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Reintegration and Reconstruction Programme – Liberia

A contribution to consolidating the peace process

Liberia was in the grip of civil war until 2003. The violence not only had disastrous effects from a humanitarian point of view – economic and social infrastructure was destroyed and the Ebola crisis of 2014-15 slowed down and impeded the country’s reconstruction and economic development. The effects are still being felt today, most strikingly in the form of extreme poverty and poor living conditions.

Although the security situation has been back in the hands of national authorities since 2016, it is still considered fragile. Since 2005, KfW has been helping to consolidate the peace process and reconstruction in the southeast of the country on behalf of the German Federal Government through the Reintegration and Reconstruction Programme. The main priority is to improve the living conditions of the rural population.

Many young people and young adults had no access to education and training during the war and, even today, often have little chance of earning a regular income by working. Women were particularly hard hit by the civil war, with around 70% of women and girls in Liberia raped during the conflict. Violence against women and girls remains widespread and psychosocial support for trauma resolution is insufficient. Liberia now ranks 181st out of 187 countries on the United Nations Human Development Index (HDI). The West African country is still one of the countries in Africa most affected by hunger and malnutrition.

Project name	Reintegration and Reconstruction Programme
Commissioned by	German Federal Ministry for Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Country/Region	Liberia/West Africa
Lead executing agency	Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs (MoPEA) Implementation: Welthungerhilfe

Context

Despite now being in its aftermath, Liberia is still feeling the effects of the civil war. The road network was almost completely destroyed or fell into disrepair due to a lack of maintenance. As a result, many villages are cut off from the outside world, especially during the rainy season. Schools, healthcare facilities, wells and administrative buildings were also destroyed or looted and often need to be completely rebuilt. Economic development has been sluggish since the end of the Ebola epidemic and has been further hindered by a drop in the prices of the most important export products.





Groups of farmers are trained in various farming methods.
Source: KfW Group, photographer: Beatrice Lucke

Project approach

Because the government structures are weak, the project is being implemented in the southeast of the country by international non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in cooperation with the government partners. Working together with local inhabitants, Deutsche Welthungerhilfe is rehabilitating roads and bridges, as well as rebuilding schools, water supply systems and sanitation facilities. These projects create short-term employment and income opportunities for the population. Farmers are trained so that agriculture can be resumed and stabilised.

Women and girls who have been affected by violence are supported by the NGO Medica Mondiale with psychosocial therapy to help them cope with their trauma. Under the project, preventative measures are taken to combat violence against women through information and awareness-raising campaigns. The NGO Oxfam carries out teacher training and offers young people practical training courses. Small farmers are supported with training and materials to increase their yield and, in turn, improve their food situation while generating additional income. The multisectoral programme thus addresses the main obstacles to development in the programme region: insufficient access to rural areas, malnutrition and lack of access to clean drinking water, educational poverty and the traumatising of the population during the civil war. The combination of the programme components in the various sectors has led to a comprehensive improvement in the living conditions of the population. Another special feature of the approach is that it brings together different actors with different experience: national and decentralised governmental bodies, international and local NGOs and traditional

authorities. Local private businesses are promoted through the involvement of local contractors.

Impact

The project contributes to socio-economic reconstruction and the consolidation of the peace process. In the four phases of the programme that have already been completed, more than 500 kilometres of rural roads have been rehabilitated, more than 450 wells drilled and 1,129 farmers and community members trained in sustainable farming methods. In addition, the current phase of the project is expected to produce further improvements in the agricultural and transport infrastructure, as well as in reducing violence against women. In a survey of the target group, 83% of the respondents in the programme area said that their living conditions had improved significantly as a result of the programme. Close cooperation with local authorities also helps residents to regain lost confidence in government structures. Even in remote villages in the project region, a peace dividend is felt by the population. One of the programme's main objectives is to establish permanent structures. More specifically, local authorities will be more involved in the selection and implementation of individual measures. Activities will be carried out more often in cooperation with local organisations that are supported in their further development by Welthungerhilfe.



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