- That the Board kindly approve our membership with FEMNET-- a global women group and the payment of US100 as annual due



Submitted by: Tamba Forkpah Jedidah Johnson  
National Coordinator and Secretary to the Board



# Celebration of International Men's Day in Liberia

Pictorial from the one day IMD celebrations



Right to left Mea, Roosevelt, Amintat, Tamba & Donish



Mae Azango -FrontPage listened to Minister Roosevelt Klefleh facilitation Some participants listened to Minister Klefleh



## Introduction:



International Men's Day is celebrated annually in more than 80 Countries of the world with focus on men's and boy's mental health, contributions of men and boys in homes and societies that flagged gender equality. The day also highlights the importance of positive masculinity to end violence. IMD is annually observed on November 19 of each year, just 7 days to the start of the 16 Days of Activism. The 2023 IMD was held under the Global Theme: “**Zero Male Suicide**” with the national Theme: “**Stop Male Suicide, End Violence Against Women and Girls**”. Focuses were placed on **#Act Now #Safe Generations #Promote SRHR & Male Mental Health**.

There were three panelists that deliberated on three unique topics below:

- **Toxic Masculinity in relation to male mental health, how can it be addressed to avoid violence**
- **Roles of the Media in the fight against S/GBV and male mental health**
- **Roles of men and boys in addressing violence and male mental health to avoid violence and abuses**



**Tamba Forkpah Jedidiah Johnson**  
**Founder & National Coordinator, He For She Crusaders Liberia**

Giving an overview of the IMD celebration on Friday, December 8, 2023, Mr. Johnson called on the government of Liberia and development partners to consider Male Mental Health as a priority, stating that “If Gender Based Violence must be addressed, the issue of male mental health should equally be handled. “Male Mental Health is a Human Right issue that should not be forgotten and placed under the carpet. We are experiencing huge report of male suicide, for instance, from January to June of 2023, we have had reports of 10 male suicide cases in Nimba, Bong and Montserrado Counties. Those males left

children, and the supports of those Children are now the responsibilities of those mothers whom, I believe were not prepared to incur those additional financial responsibilities.” Mr. Johnson further said that it was now time for government and development partners to consider redirecting their focus and resources toward “**Preventive programming in support of Responding programming**”. According to Mr. Johnson, men and boys who are the perpetrators must be engaged, mentored to avoid violence and discrimination. We need to desist from usual conversational way of doing things, that is gather the same group of people in a conducive environment to impressed our donors without focusing on going out to those who are indeed hurt and need psychosocial supports. We need to do more community (door to door, campus to campus male and boys mentoring) if we should succeed in addressing violence in Liberia. We need not to for that, over 250,000 youths mostly boys are living on illicit drugs and that their actions are being controlled by drugs. They need our engagement and supports—Mr. Johnson added. Finally, RFSU, Center for Justices and Peace Studies were appreciated for supporting the day.



## Outcomes of the one day event were:

1. He For She Crusaders Liberia and partners galvanize efforts to strengthen awareness and advocate to draw government and developments attention toward male mental health issue in Liberia
2. He For She Crusaders Liberia and media institutions developed partnership on Male Mental Health awareness arising through print and electric advocacy
3. Consensus alliance with RFSU, Carter Center, CJPS UN Women, WPF, OHCHR and other embassies including the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection be built with focus on more mentorship of boys in schools and men in communities, motorcyclists, community peace hut members on positive masculinity, human rights, gender equality and stress management (Mental health).

## Panelists



### Madam Aminata Kamara—RFSU Country Director

#### Topic: Toxic Masculinity in relation to male mental health, how can it be addressed to avoid violence

—Madam Kamara defines toxic masculinity as “unhealthy, bad or negative perceptions/beliefs usually associated with societal norms, and traditional orientations. She further stated that, over the years, society has made toxic masculinity to be an acceptable standard of lifestyle which is commonly being practiced. For instance “Men should not cry when hurt or faced unbearable issues. Men should be the only sole provider for the home and women voices and participation should not be heard and felt—because they are feebler vessels”. Based on these cultural beliefs and orientations has created toxic space over the years, keeping patriarchal system functional thereby marginalizing women, girls. Violence against women and girls have

become an acceptable norms and practices in Liberia. **What can we do?** Is to consider working with both males and females providing education on gender equality at levels (schools and communities) using community gate keepers, traditional and religious leaders, having dialogues and forums on toxic masculinity. Finally, “Men Mental Health issue – should be key priority if we should end Violence, have a safe and positive future for all”



### Madam Mea Azango—Reporter- FrontPage Africa

#### Topic: Roles of the Media in the fight against S/GBV and male mental health

Madam Azango defines the role of the media as the bridge between the governed and governors. Hence, the role of the media is to inform and educate citizens on occurrences of SGBV and steps that have been taken by the government through the judiciary to mitigate, adjudicate and punished perpetrators of Violence. The media has and still playing roles in the issue of male mental health with publication of articles on government obligations to provide healthcare service to all Liberians, because mental health is human rights and human interest subject. Madam Azango further stated that reports have been carried on all forms of abuses including male mental health, and

what, she belief is contributing to violence is lack of equipped and available facilities that are be used to provide psychosocial support to men in all counties and communities. Madam Azango



further mentioned, that, the media is not able to provide financial support, but only join the advocacy to keep knocking on the doors of relevant government and developing partners to consider directing their supports to mental health of males. She concluded by saying, there is a need to have a consolidated networks between media and other Civil Society organizations to intensify advocacy and awareness on male mental health to stop male suicide and end violence against women and girls and provide education on positive masculinity in schools and communities mostly focusing on motorcyclists.



**Honorable Roosevelt Klefleh – Assistant Minister for Planning, Research and Policy at Ministry of Gender Children and Social Protection**

**Topic: Roles of men and boys in addressing violence and male mental health to avoid violence and abuses**

We men are perpetrators of violence. Often, many men are unable to control themselves when faced with issues. To demonstrate their masculinity, violence becomes the alternative. The issue of suicide is done by males who believed that killing themselves is the best solution or appropriated way out. All of these acts are associated with mental crisis. To avoid huge increase of male suicide, we need to increase psychosocial/mental support as well mentoring boys on stressing management at all levels in schools and communities.

**Male mentorship and dialogue session**



He For She Crusaders Liberia envisioned to see a society free of intolerance and marginalization. Most men of Africa including Liberia treat women inhumanly due to cultural orientation and negative masculinity. There is need for a space to be provided for women, girls and marginalized groups to have equal opportunities at all levels. To achieve this, men and boys engagement is keen. A total of 10 men networks have been established with over 4,000 men receiving training and mentorship on positive masculinity and gender equality. These men are placed in networks. The networks meet regularly to share experiences and strategize to

engage peers. In June of 2023, some members of the Men Network established by He For She Crusaders Liberia comprising of Traditional, Religious and local leaders met to discuss and share experiences on positive masculinity in relation to ending violence against women and girls (EVAWG), promoting of Sexual Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR) and Gender Equality and Women Empowerment (GEWE).

The focus of He For She Crusaders Liberia is to engage more men, boys who are perceived perpetrators of violence to get involve with the problem solving. During and after one of the men engagement sessions these pictures were taken. Outcome, more men are now supportive of women. Due to the Patriarchal systemic nature, Men and boys have been oriented into accepting the negative and toxic cultural practices and believes that men are super human, as such, women have no right to be incorporated in decision making and leadership. Based on He For She



Crusaders Liberia interventions with support from the Spotlight Initiative, the perception is gradually changing in Liberia.

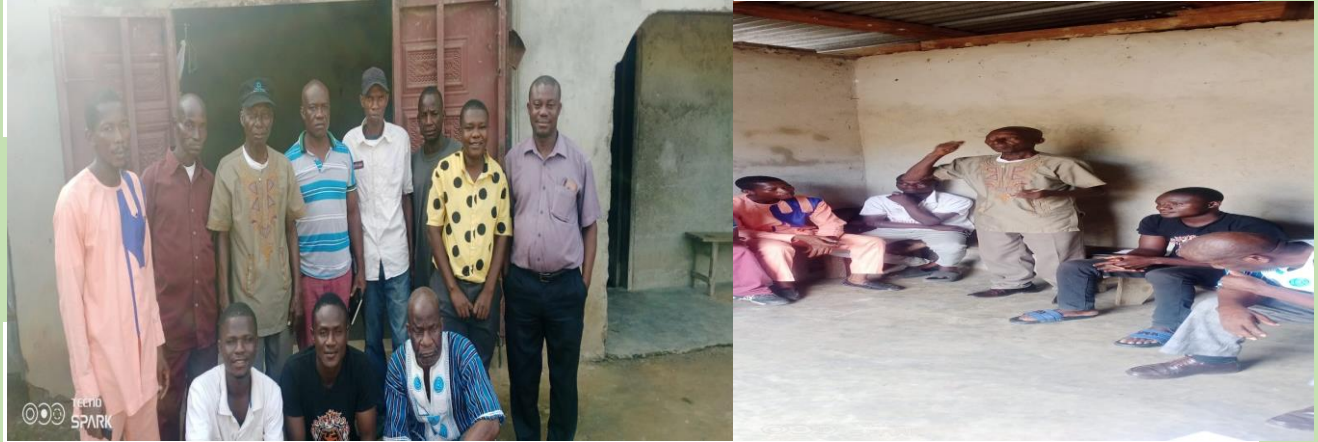


Photo from one of the Male mentorship session held in Nimba County 2023

## Boys mentorship in schools



He For She Crusaders Liberia increases boys' dialogues with members of boys clubs in Liberia. In June of 2023, mentoring of boys to exhibit positive masculinity and support gender equality and women empowerment, the current boys clubs being supported by the Spotlight Initiative increase awareness and mentorship. Amongst topics discussed: **How can rape be eradicated; How should boys keep being supportive of women and girls in community and homes; What are expected of boys in the society to promote peace and security.**



As a way of experience sharing, members from the five boys clubs in Sanniquellie City, Nimba County, gathered at the St. Mary's Cathedral High School to share their experiences, and build stronger network to fight against violence on campuses. The schools were: 1. St Mary's high school, 2. Post academy, 3. Levi H. Martin Baptist school, 4. Sanniquellie central high school and 5. Shirley high school (SDA).

He For She Crusaders Liberia Nimba Coordinator stressed the need for boys who are being trained as future leaders must exhibit the cultural of good humanity and tolerance at all levels. Jericho admonishes boys to keep sharing as positive men in homes and community because, they are ambassadors of good morals.



## INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIP (MEN ENGAGE LIBERIA/AFRICA)



He For She Crusaders Liberia chair's Men Engage Liberia Steering Committee from 2023-2025



Men Engage Liberia Stakeholders dialogue on drug and harmful practices (FGM)

Men Engage Liberia is a member of the Men Engage Africa and Men Engage Global Alliance. During the celebration of the 16 days, the Chair of Men Engage Liberia – Tamba F. J. Johnson stated in his opening remarks said that “Illicit drugs consumption by citizens’ mostly young men is one of primary contributing factors to all forms of violence and criminal activity in Liberia.”

According to Mr. Johnson, “Estimated over 250,000 Liberia youths are living on illicit drugs, over half of them are schools dropped outs. Being dropouts, Nation building is being challenged, because, those drugs addicted youths, will lock the requisite technical skills to contribute nation building and at the same time denied them a stable source of income. Johnson further said that youths’ vulnerable status, they are perpetrators of violence and criminal activities. To have a safe society where you and I can live peacefully, the 2023 Liberian Drugs law need to be promoted through awareness arising and advocate for its full implementation by the government of Liberia.”

Mr. Johnson mentioned that, “Female Genital Mutilation and sustained patriarchal system are also hindrances for the realization of gender equality mostly for women, girls, and marginalized. Liberia through the National Traditional Council of Chiefs and Elders, in February 6, 2023, banned the practice of FGM activities in Liberia and held ceremonies in Montserrado, Bong, and Grand Cape Mount reflecting the closure of FGM activities in these counties. The ban and closure is in affirmation to Concluding Observation on Liberia by International Convention on Civil Political Rights (ICCPR) in 2018.

However, there are still reports about the continue practice of FGM in Liberia. To have government become accountable and ensure full compliance and adherence by all practices (traditional practitioners and the government), there is a need for collective actions to be instituted starting with us activists/ advocates.” The human rights activist further stated that, “The 2030 SDGs goal number 5 “Gender Equality” needs to achieve with in few years. Realistically, gender equality is a challenge in Liberia for women, girls and marginalized groups. Though there are policies on gender equality, however, women are underrepresented, for instance, female at the level of parliament is less than 12 percent; 3 female the House of Senate and about 8 at the level of House of Representation.



In 2023, Political Parties signed MOU to have inclusion of 30 percent females as candidates, nearly all failed without penalty actions taken against them by the state (the Electoral body), what can we do to mitigate this gap? The Men Engage Liberia chair called on Civil society organizations and international partners to build alliance to ensure that the best strategies identified for robust advocacy and networking.

Outcome, consensual reached for robust advocacy and community education on drug law by CSOS in 2024.

