

UNIFEM AND UNDP JOINT PRESS RELEASE

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# **Liberian women crucial in reconstruction of Liberia**

*Monrovia, Friday, November 26, 2004* - UNDP Liberia and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) signed a letter of understanding to collaborate in ensuring that gender is mainstreamed in all UNDP programmes. The goal is to involve the Liberian women as major actors in the reconstruction of Liberia. The collaboration between the two UN-organizations will cover governance, community-based reintegration and recovery (CBR), rehabilitation and reintegration of ex-combatants, human rights, and HIV/AIDS programmes.

The UNDP/UNIFEM partnership is designed to take advantage of the knowledge and experience of these two organizations to mainstream gender in the good governance framework and the reconstruction of Liberia. Strengthening this governance framework requires tapping into the full capacity of Liberian women, by creating an enabling environment for women to substantially participate in the reconstruction of the country. This means that there will be in every programme an additional focus and effort on women's issues through capacity building, training, advocacy, income generation, and policymaking.

In doing this, UNDP will ensure that the concerns and experiences of women as well as men are an integral part of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies. In that perspective the UNDP Gender Officer and the UNIFEM Programme Manager will work together as a team. They will also work closely together with the UN Gender Theme Group, the Government of Liberia and the civil society organizations.

This partnership contributes to the on-going post-war national reconstruction and development efforts in Liberia, and this within the context of the Results Focused Transitional Framework (RFTF), the Gender Action Plan adopted at the National Women's Conference (May 2004).

UNIFEM promotes the enjoyment of all human rights, including gender equality and non-discrimination by women globally. It provides technical and financial support to activities that mainstream gender and human rights perspectives in development and humanitarian programmes. It has over the years developed expertise in building the capacity of women and women's organizations to strengthen them to create spaces, in which women can reconstruct their homes and lives, benefit from national reintegration programmes, forge new partnerships and broker partnership with men, local authorities and NGOs.

In developing and implementing the programmes, UNDP has drawn on its extensive experience in post-conflict recovery and reconstruction efforts in Africa and elsewhere in the world, and its nearly 40 years of development work in Liberia, to offer critical assistance on several fronts. UNDP's status throughout the region as a trusted development partner is an important asset in the agency's efforts to support Liberian recovery and reconstruction.

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