

NATIONAL PEACE HUT WOMEN OF LIBERIA

AN ACCOUNT OF SUPPORT PROVIDED BY
UN WOMEN (2009 – 2018)



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DISCLAIMER

The author's views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of UN Women.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The end of Liberia's civil war in 2003, created opportunities for the Government of Liberia and its development partners to enhance the role of women in peacebuilding as in every other aspects of sustainable development. Over the past decade, UN Women has played a leading role in supporting Liberia's gender machineries and mechanisms to deliver on the country's commitments to women, peace and security.

Since 2009, UN Women has been supporting community women by setting up Peace Huts across the country with the aim of encouraging the agency of women in peacebuilding and social cohesion. The Peace Huts mechanism has proven to be a worthy agent of change and a major actor in the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment.

This systematization report might not have been possible without the financial support from our donors: the UN Peacebuilding Fund and the Embassy of Sweden. This publication attempts to map all the functional Peace Huts spread across Liberia and document their current status in terms of memberships and economic activities. We would like to thank the National Peace Huts Women of Liberia for providing their insights and plans for the sustainability of the Peace Huts structure across the country. In this regard, we would like to acknowledge the independent consultant, Mr. Abraham Billy, for leading this research for the preparation of the systemization Report with sound technical knowledge and passion for promotion of gender equality in Liberia.

FOREWORD

Founded in 2004, the National Peace Huts Women of Liberia helped women and former child soldiers to become agents of change in their communities following the country's civil war. The Peace Huts provide space for women's voices to be heard on peacebuilding, security, rule of law, and political and economic issues, thus filling a critical gap in facilitating women's access to justice in the communities where structures, such as the judiciary system and police service are not available.

In 2018, this women-led network transformed into a formal platform for the advancement of peace-building and women's rights initiatives at the community level. UN Women is pleased that the Peace Huts is now a registered Community Based Organization (CBO) with its own constitution, elected governing board and more importantly with its own sustainability plan. Moreover, it forms a solid part of the peace infrastructure at the local level in Liberia.

UN Women recognizes the huge potential of Peace Huts to contribute not only to the betterment of women; but of the country at large. Their contributions easily surpass the needs of their communities and support the government to achieve its national priorities like ending Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV). Peace Huts have been playing a key role in referring cases of SGBV to relevant justice institutions to ensure that survivors get justice and protection.

UN Women acknowledges that the Peace Huts are a cost effective and reliable mechanism for promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment and recognizes their invaluable contributions in the promotion of social cohesion and peace.

Over the past nine years, UN Women has provided support to the Peace Huts in different areas including capacity building on mediation, conflict resolution, women's rights, prevention of SGBV, response to emergencies like outbreak of Ebola, business and literacy skills including access to finance, etc.

UN Women remains committed to supporting the Peace Huts of Liberia and to learn from this transformative example and to support the replication of Peace Huts in similar contexts as an effective women-led conflict prevention and peacebuilding initiative that yields vital peace dividends.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BACKGROUND

According to recent population statistics, Liberia has more women than men¹. The country has a population of roughly 4.2 million people, comprising 51.1 per cent females and 48.9 per cent males. Though women and girls constitute more than half of the population, gender inequality limits their ability to meaningfully participate in state-building.

In an effort to reduce entrenched gender disparities, the Government of Liberia (GOL) works with development partners to develop legal and policy frameworks that promote gender equality. In 2004, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (now UN Women) started work in Liberia, and has since partnered with the GOL in designing and rolling out interventions that empower women at both national and community levels.

In 2009, as part of the implementation of its 2008-2011 country strategy, UN Women began to work with Peace Huts at the community level to enhance women's participation in peacebuilding and to empower them economically. Peace Huts are women-created and women-operated community initiatives that provide counselling, offer space for women to engage in mediating local disputes, act as watchdogs over the police and justice services, prevent gender-based violence (GBV) and refer victims of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) to support services. Most of the huts also include physical structures.

Over the past nine years, UN Women has provided a range of services to Peace Huts to enhance their operations and to economically empower individual members.

Internationally, Liberia's Peace Huts are considered an example of an innovative and women-led, community-based conflict resolution mechanism. Although they usually include a physical building, Peace Huts are focused on supporting and strengthening community dynamics and women's roles in fostering dialogue and mediation, and justice seeking. They have proven to be viable mechanisms for addressing perspectives on peacebuilding, including past, present and future initiatives.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The overarching purpose of this study is to document the support that has been provided by UN Women and other UN agencies to Peace Huts in Liberia from 2009 to 2018. For learning and knowledge management purposes, the report also documents good practices. The findings of this study will be used to inform stakeholders within the GOL and the donor community on how to build on investments in Peace Huts and sustain their operations in advancing women's protection and empowerment at the community level.

1 Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services

METHODOLOGY

This study sought to answer three key questions:

- 1) What support has been provided by UN Women and UN development partners to Peace Huts?
- 2) What worked and what did not work? What could have been different and why?
- 3) What are key recommendations?

In answering the above questions, the study utilized a desk review and qualitative data collection to come up with its findings, conclusions and recommendations. The study used concurrent triangulation design, where data from specific sources were analysed separately and then compared and combined to confirm and validate findings.

Primary data was collected through Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with 'Peace Hut women' and via key informant interviews (KIs) with national and sub-national stakeholders, including county superintendents and town chiefs. A total of 36 Peace Huts were visited, and interviews held at them, during data collection. Three Peace Huts were not visited due to different constraints. Additionally, due to the movement of women over the past nine years, some Peace Huts no longer had information about support that had been provided to their huts years before.

SUMMARY FINDINGS

The study found that from 2009 to 2018, UN Women and other UN agencies provided different services to Peace Huts that strengthened their capacities to contribute to peacebuilding, protect women from violence, and engage in economic empowerment activities that improved the livelihood of individual women. The major donors that have supported this intervention during the last nine years are the Peacebuilding Fund, The European Union, The Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation, The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and the Swedish Embassy. The study broadly categorizes the support provided to Peace Huts into seven categories: 1. infrastructure support (Peace Hut structures, warehouses, etc.); 2. supply of equipment (rice mills, cassava processing machines, etc.); 3. capacity-building (immediate handling of SGBV cases, mediation of disputes, early warning and peacebuilding, numeracy and literacy trainings); 4. women's rights education; 5. health education; 6. provision of access to finance and 7. the formation by Peace Huts of a national civil society organization (CSO).

FGDs and KIs conducted with stakeholders indicate that some of the interventions made by UN Women and other UN agencies worked while others did not. Overall, stakeholders indicated that the Peace Hut concept and its accompanying interventions have changed the lives and improved the livelihoods of many women across communities of intervention.

Interviews revealed that investments in the construction of Peace Hut structures were largely successful, with the exception of a few structures that were left unfinished. Also, capacity-building initiatives mostly achieved their intended outcomes. For instance, this study found that Peace Hut women are utilizing their conflict mediation skills to resolve conflicts, thereby contributing to peacebuilding at the community level. Similarly, the education of women about their rights was found to have been cardinal in empowering women to defend their own rights and those of other women. The study also found that numeracy and literacy programmes, combined with business development and management trainings, were extremely

useful in enabling women to start businesses, which are now sources of income.

In spite of such achievements, a number of interventions fell short of their intended outcomes. These initiatives would have achieved impactful results had they been done differently. For example, detailed market research was not done prior to deploying equipment, such as cassava milling machines, to some communities. Also, there was no training of local technicians to maintain and repair machines supplied to Peace Huts.

SUSTAINABILITY OF PEACE HUTS

Beyond the support provided to Peace Huts by development agencies, their day-to-day operations are funded through revenue generated by members. To cover operational expenses, these members contribute social funds (ranging from USD10 or 1,910 Liberian dollars) per month, or twice a month, to cover routine expenses. In addition to social funds, the members of a few Peace Huts contribute weekly and monthly dues for the huts' sustainability.

In order to assess funding opportunities for Peace Huts at the sub-national level, KIIs were conducted with county superintendents, commissioners and town chiefs. It was found that there are no existing funding mechanisms at the sub-national level providing financial support to Peace Huts. The study also found that the huts are largely dependent on donors for the sustainability of interventions such as structures and maintenance of rice mills and cassava processing machines.

IMPACTS OF PEACE HUTS

Integrated approaches to empowering Peace Hut women through training on such topics as human rights, peacebuilding and business development and management created an empowering environment for women under the Peace Hut platform to demand and project their rights and empower themselves, the study also learned.

What Makes the Peace Hut Mechanism Successful?



Locally driven initiative owned and sustained by women leaders.



Strong linkages with community, county and national peace and security infrastructure.



Strong government recognition.



Resilience mechanism that withstood the various shocks of the Ebola outbreak and lack of reliable funding.



Huge UN support as a holistic center for integrated services for women and girls.



High community confidence in the security and justice as access is at no cost.



High recognition by the donor community.

Cost effectiveness of women-led conflict prevention mechanism in Liberia, UN Women, World Bank, 2017

For instance, it was found that Peace Huts have contributed immensely to enhancing the roles of women in conflict resolution and peacebuilding in intervention communities. In addition, through the Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA) programme, women have been able to access capital to begin new or expand income-generating activities. Respondents indicated that Peace Huts have contributed to their personal safety and economic empowerment, and have also increased their participation in decision-making at household and community levels.

In order to sustain the initiative in the long run, the study recommends that the GOL incorporate Peace Huts into national peacebuilding plans for mitigating and resolving conflicts at the grassroots level. It also recommends that Peace Huts move from “contributing-and-sharing” funds at the end of the year, to investing the capital they generate through VSLAs into new businesses that will generate interest for all members. This will enable the huts to reduce the dependence of VSLAs on individual shares by becoming viable businesses enterprises. The study also recommends that UN agencies continue to support the GOL in domesticating the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) especially Goal 5, which seeks to achieve gender equality.

ACRONYMS

AFELL	Association of Female Lawyers of Liberia
CSO	Civil society organization
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FGDs	Focus group discussions
GBV	Gender-based violence
GOL	Government of Liberia
KIIs	Key informant interviews
LNP	Liberia National Police
MGCSP	Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection
SGBV	Sexual and gender-based violence
UNIFEM	United Nations Fund for Women
VSLA	Village savings and loan association
VAW	Violence against women
WEF	World Economic Forum
WFP	World Food Programme

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1. BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

1.1 COUNTRY CONTEXT

According to recent population statistics, Liberia has more women than men. The country has a population of roughly 4.2 million people, comprising 51.1 per cent females and 48.9 per cent males. Though women constitute more than half of Liberia's population, gender inequality limits the capacity of women to meaningfully participate and contribute to state-building. This existing gender gap is reflected in a number of global indices and national data sets that assess gender (in)equality.

Liberia is ranked 96 out of 149 countries in the World Economic Forum (WEF)'s Gender Gap Report of 2018 with a score of 0.681². The report states that fewer women than men participate in the labour force (55 per cent to 57.5 per cent). Though women's participation in the labour force is close to that of men, their participation is concentrated in the informal sector where there is no job security and other employment benefits. Data shows that 86.3 per cent of women are employed in the informal sector, while men constitute 68.8 per cent of employment in the informal sector³.

Gender inequality across sectors, including the labour force, is perpetuated due to gender gaps in access to education. In spite of progress made over the past decade, the literacy rate of Liberian women is far lower than that of men. The 2016 Household Income and Expenditure Survey estimates the literacy rate among women at 54 per cent, in comparison to 77 per cent among men⁴.

In the absence of affirmative-action laws that promote women's participation in governance, women's share of positions in the public sector remains low. The WEF's 2018 Report indicates that women hold 12.3 per cent of seats in Liberia's legislature, while 87.7 per cent of those seats are occupied by males. In the executive branch of government, women occupy 15.85 per cent of ministerial positions, compared to 84.2 per cent for men⁵.

In addition to the above constraints, Liberian women and girls are faced with the challenge of being victims of different forms of gender-based violence (GBV). Statistics from the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MGCSP) show that 462 cases of GBV⁶ were reported across Liberia from January to March 2018. Of those, rape accounted for 61 per cent, physical assault/domestic violence constituted 15.4 per cent, sexual assault made up 16 per cent, while denial of resources constituted 5 per cent⁷. Annual SGBV data reported by the Women and Child Protection Services Division of the Liberia National Police (LNP) indicates that in 2018, 1,664 Sexual and Gender based Violence (SGBV) cases were reported to police.

In an effort to reduce these entrenched gender disparities in Liberia, the GOL continues to work with development partners to narrow existing gender gaps. Along this journey, UN Women and other UN agencies continue to play key roles in

2 The score is between 0 and 1, where 0 equals imparity and 1 equals parity.

3 World Economic Forum, 2018.

4 Government of Liberia, 2016, Household Income and Expenditure Survey

5 Ibid.

6 Girls Not Brides defines gender-based violence as violence directed at an individual based on his or her biological sex, gender identity, or perceived adherence to socially defined norms of masculinity and femininity. It can include physical, sexual, or psychological abuse; threats; coercion; arbitrary deprivation of liberty; and economic deprivation, whether in public or private life.

7 Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (2018), *GBV Quarterly Report*.

strengthening Liberia's gender machinery to improve the welfare of women. At the community level, UN agencies continue to design and implement programmes and projects to empower women.

1.2 BACKGROUND OF STUDY

UN Women (then known as the United Nations Development Fund for Women, UNIFEM) started work in Liberia in 2004. Since then, the agency has worked with the MGCSP (then referred to as the Ministry of Gender and Development) to develop strategies, policies and legislation that mainstream gender into national development, protect women and empower them economically.

From 2008 to 2011, UN Women's work in Liberia responded to its Global Strategic Framework⁸ (UNIFEM Strategic Plan 2008-2011), specifically the West Africa Sub-Regional Strategic Plan (2008-2011)⁹. The work covered key thematic areas, including: expanding women's voice, leadership and participation; strengthening implementation of the women, peace and security agenda; making gender equality priorities central to all aspects of national and local development planning; enhancing women's economic empowerment; and ending violence against women and girls¹⁰.

Drawing from its Global Strategy and West Africa Plan, UN Women developed its Liberia Country Strategy (2008-2011), focusing on five key result areas (KRAs):

1. Engendered national policies, strategies, guidelines and capacity support to ministries
2. Enhanced women's access to and participation in decision-making and in peacebuilding and security, and expanded voice
3. Transformed institutions and ensuring gender justice
4. Enhanced women's economic empowerment
5. UN Women leads gender equality within the UN System¹¹.

By 2009, through implementation of its Country Strategy (2008-2011), UN Women began to work with Peace Huts at the community level in order to enhance women's participation in peacebuilding and decision-making, and to empower them economically, among other aims. As defined by UN Women, Peace Huts are centres created by women to provide counselling for those who experienced grief and trauma after the civil war (such as ex-child soldiers). They are also women-led, home-grown initiatives that offer a space for women to engage in mediating local disputes, act as



The Women of the National Peace Huts of Liberia at the end of their validation workshop held in Bong County on 5th April 2019. (Photo credit: UN RCO Liberia/ Doreen Kansime 2019)

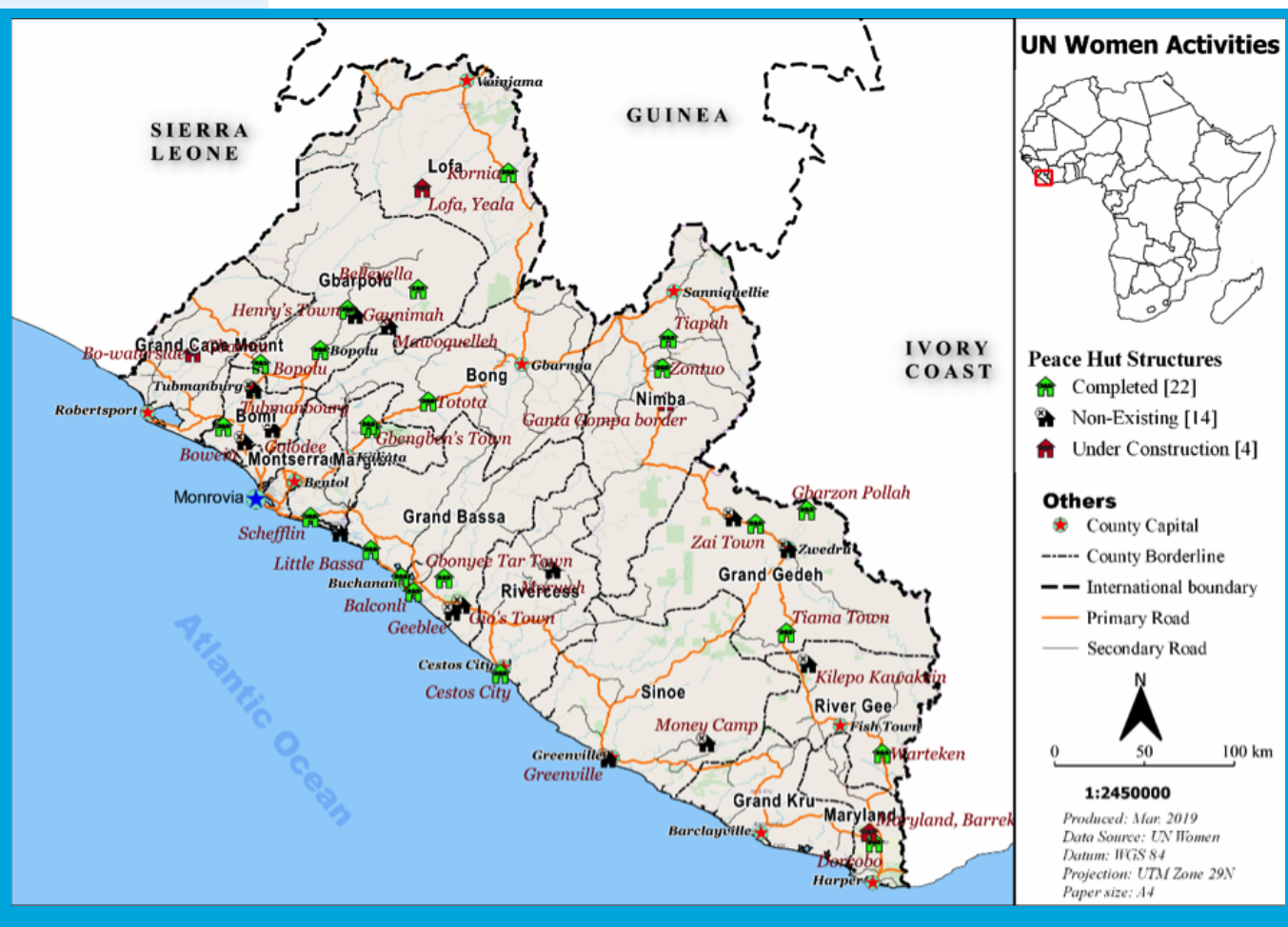
8 UNFEM (2018), Strategic Plan 2008-2011.

9 UN Women (2011). *Country Programme Evaluation Report*.

10 Ibid.

11 Ibid.

FIGURE 1: MAP LOCATING PEACE HUTS IN LIBERIA



watchdogs over the police and justice services, prevent GBV and refer SGBV victims to support services. Figure 1, opposite, shows the location of Peace Huts in Liberia supported by UN Women.

Internationally, Liberia's Peace Huts are considered an example of an innovative and women-led, community-based conflict resolution mechanism. Although they usually include a physical building, Peace Huts are focused on supporting and strengthening community dynamics and women's roles in fostering dialogue and mediation, and justice seeking. They have proven to be viable mechanisms for addressing perspectives on peacebuilding, including past, present and future initiatives.

1.3 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to generate a body of knowledge about support that has been provided to Peace Huts in Liberia by UN Women and other UN agencies from 2009 to 2018. For learning and knowledge management purpose, the report also documents good practices. The findings of this study will be used to inform stakeholders on how to build on investments in Peace Huts and sustain their operations in advancing women's protection and empowerment.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research study posed the following questions, to which answers were sought using qualitative data collection methods:

- What support has been provided by UN Women and UN development partners to Peace Huts?
- What worked and what did not work? What were the key factors for success? What could have been different and why?
- What are key recommendations?

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 STUDY DESIGN

The study utilized a desk review and qualitative data collection to come up with its findings, conclusions and recommendations. It used concurrent triangulation design, analysing data from specific sources separately and then comparing and combining to confirm and validate findings. This approach ensured that each data type validated the other, and provided stronger evidence for the study's findings, conclusions and recommendations.

2.2 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The primary focus of this study was to document support that Peace Huts have received from UN agencies since 2009. In order to get a full account of support delivered to Peace Huts, the research focused on women who benefited from these services because they are the custodians of knowledge under scrutiny. The study covered 40 existing Peace Huts across Liberia. As presented in Table 1, 36 Peace Huts were visited during data collection, in 13 counties.

TABLE 1: PEACE HUTS REACHED DURING THE STUDY

COUNTY	PEACE HUTS VISITED	PEACE HUTS NOT COVERED
Bomi County	4 - Bowein, Malema Town, Tubmanburg, Golodee	None
Bong County	1 - Totota	None
Gbarpolu County	6 - Mawoquelleh, Henry's Town, Gbarma, Bopolu, Gaynimah, Belleyella	None
Grand Bassa County	5 - Little Bassa, Balconli, Gio's Town, Edina, Gbonyee Tar Town	Geeble (Gorblee)
Grand Gedeh County	4 - Polar Town, Zai Town, Tiama Town. Gbarzon Pollah	Zwedru
Margibi County	3 - Weala, Gbengben Town, Schefflin	Krapacorn (Marshall)
Lofa County	2 - Kornia, Yeala	None
Mary Land County	2 - Dorrobo, Barrenken	None
Nimba County	3 - Zontuo, Tiapa, Ganta Border	None
River Gee County	2 - Kilepo Kawakein, Warteken	None
River Cess County	2 - Cestos City, Boegeezay	None
Sinoe County	1 - Tuzon	Greenville
Grand Cape Mount County	1 - Bo-waterside	None

2.3 DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

Secondary data was collected through the review of existing literature on gender equality and women's empowerment in Liberia, as well as via project reports from UN Women about support provided to Peace Huts. Primary data was conducted through FGDs with Peace Hut women, as well as KIIs with other stakeholders.

Desk review: An in-depth desk review of project documents and other secondary materials provided sufficient information on the context of gender equality in Liberia and the initiatives of UN Women and other UN agencies to contribute to narrowing existing gender gaps.



FGD in Zia Town

FGDs: Smaller group discussions were held with Peace Hut women in 36 communities. A total of 322 women participated in FGDs, which were held to gather information on support that participants had received from UN agencies. FGDs gathered information on specific support received by Peace Huts, the impacts of such support and the lessons learned over the past nine years.

KIIs: KIIs were conducted with Peace Hut leaders, local authorities (town chiefs, district commissioners, county superintendents, etc.) and other stakeholders at the community level in order to assess the roles that Peace Huts played in peacebuilding and women's empowerment, and to assess the participation of women in decision-making at the community level. A total of 49 key informants, 17 females and 32 males, were interviewed during the study.



Gboinyee-Tarr Peace Hut

Direct observation: During field data collection, which took place from 17-24 December 2018, team members directly observed the status of Peace Hut

structures, equipment, records of VSLAs, and women's knowledge of their rights, GBV and other issues.

2.4 STUDY LIMITATIONS

As presented in Table 1 above, four Peace Huts were not covered during the study. During field work, data collectors learned that Geeble (Gorblee) is a district and not a particular community, which made it impossible for it to be considered a

Peace Hut. Data collectors also found that Peace Huts do not exist in Zwedru and Greenville cities, and that the Peace Hut structure in Marshall had been transformed into a secret society building, and that the hut was no longer functional.

At the Peace Huts visited, the study faced a challenge of respondents lacking full knowledge on issues. Due to migration and movement of people, as well as changes in Peace Hut leadership over the years, information about some of the support provided was unavailable at some Peace Huts. Due to the timing of data collection around the festive season, a number of stakeholders targeted for interviews were unavailable.

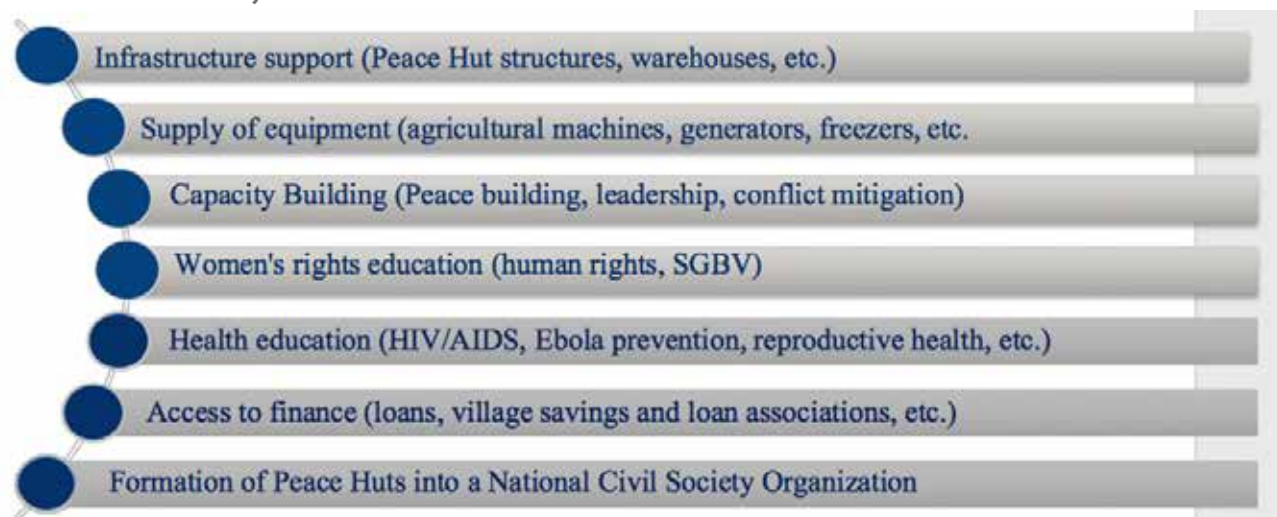
3. FINDINGS

3.1 RESEARCH QUESTION 1: WHAT SUPPORTS HAVE BEEN PROVIDED BY UN WOMEN AND UN DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS TO PEACE HUTS?

Desk review findings and interviews conducted with Peace Hut women showed that, over the past nine years, Peace Huts received a range of support from UN Women and other UN agencies. Services were either directly delivered by UN Women and other UN agencies or by local non-governmental organizations, such as Educare, Rights and Rice Foundation, Development Education Network-Liberia and Children Smile.

Figure 2 below groups the various support received into broader categories, ranging from infrastructure support to the provision of access to finance. It is important to note, however, that support provided was not uniform across Peace Huts.

FIGURE 2: CATEGORY OF SUPPORT PROVIDED TO PEACE HUTS, 2009-2019



Infrastructure support

Peace Huts are initiatives — usually including physical structures — that provide spaces for women to openly discuss issues that affect them and to find local solutions to such problems. In essence, the huts provide space for:

- Dialogue on common issues
- Conflict mediation

- Creating linkages, and
- Responding to GBV in intervention communities¹².

Creating these secured spaces in project intervention communities often resulted in the building of structures where women can meet and discuss their concerns freely, at the same time protecting and empowering themselves.

Since 2009, UN Women has supported the building of roughly 40 Peace Huts¹³, which are being used by women to contribute to peacebuilding and their economic empowerment. In addition to the construction of physical structures, UN Women provided items, including office chairs, tables, desks and stationery, for the operation of the huts.

At the community level, negotiations were held between local authorities and stakeholders to secure parcels of land for the building of Peace Huts. Once a parcel of land was identified in a community, a memorandum of understanding was signed between host communities and project implementers for the construction.

One criterion followed in building Peace Huts was that, for privacy purposes, they were not to be located in the centre of communities but also not too far away, for security purposes. Construction designs were proposed by UN Women and tweaked based on inputs from implementing agencies.

The look of Peace Huts evolved over time from simple round structures (as shown in Picture 1) to improved ones (Picture 2) after the designs were revised in 2013.



*Edina Peace Hut (built in 2010).
Photo credit: William Lafalay*



*Malema Peace Hut (built in 2014).
Photo credit: Rights and Rice Foundation*

As shown in the pictures above, while a number of Peace Huts were completed and are in use, some are still incomplete and not being used. Other huts are in deplorable physical condition due to lack of maintenance. Of the 36 Peace Huts reached, 22 included physical structures, 4 were under construction and 14 had no structures¹⁴.

In addition to UN Women, the World Food Programme (WFP) provided support for the construction of warehouses in select communities for the use of Peace Hut, including Cestos City and Belleyala. Women in Belleyala use the warehouse to store rice, okra, pepper seedlings, cassava stems and farm products that they purchase using their VSLA savings.

Equipment and other supplies

In 2012, UN Women and other UN agencies adopted an integrated approach to

¹² UN Women Project Report

¹³ The membership of Peace Huts varies from 30 to more than 200

¹⁴ See annexes 2 and 3 for details on Peace Huts that benefited from construction services and the status of the physical structures of the huts.

working with Peace Huts, which entailed merging women's economic empowerment initiatives into the huts. Based on the economic contexts of Peace Hut communities, UN agencies procured and delivered a number of machines whose purpose was to contribute to income generation for huts.

Equipment delivered to Peace Huts included rice mills, cassava processing mills, freezers, generators and sewing machines. Additionally, some huts were supplied with household utensils and stationery. During interviews, it was reported that other UN agencies, such as WFP, supplied rice (seed and clean) to Peace Huts while the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) supplied chickens for poultry farming to select huts, as shown in Table 2.

TABLE 2: SELECT PEACE HUTS THAT RECEIVED EQUIPMENT AND OTHER SUPPLIES

NO	PEACE HUT	COUNTY	YEAR OF ESTABLISHMENT	EQUIPMENT SUPPLIED
1	Cestos City Peace Hut	Rivercess County	2014	Generator ¹⁵ , Freezer, Iron box
2	Gbomyee Tarr Peace Hut	Grand Bassa County	2016	Generator, Plastic chairs, Plastic tables, Eating dishes, Flip chart stand, Buckets, Spoons, Iron box
3	Balconi Peace Hut	Grand Bassa County	2009	25 sewing machines, Plastic chairs, Freezer, Iron box
4	Edina Peace Hut	Grand Bassa County	2010	Cassava mill, Iron box, Generator, Pressing iron
5	Little Bassa Peace Hut	Grand Bassa County	2011	Generator, Freezer, Plastic chairs, Plastic tables, Iron box, Fans, Flat screen TV
6	Zuntoe Peace Hut	Nimba County	2013	Plastic chairs, Plastic tables, Iron box, 600 bags of rice from WFP
7	Tiapa Peace Hut	Nimba County	2013	11 sewing machines, Cassava mill from FAO, Chickens from FAO, Seed rice, Iron box, Plastic chairs
8	Bowein Peace Hut	Bomi County	2011	Cassava mill, Iron box
9	Gbarma Peace Hut	Bomi County	2013	Iron box, Plastic chairs, Plastic tables
10	Bopolu City Peace Hut	Gbarpolu County	2011	Generator, Iron box, Cassava mill, Plastic chairs, Plastic tables
11	Malema Peace Hut	Bomi County	2017	Generator, Iron box, Plastic chairs, Plastic tables
12	Weala Peace Hut	Margibi County	2011	Freezer, Baking utensils, Plastic chairs
13	Totota Peace Hut	Bong County	2010	Rice mill, Freezer, Baking utensils, Plastic chairs

Capacity-building

Unlike other support provided to Peace Huts, it was found that all huts benefited from capacity-building (see Annex 2). Interviews at all Peace Huts indicated that members profited from capacity-building supports of different forms over the past nine years. These initiatives provided women with skills in: numeracy and literacy, business development and management, conflict mitigation and management, VSLA

¹⁵ Except otherwise mentioned, the supplies were delivered by UN Women

management, tailoring, baking, and knowledge on natural resource management, among others.

Due to traditional and cultural beliefs and practices, many women, especially in rural Liberia, did not have opportunities to study while growing up. Lack of education is, therefore, a binding constraint to rural women powering their ways out of poverty. To address this, UN Women and other UN agencies developed and delivered tailored numeracy and literacy trainings to women in Peace Huts in order to help them build basic skills in reading and writing. In 2011, an evaluation conducted by UN Women found that adult literacy programmes supported by UN agencies helped tremendously boost the confidence of women, who, among other things, learned to write their own names and sign forms, instead of using thumbprints on documents. These outcomes were strongly validated by women during this study. In a FGD in Edina, Emma B. Gargar said:

“I no longer depend on my children to write for me. I am now able to write my name, sign documents and take records of my business activities every day.”

- Emma B. Gargar

During the period under review, UN Women invested heavily in training women on financial literacy, VSLA formation and management and business development and management. These trainings were generally intended to enhance women's capacities for income generation in order to improve their livelihoods. Through the business development training, for instance, women learned the definition of a business, why people do business, how to succeed in business and how to expand a business, as well as risks and causes of business breakdowns.

Respondents in this research indicated that VSLAs introduced by UN Women are playing critical roles in empowering women within Peace Huts. A VSLA is a group of self-selected members of about 15 to 30 persons who agree to contribute regularly to a joint fund. To help the fund grow, members are permitted to borrow and pay back to the institution with interest. On pay-out dates members receive their shares with accumulated interest. VSLAs also set aside social funds that can be used in case of emergencies¹⁶.

Though saving clubs previously existed in rural Liberia in the form of susu clubs and credit unions, the introduction of VSLAs within Peace Huts greatly increased access to finance and financial services in intervention communities. Prior to the commencement of saving, UN Women trained women on the VSLA concept and how to manage the association. Additionally, UN Women provided cash boxes and stationery to Peace Huts for the operationalization of VSLAs.

VSLAs are empowering women in several ways, including to: pay for and provide school uniforms, material and other items for their children; contribute to settling medical bills; and, crucially, help them start and expand small businesses.

In addition to financial literacy, Peace Hut women benefited immensely from capacity-building in the area of conflict mediation and resolution. UN agencies worked with partners to develop and deliver tailored trainings on conflict mediation, which provided the skills necessary for women to address GBV and other cases at the community level. Through this training, participants learned about the meaning and causes of conflict, skills on mediation steps and tips on the “do's and don'ts” of conflict mediators.

16 Kanneh, T. 2017. *Report on the Status of Women in Village Savings and Loan Associations in Liberia*

Specialized leadership trainings were conducted for Peace Hut leaders, specifically to enhance their skills to lead the process of conflict mediation and resolution, as well as to provide overall leadership. Training content covered the definition of leadership, bad and good habits of a leader and the roles and responsibilities of a leader. Women who benefited from these trainings are utilizing their skills to manage Peace Huts and VSLAs, and to settle gender-based conflicts within their communities.

Other trainings provided to Peace Huts were mostly skills-based, in order to provide women with skills for generating income. These included trainings in tailoring, baking, cosmetology and soap making. For instance, sewing machines were provided to select Peace Huts that received training in tailoring, including Schefflin, which is located along the Monrovia-Roberts International Airport Highway.

In 2012, UN Women launched a tailoring programme in Schefflin. A total of 42 women enrolled, and 35 graduated. During a FGD, participants noted that seven graduates are currently training other women who didn't participate in the initial programme. They added that two women have been able to buy sewing machines from the income they generated, and were providing services to community members, including the training of new Peace Hut members.

Awareness on women's rights

Liberia is a signatory to many international and regional instruments that seek to protect and promote the rights of women. These include the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and its Optional Protocol, the United Nations Declaration on Violence against Women (1993), the Beijing Platform for Action (1995), the African Charter on Human and People's Rights, its Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa and the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (2004)¹⁷. At the national level, the GOL has domesticated these instruments through a National Gender Policy (2009, revised in 2018) as a guide towards achieving gender equity and realisation of women's empowerment.

In spite of the above commitments, violation of women's rights remains prevalent at the community level¹⁸. As a first step to empowering women to protect themselves, they need to be fully aware of the rights of women that are protected by state laws and international instruments.

In order to achieve this, UN Women educated Peace Hut women about their rights, beginning with the notion that all humans have equal rights. Women were exposed to the concept that human rights are universal entitlements, not privileges, and that violations of women's rights are violations of human rights. Women were also made aware that both Liberian laws and international human right instruments guarantee women the right to education, property, decision-making, freedom of expression and the right to life, liberty and security of the person.

Women also benefited from trainings related to GBV. They were trained on the causes, forms and consequences of GBV, and the pathways to follow in responding to incidents of SGBV. In order to link women to other stakeholders along the GBV referrer pathway, in 2012 UN Women initiated a programme that linked Peace Huts to the LNP.

Through this medium, the LNP works with Peace Huts to respond to crimes and

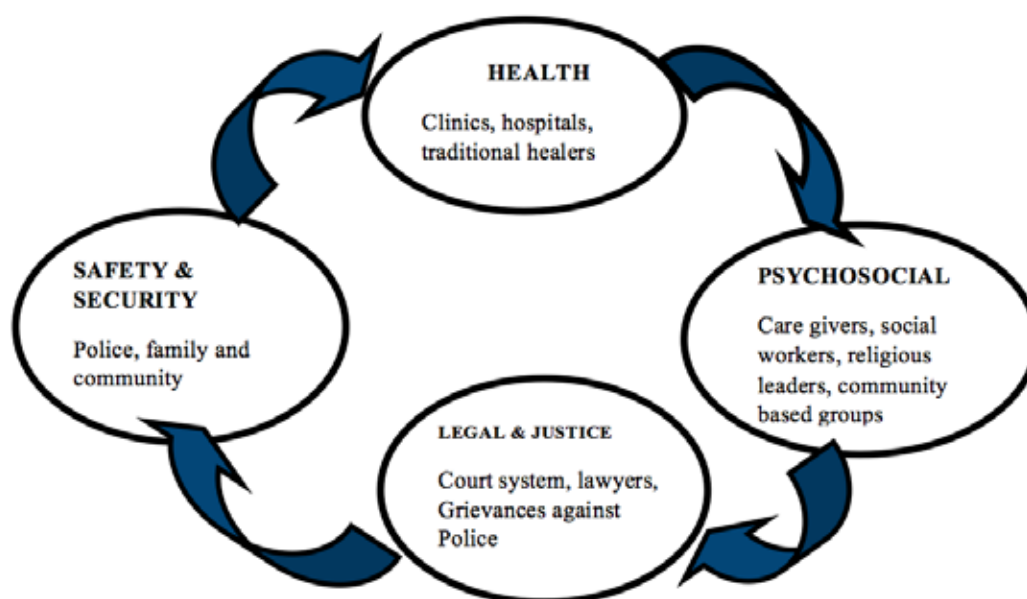
17 Gawaya, R. (2015) *Mid-term Review of the Liberia National Gender Policy*.

18 The Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MGCSP)'s statistics indicates that 462 cases of GBV were reported across Liberia from January – March, 2018. Of the total cases recorded, rape accounted for 61 per cent; physical assault/domestic violence constituted 15.4 per cent; sexual assault accounted for 16 per cent, while denial of resources constituted 5 per cent.

violence against women (VAW). In support of this initiative, for instance, a free hotline was established between the police and Peace Hut in Weala to enable women to call the police, and each other, without charge.

Peace Hut women in Weala were instructed to alert police when any type of security problem was brewing, including domestic violence and other types of violence against women and girls. Participants in a FGD in Weala indicated that this initiative helped cement relations between the Peace Hut and the LNP, and increased the referral of GBV cases to police. They noted that this improved relationship encouraged them to quickly respond to incidents of GBV by reporting cases to the police.

FIGURE 3: SGBV REFERRER PATHWAY



The GBV referrer pathway (see Figure 3) that UN Women and its partners used to train Peace Hut women proved to be a useful guide in responding to VAW.

During FGDs and KIIs, Peace Hut women explained that they used the above referrer pathway to respond to incidents of GBV. In instances where perpetrators of violence against women opted not to honour the mediatory role of Peace Huts in settling cases (such as wife beating, neglect of responsibility by men, etc.) the cases were referred to the police for onward referrer to other law enforcement institutions if necessary. In Gbogeezay, it was revealed that a man who beat his wife and refused to submit to the Peace Hut’s intervention was referred to the police, who arrested the man and forced him to submit to due process.

Across all communities visited, it was reported that the presence of Peace Huts and the work of women has reduced incidents of GBV. In some communities, it was learned that “male gender champions”, men trained by UN Women to contribute to protecting the rights of women and help eliminate VAW in their communities, are playing critical roles in fighting VAW.

Around 2013, UN Women, in collaboration with other partners, developed modules and trained men as gender champions so they could work with women on VAW. The training exposed male gender champions to the rights of women, and provided them with knowledge and skills on how to prevent and protect women from violence.

The case of Winston, and many other male gender champions interviewed,

demonstrates how effective it has been to work with men in reducing VAW. Initially, the training transforms the men themselves from perpetrators to defenders of women's rights. It then capacitates them to work with women in combating VAW.

Like Winston, other male gender champions continue to work with women to prevent VAW, and respond when the rights of women and girls are violated. In the case of Mr. Amos, he went beyond sensitizing his fellow men on women's rights to ensuring that a rapist in Nimba County would face justice.

BOX 1: PERSONAL STORY OF A MALE 'GENDER CHAMPION'

Winston was trained as a male 'gender champion' in Gnyonyee Tarr in 2015. In an interview, he explained that during the training, conducted by the Women in Peace Building Network (WIPNET), he learned about the rights of women, mutual respect for married couples, GBV, and how to settle cases of violence against women. Said Winston, "In the training, I learned not to beat my wife. I learned that a woman is a partner, and not a slave. I learned about domestic violence and how facial expressions can scare women and children at home. I also learned about rape: its causes, how to prevent and report rape cases and how to prevent teenage pregnancy." In reporting rape cases, Winston was taught how to code and report different types of rape cases: 01 for statutory rape, 02 for gang rape, etc.

Winston indicated that the training was his first exposure to the rights of women. "Through this training, I got to know that women have rights, which I never knew before the training," he stressed. He further noted, "The training absolutely changed my behaviour towards women. I now know how to talk

to women, listen to their issues and resolve cases that affect them. This gender champion job has changed my name in the community, and everyone now calls me "human rights".

Winston works with the Peace Hut women in his town to minimize and respond to GBV/SGBV. He notes that when men work with women on these issues, other men often fear that women have the backing of men. "The men will also help to sensitize their fellow men on GBV/SGBV issues with more vigour," he said.

In discharging his duties, Winston works with women to ensure that perpetrators of violence against women are brought to justice. He explained how he once helped persuade a man who beat his wife and escaped police arrest to return to town and turn himself in. The man was arrested and imprisoned for his action. Winston noted that the man returned to the community after serving his sentence and always advises his friends not to beat their wives.

BOX 2: GENDER CHAMPION COMPELS RAPIST TO FACE JUSTICE

Mr. Amos S. Dolo was trained as a male "gender champion" by UN Women in Ganta, Nimba County. In an interview he mentioned that one thing he learned in the training was the right of women to own property, a fact that changed his own stance on property ownership. "Like now, whatever property I own, I have put the name of my wife and children on those properties," he noted. Mr. Dolo added that he also learned that women have other rights and should not be subjected to any form of violence.

Mr. Dolo noted that in 2018 a Sierra Leonean man raped a girl after forcing her into his room. The

case was reported to chiefs within the community. With his knowledge on SGBV referrals, Mr. Dolo reported the case to local police, who referred the girl to a clinic for treatment.

After committing the act, the rapist escaped Ganta. Mr. Dolo took up the challenge to find the man and traced him to Yekepa, a mining town along the Guinea-Liberia border. Upon finding him, he asked police to arrest the man. They did, and he was imprisoned at the Yekepa Police Station to face justice for raping the girl.

Health education

Over the years, Peace Hut women have also benefited from health education provided by UN agencies. This has been delivered through trainings on SGBV and other issues that also raised awareness of women's health issues. Through these initiatives, women were sensitized on the Human immunodeficiency virus infection and acquired Immune deficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) and other forms of sexually transmitted diseases, reproductive health and teenage pregnancy, among other issues.

During the Ebola outbreak in 2014-2015, UN Women and other UN agencies supported Peace Huts in raising awareness in their communities, and provided sanitation and hygiene kits to huts for use at the household level. Peace Huts were also used as platforms for the distribution of Ebola prevention kits. In a 2017 study conducted on the impacts of Ebola on VSLAs, 63 per cent of VSLA leaders asserted that their institutions played major roles in ending the spread of Ebola in their communities as a result of awareness campaigns undertaken by Peace Huts¹⁹.



Evon Gbarduo

“We now plan to expand our agriculture operations by offering our services in the community to clear and plant gardens at a small cost. This we believe, will bring in more income.”

- Evon Gbarduo, the Chairperson of the group.

Access to finance

According to women who participated in FGDs, the integration of VSLAs into Peace Huts has been the most impactful support provided by UN Women since the platforms were created, as it allowed the huts to raise capital and provide access to finance.

VSLAs provide different financial services to their members. By issuing shares, they allow members to save while they also provide loans to members, which are repaid with interest. VSLAs also grant loans to non-members in instances where members are available to serve as guarantors.

Prior to the integration of VSLAs into Peace Huts, UN Women provided trainings on the VSLA methodology at each hut. UN Women also distributed cash boxes and stationery, including ledgers and pens, for the running of the associations. In a select few cases, including in Bomi Country, UN Women provided loans to VSLAs in order to recapitalize VSLAs after the Ebola crisis. These cash injections increased the holdings of VSLAs, providing them with fiscal space for granting loans to individual members.

In late 2018, UN Women commissioned a study that assessed the financial sustainability of 37 Peace Huts. It assessed revenue generation, expenditure, financial management systems and financial sustainability risks. Additionally, the study developed financial sustainability

plans that lay out a framework on how Peace Huts can diversify sources of revenue in order to remain sustainable.

Many of the Peace Huts have taken the recommendations on improving their financial sustainability in earnest and are engaged in various economic activities

¹⁹ UN Women (2017) *Study on the Status of Women in VSLAs*

to increase their income. The Tiama Peace Hut in Bissa, Grand Gedeh is one such Peace Hut, its members are actively engaged in cassava and rice farming which is bringing in extra income for their VSLA.

Evolution of Peace Huts into a national CSO

Since 2009, Peace Huts have evolved into platforms that have filled critical gaps in terms of consolidating peace, facilitating reconciliation and mediation, and promoting women's empowerment at the community level. These platforms are, however, not integrated into national peace-building mechanisms and initiatives. To address this, in addition to financially sustaining the network of Peace Huts across the country, UN Women, in collaboration with the Association of Female Lawyers of Liberia (AFELL), worked with all Peace Huts in 2018 to formally register a national body that represents their interests²⁰.

With guidance and support from AFELL, Peace Huts developed a constitution that lays out the administrative structure, governance and operational framework of the national CSO. On 25-27 October 2018, representatives of Peace Huts gathered in Gbarnga, Bong County, to validate the draft constitution and elect a national leadership. The CSO will be essential for leading advocacy at the national and sub-national levels for the inclusion of Peace Huts in national peacebuilding and women's empowerment initiatives.

3.2 RESEARCH QUESTION 2: WHAT WORKED AND WHAT DIDN'T WORK? WHAT WERE KEY FACTORS FOR SUCCESS? WHAT COULD HAVE BEEN DIFFERENT AND WHY?

FGDs and KIs conducted with Peace Hut women indicated that interventions made by UN Women and other UN agencies had mixed success. Overall, respondents' views were that the initiative has been life-changing for many women across communities of intervention. Table 3 below presents details on what worked and what didn't work at a sample of Peace Huts.

As presented in Table 3 (opposite), investments in the construction of Peace Hut structures were largely successful, with a few exceptions (see Annex 3). Also, capacity-building initiatives mostly achieved their intended results. It was revealed that Peace Hut women are utilizing their conflict mediation skills in resolving conflicts and, thereby, contributing to peacebuilding at the community level. Similarly, the education of women about their rights was said to be a major factor in empowering women to defend their individual rights and those of other women.

The study found that numeracy and literacy programmes, combined with business development and management trainings, were extremely useful in enabling women to start businesses, which are their sources of income for VSLA share contributions.

The reduction in incidents of GBV stands out in all intervention communities. The work of Peace Huts has transformed VAW from being individualized to being collective. Unlike in the past, when victims of GBV had to seek justice individually, Peace Huts respond to GBV incidents as a body — by utilizing collective resources to deter and respond to violence against any single woman. Additionally, the inclusion of men in the fight against GBV has shown to be an effective strategy in addressing GBV at the community level.

The Peace Hut framework has brought women under a single platform, where they have been educated about their rights and provided literacy, numeracy and entrepreneurial skills. These initiatives were found to be effective in empowering

²⁰ In early 2019, the Peace Huts were legally registered as a CSO.

TABLE 3: EXAMPLES OF WHAT WORKED AND WHAT DIDN'T WORK AT SELECT PEACE HUTS

NO	PEACE HUT	WHAT WORKED?	WHAT DIDN'T WORK?
1	Balconi Peace Hut	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women's involvement in peacebuilding has worked very well; • The VSLA introduced by UN Women is working very well; • Business development training provided to women was successful; • Women's rights and GBV trainings and awareness-raising have helped women stand up protect their rights and fight GBV. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tailoring training conducted by Children Smile was not completed; • Some trainees don't know how to operate sewing machines; • Fish preservation training was not properly done by Children Smile.
2	Gaynimah Peace Hut	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VSLA is working very well; • Peace hut women are contributing to making peace; • GBV has fallen in the community. 	
3	Bowein Peace Hut	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loan provided by UN Women helped empower women; • Peace hut is contributing to making peace; • VSLA is working very well; • Women are more involved in agriculture as a result of the Peace hut; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited number of women benefited from the adult literacy program
4	Golodee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction of Peace Hut was successful; • Adult literacy program worked well; • Peace hut is helping to resolve conflicts; • Business development training helped women to start their own businesses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult literacy program didn't benefit all who were interested in it.
5	Edina	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VSLA has been very successful; • Violence against women has fallen; • Business training has helped women start and manage businesses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peace hut is not being used by the women because it's too far from the town and located in a cemetery; • Former city mayor selected cassava mill as a priority without the involvement of women; • The mill is less useful because people mostly make fufu out of cassava rather than gari.
6	Little Bassa Peace Hut	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women's knowledge on their rights has increased; • The VSLA and business development training helped women save money and start businesses; • The chairs donated by UN Women are used during meetings; • GBV has fallen in the community due to the work of the Peace Hut. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One generator delivered by UN Women had a battery problem
7	Boegeezay Peace Hut	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VLSA is working perfectly and providing loans to women; • Women are educated about their rights; • GBV has fallen in the community; • Business skills' training was successful. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peace hut structure was not completed and all materials got damaged.
8	Gio Town Peace Hut	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women have been educated on their rights; • Women are educated about HIV/AIDS; • Women are making peace in the community; • The Peace Hut knows how to refer GBV cases to the police and other authorities; • Adult literacy program worked well; • Business development training was very useful and women are applying the skills learned. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Peace Hut structure was constructed in the community.
9	Cestos City Peace Hut	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VSLA, women rights and business development trainings worked very well; • Peace hut is making peace in the city; • Women know the procedure for referring GBV cases to the police. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction of the Peace Hut structure was abandoned by the contractor.
10	Barraken Peace Hut	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VSLA was successful and working effectively. 	

women. For instance, through the VSLAs, women have been able to establish institutions that provide access to finance and financial services and are serving as sources of capital for investments at the community level. In a country that is hugely unbanked, VSLAs are playing extremely important roles in providing access to finance for women to start or expand businesses.

The approach to delivering trainings to Peace Hut women was found to be a factor in the huts' success. Business development and management trainings were found to have built on the foundations of basic literacy and numeracy trainings provided to women through adult literacy programmes.

In spite of the achievements, a number of interventions fell short of achieving the intended results. These interventions would have been impactful had they been done differently. These limitations are detailed below:

Lack of stakeholder involvement in decision-making: In Edina, a cassava mill was deployed for processing cassava into gari, but the study found that no detailed consultation was done beforehand to assess the viability of the initiative. Though Edina produces a lot of cassava, much of it is processed into fufu and not gari, so the mill was not useful. Lack of stakeholder consultation in making this decision led to this poor outcome. A FGD revealed that the decision to prioritize the cassava mill was made solely by the former city mayor.

No training of local technicians for machines supplied to Peace Huts: A number of rice and cassava mills, generators and freezers were supplied to Peace Huts without training local technicians for their future maintenance. Also, there were no links created between private-sector service providers and huts. For sustainability purposes, it would have been helpful for UN Women to establish links between the sellers of these products and Peace Huts in order to enable the huts to have access to spare parts and maintenance services. During FGDs, women indicated that a number of the machines had broken down due to lack of routine maintenance and repairs.

Limited oversight on projects implemented by sub-implementing partners: The study found instances where interventions were unsuccessful due to lack of commitment on the part of sub-implementing partners. For instance, the contractor hired to construct the Peace Hut in Boegeezay abandoned the assignment after buying several construction materials and delivering them to the town. These, and other failures, would have been tracked and remedied if UN Women had at the time a robust monitoring system in place to identify and remedy early signs of poor performance.

In other instances, sewing machines delivered by Children Smile for tailoring trainings were found upon arrival to be mostly defective. In Schefflin, all 25 sewing machines delivered by Children Smile were not working. This limited the effectiveness of the training programme.

As the Peace Hut initiative operated with a country-wide scope, UN Women should have strengthened its performance management systems in order to closely track the delivery of services by sub-implementing partners. This could have helped increase the efficiency of resource utilization in improving the welfare of its beneficiaries.

4. SUSTAINABILITY OF PEACE HUT INITIATIVES

The work of Peace Huts in peacebuilding and women's empowerment is well known in communities where huts are located. Peace huts deliver a range of services that

benefit not only their own members, but the wider host communities. Delivery of these services is being sustained through individual member contributions.

Beyond the supports provided to Peace Huts by development agencies, their day-to-day operations are funded through own-source revenue generated by members. To cover operational expenses, Peace Hut members contribute social funds (ranging from \$10 Liberian Dollars – \$40.00 Liberian dollars) to cover routine expenses. In addition to social funds, members of some Peace Huts contribute weekly and monthly dues to sustain the operations²¹.

At the local level, KIIs were conducted with county superintendents, commissioners and town chiefs to assess the feasibility of identifying funding opportunities for Peace Huts. It was found that there are no existing frameworks at the sub-national level that provide financial support to Peace Huts. Though public funds exist, such as county and social development funds²², Peace Huts do not benefit from these.

The short- to medium-term sustainability of Peace Huts depends largely on the running of VSLAs. During interviews, Peace Hut members indicated that they remain committed to contributing social funds and dues, which are used to pay the running costs of Peace Huts. The viability of VSLAs, however, depends mostly on the ability of individual members to purchase shares in the long run.

After several years of operation, members were confident that they can continue operating Peace Huts and thereby further contribute to peacebuilding and women's empowerment. The study also found that beneficiary women have acquired knowledge and skills that they will continue to use to sustain their individual livelihoods. However, with respect to sustaining Peace Hut structures (as presented in Annex 3), Peace Hut women lack the capacity to maintain and replace structures, or to maintain machines that were delivered by UN agencies, let alone to acquire these assets by themselves.

5. IMPACTS OF PEACE HUT INITIATIVES

5.1 PEACEBUILDING

The contribution of Peace Huts to peacebuilding and conflict resolution was widely acknowledged by stakeholders at the community level. In assessing the roles Peace Huts play in resolving household domestic conflicts and other forms of conflicts, interviews were conducted with town chiefs, chairladies, district commissioners and county superintendents.

During FGDs with women, it was revealed that Peace Hut leaders have been effective over the years in mediating and resolving conflicts within households. When Peace Huts were established, some men refused to recognize them as platforms for resolving domestic conflicts. However, this has changed over the years due to awareness created by women and the positive records of Peace Huts in peacefully resolving conflicts.

In part, the recognition and acceptance of Peace Huts as conflict-resolution platforms were found to be a result of close collaboration between hut leaders and authorities at the town level. In an interview, the town chief of Tiapa noted that his leadership works closely with the Peace Hut. He added that his leadership has a policy on ensuring that all citizens respect and collaborate with hut leaders in

21 UN Women, (2018) *Financial Sustainability Study*

22 Liberia's central government allocates US\$200,000 every fiscal year to each of the 15 counties as county development funds. Social development funds are paid to select counties by concession companies for their operations in host counties.

resolving cases that are taken to the Peace Hut by women. The town chief revealed that the hut has done a great job in reducing the volume of domestic cases that reach his office for resolution.

The study also found that because Peace Huts resolve issues without charging fees, like courts, local chiefs and the police, they have grown to be effective conflict-resolution institutions. Peace huts continue to grow as alternative conflict-resolution models to traditional, local judicial institutions. In communities that are far from courts and don't have police offices, Peace Huts are filling critical gaps in responding to VAW.

By resolving domestic conflicts and other types of cases, Peace Huts are contributing to building and sustaining peace within households, and by extension, within communities. This was validated by local authorities, such as the Town Chief of Beleyallah:

“Since the Peace Hut started operating in this town, the number of cases that are brought to the town chief by women has reduced greatly. This is because the women in the Peace Hut have been trained to settle conflicts between husbands and their wives, and they are doing a great job.”

- Peter S. Flomo

5.2 WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

Economic empowerment of women within Peace Huts is the result of varying outcomes of a number of interventions. As has been indicated, literacy and numeracy trainings provided to women, the majority of who have never had formal education, laid the foundation for women to empower themselves economically.

Building on the numeracy and literacy skills they acquired, Peace Hut women enrolled in VSLAs and began to contribute shares. Loan schemes of the VSLAs provided women access to capital to begin new income-generating activities or expand existing ones. Though VSLAs addressed the constraint of access to finance, many women found it difficult to effectively manage businesses due to limited knowledge. To remedy this, women were trained in business development and management, which provided them skills in effectively running their micro-enterprises.

As a result of the above investments, many Peace Hut women have been able to start and expand their businesses. In Schefflin, focus group discussants explained that prior to UN Women's interventions, the only source of income for women was rock crushing. However, after years of exposure to trainings, many of the women who joined the Peace Hut started businesses and left the rock crusher. One member of the Schefflin hut revealed that she has been able to purchase a plot of land from the earnings of the business she started after attending UN Women's business development training.

In most of the Peace Hut VSLAs, the women save 50–500 Liberian dollars every week. These savings are loaned out to members at a small interest ranging from 5% -10% depending on the need. Embedded in the VSLA is a 20% social fund, which is used to support members in difficult times such as sickness or bereavement.

Beyond individual empowerment initiatives, some Peace Huts are creatively utilizing resources to generate additional income that empowers their members. In Malema,

Peace Hut women are employing the generator provided by UN Women to supply electricity to households in their town. The Peace Hut uses the additional revenue to purchase mattresses, which it rents for a fee. Funds generated from renting mattresses are fed back into the VSLA and loaned to members for investment.

Due to the micro nature of the businesses that most Peace Hut women are engaged in, there are substantial vulnerabilities to their long-term sustainability and lack of potential to grow them into more sustainable enterprises. However, in the short- to medium-term, women are being empowered by generating money from these businesses to buy VSLA shares whose are distributed at the end of each year.

Women revealed that when VSLA profits are distributed annually, they use the money to address basic household needs, like clothing for children, payment of school fees and payment of rents for kids living in Monrovia, as well as to reinvest in existing businesses. Many women said that depending on the amount they accumulate at the end of the year, they invest in land or build houses.

5.3 WOMEN'S PROTECTION

The study revealed that incidents of GBV were uniformly reported to have declined in the 36 Peace Hut communities visited. This was attributed to a number of factors.

Firstly, it was indicated that though Peace Huts emerged out of a peacebuilding framework, training provided to women about their rights, GBV, mediation and leadership contributed greatly to empowering Peace Huts to address issues faced by women. In addition, women who were trained about their rights were capacitated to demand respect for those rights within their households.

Also, the inclusion of men in the fight against GBV proved to be largely successful. Men who were trained as gender champions acquired knowledge about the rights of women and the need to respect and uphold these rights. The masculinity training transformed gender champions from violators of women's rights to protectors of such rights, which helped reduce incidents of GBV in communities.

General awareness within communities also played a role in educating people on the rights of women. FGDs with Peace Hut women revealed that they routinely raise awareness about women's rights and GBV issues in town meetings.

It was revealed by a number of peace huts that in addition to raising awareness on gender issues, they have extended awareness campaigns to towns and villages close by. Building on the education of women and men on the rights of women and the consequences of GBV on women and girls, the adjudication of cases brought by victims of GBV serves as a deterrent to perpetrators. In instances where Peace Huts do not find amicable settlements to cases brought before them, they refer such cases to the police for redress.

The combination of trainings, awareness-raising activities and adjudication of GBV cases all culminated in reduction of GBV incidents in Peace Hut communities. Collectively, these interventions contributed to influencing peoples' knowledge and attitudes towards women in intervention communities.

The reduction in violence against women in beneficiary communities has improved women's personal security, both within their households and within the larger communities. Women revealed that they feel much more secure due to the

“The peace hut trained all members and the members shared their experiences with the community and the leaders of the community. The leaders came to know about women's rights and have accepted it.”

- Esther Dolo

recognition and protection of their rights by their partners and the readiness of Peace Huts to respond when their rights are violated.

5.4 PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING

Participation of women in decision-making is critical in ensuring that women's voices are heard and allowed to influence decisions that affect both men and women. Cultural and traditional practices, especially in rural Liberia, serve as a barrier to women's participation in decision-making at both household and community levels. However, interviews with Peace Hut women revealed that women have increased their participation in making decisions within their households and in the community.

The study found that at the household level, the ability of women to generate income and contribute to household welfare has increased their influence and stake in household decision-making. Through the human rights trainings, women have been educated on their rights, and now demand and protect these rights within households, as reflected in the quotes below:

"In the past, my husband never used to consult me on anything in the home; Now, things have changed, he normally sits with me and we discuss and agree on what to do because he knows that I have the ability to contribute because the small business I am doing."

- Massa Smith, Bowein Peace Hut

"We know our rights and do not allow even our husbands to violate these rights... As for me, my husband knows that if I can lead over 30 women, I have the ability to manage our home, so he respects me for that. For everything that happens in our home, including which school our children should attend, I have to agree with him before we can go ahead with such a decision."

- Musu Massaquoio, Bopolu Peace Hut

The study also found that women's participation in community meetings on governance and the utilization of community resources has increased greatly. The biggest factor in this change is women's ability to speak out during meetings. Interviews revealed that Peace Hut women acquired public speaking skills from the numerous workshops that they participated in over the years.

Across communities visited, it was reported that the Peace Huts have helped improve women's participation in local decision-making. In an interview, the town chief of Yeala averred that since the Peace Hut was established, women in his community have been very vocal and forceful in demanding their rights:

"Unlike the past when women in Liberia never had rights to their fathers' properties, women in Yeala have full rights to land and other properties that are owned by their fathers." He also mentioned that, "The Peace Hut women are the ones educating other women on their rights and representing the interest of all women during meetings."

- Rufus M. Sumo

The integrated approach to empowering Peace Hut women, through human rights trainings and economic empowerment interventions like VSLAs and entrepreneurial skills-building, was found to have led to improved participation of women in decision-making at the household and community levels.



Mamie Kollie and Mama Jah discussing their Peace Hut's business plan. (Photo credit: (Photo credit: UN RCO Liberia/Doreen Kansime 2019).

“When the men know you have some money of your own, and they are more respectful,” Mama Jah, a member of the Bopoplu Peace Hut in Gbarpolu County shares while her friend and Chair of the same Peace hut, Mamie Kollie adds that; “the Peace Huts have also changed us on a personal level. I am more confident, I can speak up, I can mediate conflicts in the community, I can counsel, and I can also train. Through the VSLA I can support my family.”

6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 CONCLUSIONS

The intent of this study was to provide an account of support that UN Women has provided to Peace Huts from 2009 to 2018. As documented throughout the report, peace huts benefited from a broad range of services that contributed to enhancing the roles of women in peacebuilding, empowering them economically, and increasing their roles in decision-making within their communities. The communities recognized and accepted Peace Huts as conflict-resolution platforms as a result of close collaboration between peace hut leaderships and local authorities at the town level.

Regionally and globally, Liberia's Peace Huts are considered an example of an innovative conflict resolution mechanism. The huts are less about a community infrastructure — the physical buildings — than about supporting and strengthening community dynamics and women's roles in fostering dialogue, mediation, development and seeking justice. Peace Huts have proven to be a viable initiative for addressing perspectives on peacebuilding, including past, present and future initiatives.

The integrated approach used to provide support to Peace Huts has contributed to the achievement of fruitful results at the local level. Peace huts have become a peacebuilding and conflict resolution mechanism as well as powerful platforms for the elimination of SGBV and the strengthening of women's leadership and economic empowerment.

Investing in the economic empowerment of Liberian women is crucial for achieving gender equality, minimizing poverty and building peaceful and inclusive communities across the country. This study found that the integrated approach to empowering Peace Hut women through training in human rights, peacebuilding

and business development and management, among others, created a more empowering environment for women. These integrated interventions were outcomes of initiatives jointly designed and implemented by UN agencies under the 'One UN' platform, and demonstrate that integrated approaches to women's empowerment are more likely to have positive outcomes than intervention in silos.

The Peace Hut platform provides a unique opportunity for designing and implementing women's empowerment programmes in the community. It has established institutional frameworks that are used in assessing the needs of women and designing context-specific interventions to respond to such needs in different communities. Additionally, the unification of women under this platform enables them to pool resources to empower themselves. For instance, the VSLAs are shown to have played key roles in providing women access to finance for starting and expanding businesses. Peace Huts have also been helpful in developing social capital for women, as they represent networks of relationships among women in intervention communities, which are enabling women to contribute to societies that function effectively.

Though many interventions were found to have been successful within individual communities, it was observed that a number of them were less impactful due to poor performance of sub-implementing partners contracted by UN Women and other agencies. The study found that a number of construction works were abandoned, and materials delivered for skill trainings were found to be defective upon delivery. These deprived women of the opportunities to acquire desperately needed life skills to empower themselves.

In terms of sustainability, it was found that there are no funding opportunities available at either national or sub-national levels to sustain the operations of Peace Huts: the sustainability of these platforms depends solely on the contributions of their members. In the absence of external support though, Peace Hut women showed determination to sustain the operation of their huts. To support this, UN Women supported the development of financial sustainability plans for 37 Peace Huts, which provide guidance on income diversification and sustainability.

At the time of writing this study, the GOL was in the process of developing the second phase of the National Action Plan on Women Peace and Security, which is intended to provide a coordination mechanism to link local practices, experiences and lessons learned with national structures, as well as to facilitate increased lesson sharing. This will be critical for sustaining investments made in Peace Huts at the community level.

6.2 RESEARCH QUESTION 3: WHAT ARE KEY RECOMMENDATIONS?

The report proposes a number of recommendations for sustaining the empowerment of women under the Peace Hut platform. Implementation of the recommendations will require efforts from different stakeholders, including national and local governments, development agencies and Peace Hut women. The recommendations are thus directed at the selected stakeholders, as presented below.

Government of Liberia

It is recommended that the GOL:

1. Ensure that gender is adequately mainstreamed in all national, sectoral and sub-national development strategies, plans and

policies in order to make sure that development is inclusive and its outcomes benefit all, leaving no one behind.

2. Develop a framework for peacebuilding and include community-level frameworks like Peace Huts for mitigating and resolving conflicts at the grassroots level.
3. Ensure that existing legislation and regulations that protect women against violence are enforced at all levels.
4. Ensure that funds are allocated to Liberia's gender machinery for implementation of the National Gender Policy and the National Action Plan on Women Peace and Security.
5. Continue to collaborate with development partners in order to ensure that donor interventions are well coordinated across the country.

UN agencies

It is recommended that UN agencies:

1. Continue to provide resources and technical support to the GOL in addressing gender inequality across sectors.
2. Continue to utilize their specialized skills in designing and implementing joint gender equality and women's empowerment initiatives.
3. Put in place robust monitoring systems that ensure effective implementation of interventions at the community level, including those of sub-implementing partners, in order to improve outcomes.
4. Train technicians at the community level to repair and maintain machines (such as rice and cassava mills) or link Peace Huts to private-sector entities that can provide repair and maintenance services for machines.
5. Conduct detailed market research studies to determine the profitability of income-generating interventions prior to supplying machines and other forms of support.
6. Commission an empirical study that assesses the impacts of Peace Huts by comparing Peace Hut communities to non-intervention communities.

Peace Huts

It is recommended that Peace Huts:

1. Discontinue the practice of "contributing-and-sharing" funds at the end of the year, and instead invest the capital they generate through VSLAs into new businesses that will produce interest for all members, in order to achieve long-term sustainability and reduce the dependence of VSLAs on individual shares.
2. Conduct market analysis and develop business plans that will guide their investments in new businesses.
3. Improve and strengthen relationships with local government institutions at the community level.

4. Invest in the maintenance of Peace Hut structures, machines and other supplies provided by donor agencies.
5. Work towards operationalizing the national CSO and advocate for the recognition and integration of Peace Huts in national peacebuilding and women's empowerment initiatives.

ANNEX 1: LIST OF KEY INFORMANTS INTERVIEWED

NO	NAME	POSITION	PLACE OF INTERVIEW
1	Mr. Rufus M. Sumo	Town Chief	Yeala
2	Hon. George A. Prowd	Superintendent, Maryland County	Harper
3	Mr. Edwin Wadeh	Town Chief	Barreken
4	Mrs. Mary S. Allison	Chairlady	Barreken
5	Mr. Joe K. Williams	Town Chief	Dorrobo
6	Ms. Elizabeth Q. Williams	Chairlady	Dorrobo
7	Mr. Godfred Weah	Administrative Assistant	Fish Town
8	Mr. Paul S.T. Brooks	Acting Superintendent, River Gee County	Fish Town
9	Mr. Andy K. Tullah	Town Chief	Warteken
10	Mr. Emmerson G. Gorwu	Town Chief	Zia Town
11	Mr. Chester Zarway	Male Gender Champion	Polar Town
12	Mr. Joseph G. Vah	Town Chief	Zuntou
13	Mr. James Vaye	Gender Champion	Zuntou
14	Mr. Asmon Zarwlo	Town Chief	Tiapa
15	Mrs. Annie Wonda	Chairlady	Tiapa
16	Mrs. Ma Yei Dahn	Chairlady	Ganta
17	Mrs. Nau K. Baar	Quarter Chief	Ganta
18	Mr. Amos S. Dolo	Male Gender Champion	Ganta
19	Hon. Clinton L. Brown	Totota City Mayor	Totota
20	Mrs. Hawa Kango	Peace Hut Secretary	Weala
21	Mr. Fayia Borbor	Town Chief	Weala
22	Mr. Johnny David	Town Chief	Gbengben Town
23	Mrs. Rebecca May	Assistant Town Chief	Boegeezay
24	Mr. Emmanuel T. Mandeh	Male Gender Champion	Boegeezay
25	Mr. Solomon W. Kpleh	Town Chief	Gio Town
26	Mrs. Esther Z. Garmondeh	Chairlady	Gio Town
27	Mr. Paul Weh	City Mayor	Cestos City
28	Mr. Eric Peterson	Administrative Assistant	Cestos City
29	Mr. Isaac B. William	Information Officer	Cestos City
30	Mrs. Leoninn Gbargbah	Chairlady	Tuzon
31	Mr. Peter S. Flomo	Town Chief	Belleyallah
32	Mr. Vankpanah K. Wymon	Statutory Superintendent	Mawoquellah
33	Mr. Zaikou Kolubah	Chieftom Chairman	Henry's Town
34	Mrs. Weedor Pabai	Chairlady	Bopolu City
35	Mrs. Mammie Massaquoi	Chairlady	Gaynimah
36	Mr. Bassie Kollie	Town Chief	Gaynimah
37	Mr. Gbelley Fallah	Town Chief	Gbarma
38	Mrs. Massa Smith	Chairlady	Dowein
39	Mrs. Jebbeh Samba	Chairlady	Bo Waterside
40	Mr. M. Zinnah Folley	Clan Chief	Malema
41	Mrs. Jenneh Sambolah	Chairlady	Golodee

NO	NAME	POSITION	PLACE OF INTERVIEW
42	Mr. Sam Crayton	Town Chief	Gbonyee Tarr
43	Mr. Winston L. Dolo	Male Gender Champion	Gbonyee Tarr
44	Mrs. Julia Gbar	Chairlady	Gbonyee Tarr
45	Mr. Abel Nyankoon	Town Chief	Balconi
46	Mrs. Jennie Reeves	Chairlady	Balconi
47	Mrs. Mella Gueh	Chairlady	Little Bassa

ANNEX 2: SERVICES RECEIVED BY PEACE HUTS

NO	PEACE HUT	SERVICES RECEIVED
1	Bowein	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peace Hut structure • VSLA training • Cash injection to the VSLA • Literacy and numeracy training • Cassava mill • Cash box • Business development and management training • Conflict management • GBV training
2	Malema Town	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VSLA training • Generator • Business development and management • Conflict management training • GBV training • Human/women's rights training • Leadership training • Community mobilization training
3	Tubmanburg	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VSLA training
4	Golodee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VSLA training • Human/women's rights training • Business development and management training • Conflict management training • GBV training • Literacy and numeracy training
5	Totota	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rice mill • Freezer • Business development and management training • Literacy and numeracy training • Baking utensils • Plastic chairs • Human/women's rights training • GBV training • Health education • VSLA training
6	Mawoquelleh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peace Hut structure • VSLA training • Business development and management training • Conflict management training • Human/women's rights • GBV training
7	Henry Town	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peace Hut structure • VSLA training • Business development and management • Literacy and numeracy training • Human/women's rights • GBV training • Conflict management training
8	Gbarma	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cash box • Conflict management training • Business development and management training • Plastic chairs • Peace hut structure

NO	PEACE HUT	SERVICES RECEIVED	
9	Bopolu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VSLA training • Generator • Literacy and numeracy training • Conflict management training • GBV training • Human/women's rights training • Leadership training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business development and management training • Community mobilization training • Peace Hut structure • Cash box • Cassava mill • Plastic chairs
10	Gaynimah	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VSLA training • Human/women's rights training • Literacy and numeracy training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GBV training • Conflict management training • Business development and management training
11	Belleyella	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VSLA training • Generator • Conflict management training • GBV training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human/women's rights training • Leadership training • Community mobilization training • Business development and management training
12	Little Bassa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peace Hut structure • Business development and management training • Literacy and numeracy training • Generator • Conflict management training • Freezer • Plastic chairs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GBV training • Human/women's rights training • Health education • Plastic tables • Cash box • Fans • Flat screen TV
13	Balconli	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25 sewing machines • Plastic chairs • Freezer • Cash box • Conflict management training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health education • Human/women's rights training • GBV training • Business development and management training • Tailoring training
14	Gio's Town	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VSLA training • Business development and management training • Human/women's rights • Conflict management training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GBV training • Literacy and numeracy training • HIV/AIDS awareness • Health education
15	Edina	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cassava mill • VSLA training • Peace Hut structure • Cash box • Generator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pressing iron • Business development and management training • Conflict management training • Plastic chairs
16	Gbonyee Tar Town	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VSLA training • Generator • Conflict management training • GBV training • Human/women's rights training • Leadership training • Community mobilization training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plastic chairs • Plastic tables • Eating dishes • Flip chart stand • Buckets • Spoons • Cash bo

17	Gbalaken Town	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VSLA training • Human/women's rights • Business development and management training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human/women's rights training • Conflict management training • GBV training • Health education
18	Zai Town	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conflict management training • Peace Hut structure • Health education • Human/women's rights training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GBV training • Business development and management training • Hotline with police
19	Tiama Town	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VSLA training • Generator • Business development and management training • Conflict management training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GBV training • Human/women's rights training • Leadership training • Community mobilization training
20	Polar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Male gender champion training • Conflict management training • Peace Hut structure • Business development and management training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health education • Human/women's rights training • GBV training • Hotline with police
21	Weala	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freezer • Peace Hut structure • Conflict management training • Literacy and numeracy training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baking utensils • Plastic chairs • VSLA training • Hotline with the police
22	Gbengben Town	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VSLA training • Human/women's rights training • GBV training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health education • Literacy and numeracy training
23	Schefflin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peace Hut structure • VSLA training • GBV training • Tailoring training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sewing machines • Business development and management training • Conflict management training
24	Kornia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VSLA training • Human/women's rights training • GBV training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peace Hut structure • Rice mill
25	Yeala	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VSLA training • Human/women's rights training • GBV training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peace Hut structure under construction • Business development and management training
26	Dorrobo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Male gender champion training • Conflict management training • Peace Hut structure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health education • Hotline with police
27	Barrenken	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VSLA training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literacy and numeracy training
28	Zontuo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plastic chairs • Peace Hut structure • Natural resource management training • Plastic tables 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hotline with police • Cash box • 600 bags of rice from WFP • Male gender champion training • Conflict management training
29	Tiapa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11 sewing machines • Cassava processing machine from FAO • Chickens from FAO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seed rice • Cash box • Plastic chairs

30	Ganta Border	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VSLA training • Business development and management training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conflict management training • Human/women's rights • GBV training
31	Kawakein	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VSLA training • Business development and management training • Conflict management training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GBV training • Health education • Human/women's rights training
32	Warteken	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Male gender champion training • Peace Hut structure • VSLA training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hotline with police • GBV training • Conflict management training
33	Cestos City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human/women's rights training • Conflict management training • Hair dressing training • Baking training • Generator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freezer • Cash box • VSLA training • Business development and management training
34	Boegeezay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VSLA training • Human/women's rights training • Business development and management training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incomplete Peace Hut structure ^a GBV training
35	Tuzon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VSLA training • Generator • Conflict management training • GBV training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human/women's rights training • Leadership training • Community mobilization training
36	Bo-waterside	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peace Hut structure • VSLA training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human/women's rights • GBV training

ANNEX 3: PHYSICAL CONDITION OF PEACE HUT STRUCTURES



Little Bassa Peace Hut



Edina Peace Hut



Balconi Hut



Cestus Hut



Gboinyee Tarr Peace Hut



Gboegeezay Peace Hut



Weala Peace Hut



Gbengben Town Peace Hut



Belleyalla Peace Hut



Morlakwelleh Peace Hut



Bopolu Peace Hut



Henry Town Peace Hut



Gbarma Peace Hut



Bowein Peace Hut



Malema Peace Hut



Bo Waterside Peace Hut



Golodee Peace Hut



Polar Peace Hut



Zia Town Peace Hut



Tiama Peace Hut



Warteken Peace Hut



Zontuo Peace Hut



Totota Peace Hut



Dorrobo Peace Hut



Barreken Peace Hut



Schefflin Peace Hut

ANNEX 4: DATA COLLECTION TOOLS

KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW GUIDES - SYSTEMATIZATION STUDY

County:	District:
Community:	Date:
Name of respondent:	Title:

Note: Complete the above table in your note book for each respondent.

This is just a guide and should be used as you see fit. Some questions may not be relevant or may be answered through a more open conversation but this can be used for respondents to articulate their story.

Local Government Authorities – Superintendents

1. How does your county engage women in peacebuilding?
2. Are you aware of Peace Huts in your county and the work they do?
3. What is your assessment of the work done by Peace Huts in this county?
4. Are there opportunities that exist for your county administration to financially support Peace Huts to remain sustainable? (probe for support from county and social development funds)

Local authorities – Town chiefs, etc.

1. What is your community's level of participation in the running of Peace Huts?
2. How helpful are Peace Huts in empowering women?
3. What is the status of GBV in your communities?
4. Do you think the Peace Huts have contributed to preventing and minimizing GBV?
5. Does the Peace Hut leadership work with town authorities in addressing women's issues?
6. To what extent have women been involved in community decision-making since the Peace Hut was opened?
7. How can the town be of support to financially sustain Peace Huts in the absence of donor support?

Chairladies

1. How helpful has the Peace Hut been in empowering women?
2. What is the current status of GBV in your city/town/village?
3. To what extent has the Peace Hut contributed to improving women's

participation in decision-making within the town?

4. What do you think women in the Peace Hut can do to manage the hut themselves in the absence of donor funds?

Male Gender Champions

1. Could you tell me about the training you attended on how to protect women from GBV? Probe for the time of the training and the organization that provided it.
2. What did you learn from the training? What do you know now about women's rights that you did not know before the training?
3. How has the training changed your knowledge and attitude towards women's protection?
4. What roles do you play in your community as a gender champion?
5. How do you think working with men contributes to reducing violence against women?
6. Can you please share with me any specific instance where you prevented or protected a woman or women from GBV?
7. What recommendation do you have for women's empowerment organizations on working with men to empower women?

Thanks for your participation!!!!

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE – SYSTEMATIZATION STUDY

County:	District:
Community:	Target Group:
Total Number of participants:	
Date of interview:	

This is just a guide and should be used as you see fit. Some questions may not be relevant or may be answered through a more open conversation but this can be used where respondents struggle to articulate their story.

Participants List

NO	NAME	SEX	AGE GROUP 18-35	AGE GROUP 36-49	AGE GROUP 50+
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					

Systematization Study

1. What different supports have UN Women and other UN agencies provided to your Peace Hut since it was established? (Probe for full list of support delivered).
2. What services is this Peace Hut providing to community members?
3. How do women and men benefit from services offered by the Peace Hut?
4. Since your community started operating the Peace Hut, what has changed in your lives?

5. What are the positive or negative effects of the Peace Hut since it was brought to your community?
6. Of all the support provided by UN Women and other UN agencies, what worked and what did not work?
7. For those interventions that were successful, what were the key factors of success?
8. When you look back on the support that donor agencies have provided over the past years, what specific things do you think could have been done better?
9. Did Peace Hut women in this village/town benefit from skills-building?
10. When was the last workshop held and which organization funded it?
11. Are women using the skills they gained?
12. What other skills of women do you think should be improved?
13. How effective were the business management trainings provided by UN Women and how have women applied the skills they acquired?
14. How has the Peace Hut initiative contributed to empowering women?
15. How has the Peace Hut initiative contributed to reducing violence against women?
16. How secure and protected do women feel in your community?
17. Were gender champions trained in your community? If yes, how are they contributing to reducing violence against women?
18. How has the Peace Hut initiative contributed to improving women's participation in decision-making at your community level?
19. What recommendations would you want to make to agencies working on women's empowerment across Liberia?

Thank you!!!

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