

**CONCERN WORLDWIDE  
LIBERIA STRATEGIC PLAN**

2022 – 2026

**CONCERN**  
worldwide

**ENDING  
EXTREME POVERTY  
WHATEVER  
IT TAKES**



## Contents

<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2. External View</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3. Our Strengths (and where we want to improve)</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>4. Our Five-Year Ambition</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Goal One:</b> Address issues of chronic malnutrition in Liberia, through our programme and advocacy work	8
<b>Goal Two:</b> Enhanced emergency preparedness and early warning	11
<b>Goal Three:</b> Increase the proportion of our programmes implemented with partners	12
<b>Goal Four:</b> Become a greener organisation	13
<b>Goal Five:</b> Strengthen our organisational structures to improve our programme delivery	15
<b>5. Financing the Plan</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>6. Managing the Plan</b>	<b>16</b>

**COVER IMAGE:** Nowah Kwaneh at her farm near Buchanan, Liberia, which she has expanded with support from Concern and her local CSLA. Here she grows watermelon, okra, bitter ball, cucumber, peppers, eggplant, tomatoes, and pumpkin.

**Photo:** Kieran McConville/Concern Worldwide.

## 1. Introduction

The optimism of recent years that hunger and poverty can be eliminated has suffered a major setback with the triple impact of COVID-19, the challenges of climate change and the effect of conflict. For the first time in 20 years, the absolute numbers in poverty and hunger globally have started to increase, with expectations that the pandemic will push more than 120 million additional people into extreme poverty in 2021. This requires a doubling down on global efforts to ensure that we achieve the commitments to end hunger and extreme poverty by 2030, and ensuring that no one is left behind, encapsulated in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Founded in 1968 Concern has grown into a global organisation, supporting operations in the world's poorest and most vulnerable contexts. This has been driven by an organisational culture, encapsulated in our identity, vision and mission. Concern is a dual mandate organisation focused on fragile and conflict-affected contexts. We have an obligation to respond to emergencies and we seek to address the underlying causes of poverty and vulnerability through longer-term programming.

Concern Worldwide's first engagement in Liberia was in 1991 with an emergency intervention, and we have been operating continuously in the country since 1996. The following restates our identity, vision and mission, and outlines our five-year ambition and areas of focus for 2022 to 2026 in Liberia. This is the culmination of a comprehensive process that considered the external environment, both in country and globally, as well as looking at our strengths and weaknesses and how well we have performed in terms of delivering our previous Strategic Plan.

### Our Identity



Concern Worldwide is a nongovernmental, international, humanitarian organisation dedicated to the reduction of suffering and working towards the ultimate elimination of extreme poverty in the world's poorest countries.

### Our Vision



Is a world where no-one lives in poverty, fear or oppression; where all have access to a decent standard of living and the opportunities and choices essential to a long, healthy and creative life; a world where everyone is treated with dignity and respect.

## Our Mission



Is to help people living in extreme poverty achieve major improvements in their lives, which last and spread without ongoing support from Concern. To achieve this mission we engage in long-term development work, build resilience, respond to emergencies and seek to address the root causes of poverty through our development education and advocacy work.

## Our Values



### **We focus on extreme poverty:**

We are driven by a clear focus on eliminating poverty in the most vulnerable places and responding to humanitarian crises.

### **We believe in equality:**

People are equal in rights and must be treated with respect and dignity.

### **We listen:**

Listening and partnership are key to empowering the poorest and most vulnerable to transform their own lives.

### **We respond rapidly:**

People affected by disasters are entitled to have their most basic needs met through rapid, effective, and principled responses.

### **We are courageous:**

Taking necessary risks, balanced with sound judgement, allows us to work in the most challenging contexts.

### **We are committed:**

Going the extra mile to support communities in times of need and in the face of very difficult operating environments.

### **We are innovative:**

Finding effective solutions requires innovative thinking combined with a pragmatic approach.

### **We are accountable:**

Accountability and transparency are central to all of our actions and use of resources.

## 2. External View

As Liberia, a country of 5.1 million people, continues to recover from two civil wars and the devastation of the Ebola outbreak in 2014-15, it faces a myriad of challenges, including dealing with COVID-19, low levels of human development, and continued economic hardships. GDP per capita, at \$583, is higher than it was 10 years ago, but this disguises a sharp decline since 2016, when it was closer to \$715. Poverty, as measured by the proportion of the population below \$1.90 per day has fallen over this same 10-year period, but still affects 44.4% of the population. Income is unequally distributed, with the richest 10% of the population estimated to receive 27.1% of income, with the poorest 10% receiving less than 3%. Liberia's score and ranking on the Human Development Index has improved over the past 10 years, but remains one of the lowest globally. Gender inequality, exacerbated by the war, and the mind-set of male dominance over women, results in widespread Gender Based Violence (GBV).

Data from the World Governance Indicators project<sup>1</sup> shows that while Voice and Accountability have improved since the end of the war in 2003, as has the Absence of Violence, Government Effectiveness remains very low with little change since then. Initial improvements in the post war years in the areas of regulatory quality, rule of law and control of corruption have been reversed. At the same time, Liberia remains one of the most difficult to do business in (ranked 175th out of 190 countries in the 'Doing Business' index<sup>2</sup>).

**Table One:** Core National Level Indicators

	2010 (OR CLOSEST)	2020
<b>Human Development Index (Score / Rank)</b>	0.300 (162nd out of 169)	0.480 (175th out of 189)
<b>GDP, per capita</b>	\$513	\$583
<b>Poverty headcount ratio at \$1.90 a day</b>	71.4%	44.4%
<b>Corruption Perceptions Index (Rank)</b>	91 / 178	137 / 180
<b>Doing Business (Rank)</b>	149 / 183	175 / 190
<b>Gender Inequality Index (Rank)</b>	139 / 145	156 / 162
<b>Global Hunger Index</b>	50 / 76	102 / 107

The HDI and Global Inequality Index figures are taken from UNDP's 2010 and 2020 reports; GDP per capita data and data on the poverty headcount ratio is taken from <https://data.worldbank.org> (the poverty figures are taken from 2007 and 2016). The Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) comes from Transparency International (and is available at [www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2020/index/nzl](http://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2020/index/nzl)). The global gender gap index comes from <https://reports.weforum.org/global-gender-gap-report-2020/the-global-gender-gap-index-2020/results-and-analysis/>) Global Hunger Index rankings are taken from the 2013 and 2020 GHI Reports.

1. World Governance Indicators – WGI for Liberia, The World Bank, Washington, 2021
2. Ease of Doing Business Rankings– Measuring Business Regulations, The World Bank, Washington, 2021. <https://www.doingbusiness.org/en/rankings?region=sub-saharan-africa>

**Hunger** remains a major problem in Liberia. Despite progress made in reducing rates of chronic malnutrition as demonstrated through the prevalence of stunting in under 5's, (down from 45% in 2000 to 30% in 2020) this remains a particular issue for children living in households in the lowest wealth quintile. Similar trends can be seen in other measures of health and nutrition<sup>3</sup>. Only a very small proportion of children eat a diverse diet, with less than one in ten eating from four or more food groups (out of seven); only 45% of children start receiving their first complementary foods at the right time; and there has been no change in the proportion of children 0 to 5 months exclusively breast fed. In Liberia, 71% of all children suffer from anaemia, while maternal anaemia, at 45%, is a major cause for concern.

**Table Two:** Health and Nutrition Indicators

	2013	2019/20
<b>% of children under five chronically malnourished</b>	31.6%	29.8%
Among the poorest wealth quintile	35.3%	37.9%
<b>% of children 0-5 ,months exclusively breastfed</b>	55.2%	55.2%
Among the poorest wealth quintile		
<b>Minimum acceptable diet (breastfed children 6-23m)</b>	4.5%	3.7%
Among the poorest wealth quintile	2.9%	2.0%
<b>Prevalence of diarrhoea among children &lt;5</b>	22.0%	15.7%
Among the poorest wealth quintile	25.2%	16.7%
<b>Maternal malnutrition (15-49 years) (BMI&lt;18.5)</b>	7.4%	5.2%
Among the poorest wealth quintile	10.0%	6.5%
<b>Maternal overweight (15-49 years) BMI &gt;=25.0</b>	26.4%	36.6%
Among the poorest wealth quintile	17.9%	21.4%

In the coming years, Liberia will also be affected by **Climate Change**, average annual temperatures are expected to rise significantly in the coming decades, and will have increased by between 0.9 and 2.6°C by 2060. In the same period, average annual precipitation is expected to decrease by about 16 mm. These changes in climate will have a severe negative impact on the country, affecting the poorest first and hardest, it is estimated that by 2030, the number of deaths associated with heat will increase to 38,000 annually, and that agricultural production, responsible for a large proportion of GDP, will be particularly badly affected. Flooding is considered the highest natural risk<sup>4</sup>, particularly in the coastal region, where the majority of the population live. This is caused by both river flooding due to heavy rains (of around 4,700 mm annually) and rising sea levels. This is exacerbated by land use changes that lead to increases in precipitation run-off that exceeds the capacity of the river channel to accommodate. In the Greater Monrovia area alone, a predicted 16 cm sea level rise by 2030 would put 675,000 people and 9,500 hectares of land at risk.

3. This sections compares the results from the Demographic and Health Surveys from 2019/2020 and 2013

4. <https://drmkc.jrc.ec.europa.eu/inform-index/INFORM-Risk/Country-Profile/moduleId/1767/id/419/controller/Admin/action/CountryProfile>

**Education** levels are low in Liberia due to the lasting effects of the protracted civil war and the closure of schools in 2014 due to the Ebola outbreak and again in 2020 due to the COVID 19 pandemic. The most recent DHS results<sup>5</sup> show that 56% of females and 39% of males have never attended any school. The net attendance ratio (NAR) for primary school for the population age 6-11 is 43% (41% female and 45% male) and the NAR for secondary schools is only 26% (25% male and 26% female). Literacy levels are significantly better in urban areas of the country with 63.2% of females and 84% of males age 15-49 literate, compared to literacy rates of 33.5% for women and 61.3% for men of the same age in rural areas.

Alongside some of these longer-term, systemic, challenges the COVID-19 pandemic has reduced economic activity resulting in lower incomes, particularly for poorer Liberians. Markets and inter-county travel were closed, and agricultural activities greatly reduced, causing interruptions in fragile value chains. Farmers who normally depend on local markets to sell their produce were faced with a combination of reduced incomes, higher transport costs, and higher market prices for food and other items they would normally buy, in turn increasing food and nutrition insecurity<sup>6</sup>. In 2021 COVID-19 was estimated to be responsible for an increase in the proportion of Liberians moderately or severely food insecure from 9.6% in 2020 to 50.3% in 2021<sup>7</sup>.

### 3. Our Strengths (and where we want to improve)

As part of the development of this strategy, we took the time to reflect on what we are good at – and the areas we need to focus on improving.

We strongly believe our greatest strength are our personnel – we have a committed and qualified team who have worked with Concern for a number of years, developing a strong understanding of the programming context. We will continue to strengthen this team, engage them in strategic decision-making, and make sure that we have the right staffing balance in our different areas of operation for the activities identified in our plan.

We have strong relationships with the communities where we work, and focus on involving them in programme design. We will continue with this, particularly focussing on involving women in project activities, enhancing our equality outcomes and improving community ownership.

We benefit from having clear and comprehensive organisational policies, which have allowed us to develop effective systems, reducing the risk of fraud and corruption and to provide strong support to programme implementation. We will continue to focus on ways to improve our effectiveness and reduce bureaucracy, while maintaining the highest levels of transparency and accountability.

We have made progress in recent years in attracting more women into the organisation, even though women still only make up 31% of our national staff. We continue to try to address this and to take on the next challenge, addressing the gender imbalance at management level.

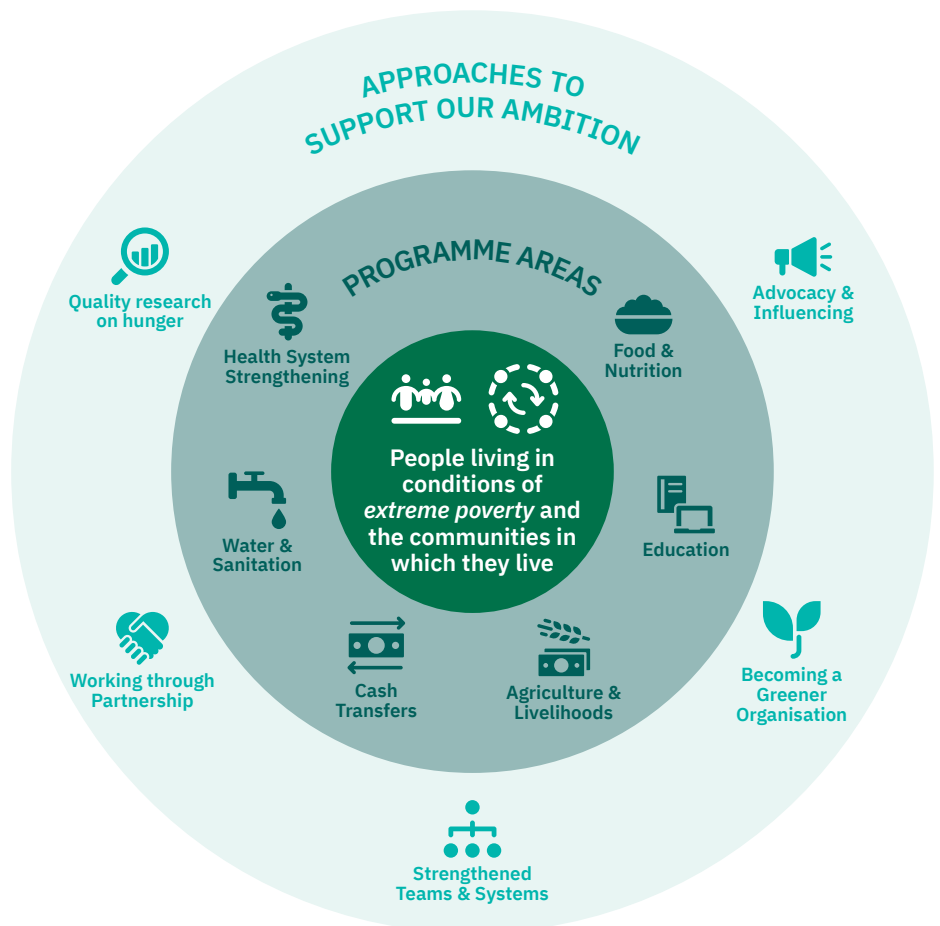
5. All education data taken from the Liberia Demographic and Health Survey 2019/20, LISGIS, Ministry of Health Liberia, DHS Programme U. of Maryland, 2021.

6. COVID-19 & Community Resilience – A Multi-Country Study, Alliance2015, Brussels, 2021.

7. Liberia Food Security and Post Harvest 2021, Ministry of Agriculture, March 2021.

## 4. Our Five-Year Ambition

Our overall objective is to contribute to a **Liberia that is food and nutrition secure**. We will achieve this through a multi-layered, multi-sectoral approach. This means working with households living in conditions of extreme poverty on activities that are both nutrition specific and sensitive, including continuing our livelihoods work with a particular focus on enhancing engagement in food systems, expanding our water and sanitation, and health system strengthening programming and if the right opportunities arise, re-starting our education interventions. We will also work with the communities in which people in extreme poverty live to create an environment that enables them to reach their full potential. Through our advocacy and influencing work, we will contribute to addressing some of the systemic challenges at district and national level that prevent people from moving out of extreme poverty.



At the same time, our humanitarian identity is central to our work and means that we will prioritise, and maintain the capacity to respond quickly to emergencies, with the express intention of saving lives and reducing suffering, maintaining the dignity of affected communities and working with communities to strengthen their preparedness.

To achieve this we implement programmes directly and through partners.

Overall, we expect that our programmes will directly contribute to progress against SDG1 (No Poverty), SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), SDG4 (Gender Equality) SDG6 (Clean Water and Sanitation).



## Where we work

Our analysis of available national level data suggests that Grand Bassa and River Cess are two of the poorest and most vulnerable counties in Liberia, and are areas we are committed to working in over the lifetime of the strategy. We will expand our programming into at least two additional counties over the lifetime of our strategy, based on need, initially working through partners, both Government and Civil Society. Over the last five years our work has been predominantly rural in its focus, however we are aware that there are large pockets of extreme poverty and vulnerability to shocks and stresses in urban areas, and we will expand our work into these areas, starting with Buchanan.

## Who we work with

We will continue to work with a broad array of people who are identified as living in conditions of extreme poverty, and those caught up in emergencies. Within this, we will focus on specific groups identified as being more vulnerable. This includes

- (i). Children under 5, pregnant and lactating women
- (ii). Adolescent girls, with a specific focus on their sexual and reproductive health, as a means of contributing to longer term improvements in their nutrition and that of their children
- (iii). Youth (generally under 25) and helping them to develop their livelihoods in agriculture
- (iv). People living with disabilities

Rebecca Jallah, who constructed a new latrine for her family in Womgba Community, Bong County, as part of the USAID-funded County Wide Sanitation Activity project.

**Photo:** Kieran McConville/Concern Worldwide.



# 1

## **GOAL ONE: Address issues of chronic malnutrition in Liberia, through our programme and advocacy work**

Our previous five-year strategic plan had a broad focus on chronic malnutrition; at a programme level we have been quite successful in promoting breast feeding, complementary feeding and the consumption of a minimum acceptable diet in the geographic areas in which we work. However, more remains to be done, meaning our programme work will continue to reflect our drive to address hunger, in a multi-sectoral manner.

Central to this in Liberia is addressing the issue of chronic malnutrition amongst children under-five; given Liberia's land, rainfall, and soil resources and potential to produce plentiful and diverse food to feed all of its population, malnutrition rates of 30% should be considered unacceptable. To achieve our ambition of a Liberia that is food and nutrition secure, we will work with both individuals and communities to address the barriers people face at that level. We will also bring the evidence from our programme forward to influence policy and share our experiences with other agencies working in the area.

At a practical level, we will work across a number of areas including supporting the production and processing of foodstuffs, promoting the consumption of nutritious foods and greater engagement in value chains, assisting social and behaviour change by strengthening groups such as Mother to Mother Support Groups (MtMSG), addressing challenges in the area of water, sanitation and hygiene, and implementing climate smart approaches to agricultural production. Throughout we will strive to be gender transformative in the approaches we take, while strengthening ownership at community level, and maintaining the highest standards of programme quality.

### **SO1: Strengthened Ownership at Community Level**

Building on our understanding of extreme poverty, which places assets, inequalities, and risk and vulnerability at the heart of programme design, we aim to develop programmes that have stronger community level ownership. We aim to put people at the centre of what we do, this includes supporting the empowerment of communities to identify their own priorities and solutions to the challenges they face. This focus on greater ownership by programme participants will require a continued shift in how we implement our programmes. It will build on our experiences of supporting the establishment of community institutions such as Community Savings and Loans Association (CSLAs) and MtMSGs to provide community centred solutions. We will support communities to prepare their own action plans through these structures and self-direct the process.

We are also committed to a process of continuously receiving feedback on our work, improving our accountability (and providing feedback) to the communities we work with, and ensuring we have a fully functional Feedback and Complaints Response Mechanism (FCRM). Within this, we are committed to ensuring that those who work in and with our organisation, our partners and the communities with which we work are protected from all forms of violence, abuse and exploitation.

To ensure that all communities and programme participants have clear information on their entitlements under each programme, we will recruit

a dedicated FCRM lead and ensure every programme community is visited annually by them, independent of programme implementation, to seek feedback. We will also ensure a dedicated agenda item in all Programme Quarterly Reviews to share and address issues.

We will ensure that we include community perspectives more frequently in Quarterly Programme Reviews by hosting them in the rural areas where programmes are based and twice per year ensuring they are participatory events. Moreover when working at national level on our advocacy objectives we will empower those we are working with to speak and raise their voices.

## S02: Enhanced Programme Quality

Concern in Liberia has a history of doing strong, contextually appropriate, integrated programmes, and we will continue to strive for the highest level of quality in our work. Ultimately, we see this as being the foundation for any growth or expansion.

To enhance our programme quality we will strengthen our approach to Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL), allowing us to be more adaptive in what we do; regularly update our contextual analyses; and take a system strengthening approach across all of our areas of operation. This means not only providing direct support to the functioning of various elements of the systems, but also the governance of the system, in a manner that facilitates the participation of our target group – those living in extreme poverty. Concern Liberia has invested heavily in developing and strengthening an approach to gender transformative programming called **We Are One**, which we see as having the potential to improve our programming in all sectors. We will expand the number of organisations that have implementation ready trained staff to implement this approach and involve the relevant Government stakeholders to boost the prominence of discussions on gender equality issues in Liberia.

We are committed to doing at least one piece of high quality, rigorous research that will contribute to better knowledge of which programmes can work in addressing the challenges of chronic malnutrition in Liberia and globally. We are also committed to ensuring robust and independent evaluations of our work and propose to do at least one national level learning event per year.

## S03: Addressing hunger through improved policies

Building on our programme work, and the research we will undertake, we aim to become **Thought Leaders** in the area of hunger (and climate) in Liberia. We will do this by being propositional and practical about the actions that need to be supported to address this issue and will focus on influencing key decision makers on policies and strategies that have the greatest impact on those living in extreme poverty and suffering from chronic malnutrition.

We will build on our experience of coordination with other stakeholders, including our colleagues in Alliance2015, to have high-level discussions on the subject. We will develop further our strong working relationship with Government at all levels including national, county, district and community. Throughout, we will advocate alongside our programme participants.

We will also work closely with Concern's International Advocacy Team (IAT) to focus attention on the human impacts of hunger, and to galvanise urgent action in this area. Specifically, we will

- Develop a set of clear and consistent messages on chronic malnutrition to guide our advocacy work by the end of 2024.
- Organise annual events, tied to the Global Hunger Index, to draw attention to issues at national level.
- Participate in, and strengthen where necessary, appropriate coalitions and networks in Liberia working on issues of hunger and malnutrition.

### Key Performance Indicators

1. Organisational reach – increase in the number of people directly benefiting from our work from 2021 baseline of 24,598.
2. Liberia-specific advocacy strategy developed by the end of 2024.
3. Increase in the number of feedback gathered (complaints or positive feedback) by the FCRM team, from 2022 baseline.
4. Percentage of programmes that have been evaluated as per the evaluation guidelines (could be a wash-up, internal evaluation or external evaluation).
5. At least one learning document produced for each major programme.
6. Number of speaking roles for a programme participant or local NGO at subject related events in country.
7. Number of in-country coalitions we participate in.

## **GOAL TWO: Enhanced emergency preparedness and early warning**

Our humanitarian identity is central to our work and obliges us to prioritise the capacity to respond quickly and effectively to emergencies in countries in which we are currently operating. In recent years, Concern in Liberia has not had to respond to any large-scale rapid onset emergencies, but have been heavily involved in the COVID-19 response and supporting the roll out of the vaccination programme. However, we are committed to engaging in any response as the need occurs, focussing on saving lives and reducing suffering, while strengthening community preparedness for future emergencies.

As an organisation, we maintain a regularly updated Preparing for Effective Emergency Response (PEER) plan that allows for a rapid scale-up, and are committed to engaging in coordination mechanisms at national and sub-national levels as part of any response. A commitment to respond is included in all Job Descriptions and all staff receive a briefing on the need to respond as part of their induction. Our relationships with communities is strong and we will ensure we both pilot using cash modalities and do community level climate vulnerability analysis to learn how best to strengthen resilience.

### **Key Performance Indicators**

- At least one multi-year programme has a community –based early warning system and community DRR plan developed for some of the target communities.
- Percentage of sudden onset emergencies in the country where a decision whether or not to assess has been made within 72 hours and the rationale documented.
- Map active partners with whom we could establish an MOU to support our emergency response by the end of 2024.
- Framework agreement in place with an identified mobile money service provider by the end of 2024.

## **GOAL THREE: Increase the proportion of our programmes implemented with partners**

As an organisation, we are committed to the localisation agenda and expanding the proportion of work we undertake alongside local partner organisations, including both civil society organisations (CSOs) and local government. We acknowledge that we have a very limited array of partnerships within the Concern Liberia country programme, despite commitments made in previous plans. It is our intention to address this over the five years of this strategic plan, and we are committed to spending at least 10% of our overall programme budget through local partners by 2025, including at least 25% of the Irish Aid programme by the end of 2027. This does not mean that our relationships will be a purely financial one; rather we will strive to have partnerships with local and national NGOs that add value to the quality, reach, and sustainability of programmes and increase access to people living in conditions of extreme poverty and those made vulnerable by disasters.

Behind this approach are questions of sustainability and legitimacy. While the road to sustainability is complex, we believe strengthening the capacity of local civil society institutions to mobilise, organise and empower poor people, to advocate, to hold government to account and to deliver services where there are gaps in provision, is an important investment for the future. At the same time, we believe these groups, with strong roots in Liberian communities, have a greater familiarity with the local context and provide greater legitimacy. Ultimately, our role should be to provide temporary support, technical expertise and learning from our international network.

Though not considered traditional partners, we see the opportunity to develop a number of strategic relationships with actors in the private sector, particularly in the area of social marketing, or on digital solutions. We also remain committed to working with other international NGOs on issues of mutual concern, particularly in terms of influencing policy, and to working with others through consortiums.

### **Key Performance Indicators**

- At least two strategic partnerships established by the end of 2024.
- 15% of Irish Aid programme on-granted to partners by 2025 (aim of 25% by 2027). All strategic partners have an agreed & resourced capacity building plan.
- Number of proposals jointly developed with partners.
- Number of national level events co-hosted between Concern and our partners on key policy issues.

# 4

## GOAL FOUR: Become a greener organisation

Concern's environment policy commits us to protect and sustain the natural environment as a means of protecting the foundation of the livelihoods of many of the poorest people in the world. We do this through programme activities such as supporting communities and local institutions on positive environmental management, community resilience and climate change adaptation, essential with the potential risks associated with climate change in Liberia, particularly flooding and increased temperatures. A second element is by reducing the carbon footprint of our organisational activities.

In Concern Liberia, we are committed to becoming a greener organisation, deepening our environmental commitments in the coming years with an increased focus on climate-related programming and a continuous improvement in our own internal environmental standards. We will be seen as a leader amongst Concern countries in reducing our own carbon footprint.

### SO1: Reduce our Carbon Footprint

Within our programming, we are committed to minimise any negative impact on the environment, and to build in protection of the natural environment where possible. Part of doing this will be to increase the number of assessments of the potential environmental impact of our work and incorporate them into proposals. We will also integrate climate change adaptation (CCA) and DRR approaches and techniques into our programmes. Specifically we will

- Develop a fleet management plan, in line with the findings from the carbon audit that improves coordination amongst teams and introduces the most appropriate policies around vehicle usage.
- Move to renewable energy as a power source
- Develop and implement a waste management strategy, and continue to raise awareness on waste recycling.
- Implement a local procurement strategy that supports local suppliers and local production, reducing carbon emissions associated with international procurement.
- Increase our use of technology (in particular mobile money) to reduce our carbon footprint.

### SO2: Ensure that our work supports a sustainable environment

Within our programming, we are committed to minimise any negative impact on the environment, and to build in protection of the natural environment where possible. Part of doing this will be to increase the number of assessments of the potential environmental impact of our work into proposals. We will also integrate climate change adaptation (CCA) and DRR approaches and techniques into our programmes. Specifically we will:

- Develop climate change risk and mitigation plans at the community level.
- Develop a Natural Resource Management / DRR plan in line with our programmes.

- Develop programmes that support sustainable land use, in particular through better intensification, reducing shifting cultivation, and nutrient recycling. In particular we will promote the use of climate smart agriculture.
- Substantially reduce our consumption of single use plastics in our programming (the only exception being medical supplies).

### Key Performance Indicators

- 80% reduction in CO2 emissions from power generation at Concern offices and premises by 2024 (based on 2021 Carbon Audit, operational emissions only, excludes embodied carbon emissions).
- 40% reduction in organisational waste going to landfill by 2025 (based on 2021 Carbon Audit).
- 100% of programme proposals either integrating climate smart programming or undertaking environmental impact analysis or justifying why not appropriate in context

Etmaralyn, Macee, Quetta, Antoinette, Susan, and Pandora of the Concern Liberia team, outside the programme office in Buchanan, Grand Bassa County.

**Photo:** Kieran McConville/Concern Worldwide.





## **5 GOAL FIVE: Strengthen our organisational structures to improve our programme delivery**

As with any plan, its delivery depends on having the right people and structures in place. Our plan for 2022 to 2026 is ambitious, and will require us to shift our ways of working. A greater focus on partnerships requires staff who can work with organisations to develop their capacities; new areas, such as becoming a greener organisation, require changes to how we work, while taking on to do substantial research and advocacy work require a specific skill set.

We have had some excellent experiences during the implementation of our last plan in developing our own staff, through our internship programme and enhancing our non-finance managers capacity in financial management. We have also been successful in strengthening the working relationship between our systems and programmes teams. For the coming years we will focus on developing an empowered work force and investing in systems to ensure that staff have the tools they need to do their work.

### **S01: Develop an empowered work force**

Concern is a people-to-people organisation, and recruiting and retaining the right people, and developing our staff and our future leadership is a critical part of our strategy. We are committed to creating and supporting workplaces in which people feel valued and are enabled to succeed in their work. To increase the opportunities available to our staff, we will:

- Improve access to learning opportunities for growth, particularly investing in women.
- Undertaking a number of learning and exchange visits to country programmes of a similar scale, particularly those with strong research, partnership or advocacy components.
- Support the secondment of staff to other country programmes as part of career path development.
- Undertake regular team building exercises, tied in with programme reviews.
- Strengthen our organisational IT skills.
- We will also focus on recruiting team members with specific skills in the areas of livelihoods – particularly urban livelihoods, food security, environment and natural resource management, partnership management (including financial), research and data analysis to help us deliver on our plan.

### **S02: Invest in systems to ensure staff have the requisite tools to work effectively**

To achieve this objective we are committed to:

- Shift towards more e-payment and mobile money transactions were feasible and logical.
- Improve on our use of mobile apps for information sharing, data collection, weather forecasting and market information.
- Analyse and utilise the outputs from our DDG system better – and tie this into iterative learning and adaptive programming to improve programme quality.
- Pilot ERP or other digital systems as a support to Concern globally.

## Key Performance Indicators

- 40% of management positions occupied by women by 2026.
- Yearly PDRs in place for all staff (100%) with all training linked to career progression.
- Reduction in the number of programme payments made using cash, aim for 90% mobile money by the end of the strategy.
- Number of successful learning and exchange visits related to research, partnership and advocacy.
- Number of interns passing the internship programme who secure a position with Concern.

## 5. Financing the Plan

Over the past years, our budget in Liberia has seen a substantial jump from an annual (post-ebola response) amount of between €2.5 and 3 million to more than €4 million in 2021. It is our intention to continue this growth to a level of between €5 million and €6 million a year, ensuring the sustainability of our work. This is in line with our global ambitions to grow our annual budget by 15% over the next five years. To achieve this it is our intention to receive more multi-year funding than is currently the case, and to make sure that we are not overly reliant on any one source of funding. This will require a substantial investment in our ability to develop proposals of this nature, all the time building on our strong reputation for programme implementation.

## 6. Managing the Plan

While overall responsibility for implementing and managing the plan rests with Concern's Country Management Team in Liberia, it is intended to be a living document to guide all staff. In this respect, we are committed to making sure that it is well understood by all in the organisation, including through producing a scaled down, easy to understand version. The team will be expected to report on an annual basis on progress towards achieving the goals identified in the strategy and provide an update on performance against the key performance indicators included under each objective. Within this, individual staff members will be given responsibility for taking the lead on specific areas and developing an action plan and timeline for showing how they will be achieved.

*For more information contact:*

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