



**INDEPENDENT NATIONAL COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS  
(INCHR)**

**REPORT ON**

**THE CONDITIONS OF PRISONS AND PRISONERS  
IN LIBERIA**

**A CALL TO SUSTAINED COORDINATED COLLABORATED  
AND COHERENT EFFORTS IN ADDRESSION THE APPALLING  
CONDITONS OF PRISONS AND PRISONERS**

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## **Acronyms**

|        |                                                                            |
|--------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| BCR    | Bureau of Corrections and Rehabilitation                                   |
| CEDAW  | Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women |
| CSO    | Civil Society Organization                                                 |
| HRM    | Human Rights Monitor                                                       |
| HRO    | Human Rights Officer                                                       |
| GOL    | Government of Liberia                                                      |
| HRPS   | Human Rights Protection Section (of UNMIL)                                 |
| ICCPR  | International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights                       |
| ICRC   | International Committee of the Red Cross                                   |
| ICESCR | International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights              |
| INCHR  | Independent National Commission on Human Rights                            |
| JSTF   | Justice and Security Trust Fund                                            |
| LNP    | Liberian National Police                                                   |
| MCP    | Monrovia Central Prison                                                    |
| NGO    | Non-Governmental Organization                                              |
| MOJ    | Ministry of Justice                                                        |
| PBF    | Peacebuilding Fund (United Nations)                                        |
| PSD    | Police Standard Division                                                   |
| PSU    | Police Support Unit                                                        |
| QIP    | Quick Impact Project (UNMIL)                                               |
| UNCT   | United Nations Country Team                                                |
| UN     | United Nations in Liberia                                                  |
| UNMIL  | United Nations Mission in Liberia                                          |

## **I. Executive Summary**

1. This report was prepared by the Department of Complaints, Monitoring and Investigation (DCMI), of the Independent National Commission on Human Rights of Liberia (INCHR), and is released by the Commission. The INCHR is empowered by articles 3 and 4 of its Act to: a) promote and protect human rights throughout the Republic of Liberia; b) investigate complaints of human rights violations and conduct hearings; c) propose amendments or reform of laws, policies and administrative practices and regulations; and d) advice the Government on the implementation of national and international human rights standards.
2. In fulfillment of its mandate, the INCHR conducts human rights monitoring in all the 15 counties of Liberia, through its Human Rights Monitors assigned to the counties and reports on various human rights violations. The INCHR is also required by its Act to submit quarterly and annual reports on the human rights situation of the country to the head of the three Branches of the Liberian Government: the Executive, Legislative and Judiciary. In addition the INCHR submits thematic and/or incidence reports as and when necessary. As a result of its monitoring conducted to prison facilities and detention centers and withholding cells across Liberia, the INCHR Human Rights Monitors flagged the appalling conditions of prisons and human rights violations of the prisoners, comparing such conditions to best acceptable human rights standards and practices.
3. Some of the appalling conditions of the prisons and human rights violations of prisons include the worsening overcrowding of the prisons, prolonged-pretrial detention and very poor facility structures. As it stands, the prison population has more than tripled the acceptable capacity especially at the Monrovia Central Prison (MCP). Living conditions in the prisons are damaging to the physical and mental well-being of inmates and in many cases constitute clear threats to health. Toilets are blocked and overflowing or simply nonexistent, and there is no running water. As a result, diseases are widespread. Conditions such as poor sanitation, lack of sufficient food and medicines fall short of UN standards for the treatment of prisoners. Prisons are in bad shape and the facilities are operating below the minimum standards required for prisons and prisoners management. The structures are not up to date and the sanitary conditions are appalling. In addition, the classification and treatment of prisoners remains a challenge. Moreover, prolonged-pretrial detention accounts for more than 55% of the inmates in Liberia. Majority has never had a day in court and some of them have been remanded for more than 2 years.
4. The Government of Liberia has the moral responsibility to reform the system and act in a way that protects, respects, and upholds the human rights of prisoners. It is expedient for the Government to create conditions that will keep the prisoners both physically and mentally alive, and give them a chance to be rehabilitated and restored for successful reintegration into the society. Chapter 3 of Article 21(f) of the Liberian Constitution & the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) provides for an accused person's right to a speedy trial which is a human right guaranteed to all persons and consistent with human rights instruments to which Liberia is a signatory. Though isolated, inhuman conditions as highlighted above, could amount to torture which stands in violation of international human

rights standards, including the UN Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment of accused persons.

5. While, some efforts have been exerted by the Government, with support from the UN and other partners to help address the condition of prisons and prisoners, these efforts have not made any significant change. The INCHR recommends that the Government of Liberia takes practical and concrete steps to address the appalling condition of prisons and prisoners in Liberia. Some of these steps could include, but not limited to, a more coherent, coordinated and sustained approach to address the appalling conditions of prisons and prisoners especially prolonged-pretrial detention. The entire justice system needs to work collectively with each component of the justice system adequately playing its role. Government should prioritize providing adequate resources for basic prison operations through fair budgetary allocations.

## **II. Introduction**

6. The very poor conditions of prisons and detention facilities across Liberia, and the inhuman treatment of prisoners, continue to be of grave concerns. Despite some notable efforts on the side of the Government of Liberia (GoL), with support from the UN and other partners especially over the last six years, violations of the rights of persons detained or incarcerated continue unabridged. As shown in this report, since 2011, hitherto, there has been systematic increase in the number of prisoners. As of August 2016, prisons records across Liberia show a total number of 2,354 (1,960 in prisons and 394 in detention facilities) – the majority 1,297 (about 55%) of them being pretrial detainees (the full statistics of the prisons and detention facilities across the country is presented in Annex 1). Unfortunately, not much is being achieved to address the high prevalence of pretrial detainees and the poor conditions of prisoners and prisons.
7. The purpose of this Thematic Report is in three-folds: First, it highlights the appalling conditions of prisons and detention facilities as well as the inhuman treatment of prisoners and reminds the government of its obligations to comply with both domestic laws and regulations concerning the right to a fair and speedy trial as guaranteed to all persons. Second, the report analyzes and highlights the trend in the conditions of prisons and prisoners over the last six years (2011 – 2016) and attempts to investigate why there is little or no progress in addressing these human rights violations despite some notable efforts. The report presents a matrix that shows the current statistics of the conditions of prisons and prisoners – based on comparative analysis of these conditions over the last six years. Third, the report makes a number of concrete recommendations to the government on practical steps to help mitigate if not fully address the abysmal conditions of prisons and prisoners especially prolonged-pretrial detentions in the short (six months – one year) to medium term (one – three years). Some of the recommendations amplify strategic interventions in the BCR Five Year Strategic Plan (2015 – 2019) and also the draft Act to Amend the Executive Law, Chapter 22 Ministry of Justice, Relating to the Office of Assistant Minister of Justice for Rehabilitation. There is also a need to complete the review of Section 34 of the Criminal Procedure Law related to prisons which the BCR is leading. The overarching goal of this thematic report and the

analyses and recommendations contained therein is to promote and protect human rights in Liberia which is in line with the Mandate of the INCHR.

8. The Report is structured as follows: Following the executive summary and introduction, are the present conditions of prisons and prisoners in Liberia. This section highlights the condition of prisons and prisoners as well as detention facilities across the country from primary and secondary sources. In particular, it looks at INCHR Human Rights Monitors reports and the findings from INCHR nationwide tour undertaken by INCHR Commissioners and Human Rights Monitors. To avoid much detail, only crucial or relevant findings and issues are lifted with references made to specific county or counties as empirical evidence. [The detailed County Reports are available for review at the Commission.] Next is review of related literature, such as reports and other documentations on the conditions of prisons and prisoners covering the period 2011 – 2016; this is to show the trends of the prison conditions in the country over the last six years. The next section discusses previous and on-going efforts by the government and her partners to help address the conditions of prisons and prisoners in Liberia. For example, the Magistrate Sitting Program is reviewed. It looks at what has worked and what has not worked and deciphers why there have not been significant improvements regarding prisons and prisoners conditions across Liberia. The last, but very important section of the report is the conclusion with practical recommendations on how to address the conditions on prisoners and prisons in Liberia in the short - medium term. Following this the report puts forward findings on some of the reasons for the poor conditions of prisons and prisoners, especially pretrial detentions.
9. Finally, it is expected that this report will serve to advocate for the rights of prisoners in Liberia and to call the government to its moral and constitutional obligations to protect the rights of all its citizens and those within its borders. It is also the anticipation of the INCHR that the government will -fulfill its commitments and obligations and will ensure compliance with various international treaties and covenants to which Liberia has acceded especially related to the condition of prisons and prisoners.

### **III. Methodology**

10. This report is based on empirical data both from primary and secondary sources. Primarily, Human Rights monitors of the Independent National Commission on Human Rights (INCHR) assigned in the counties continue to monitor and report on prisons conditions across the country and this provides firsthand information of the conditions of prisons and prisoners. Also, the INCHR, with support from UNMIL through the Quick Impact Project (QIP), hired and assigned a Consultant at the Monrovia Central Prison (MCP) in Central Monrovia, in May 2016, to monitor, investigate and report on the conditions of the prison and prisoners – with a focus on prolonged-pretrial detentions. The INCHR Consultant obtained information from interviewing prisoners inside the prison and prison staff as well as from reviewing prison records.
11. On the conditions of prisons outside Monrovia, prison facilities were assessed by INCHR Human Rights Monitors, the result of which the report highlights human

rights issues and violations identified in the fifteen (15) counties of Liberia including: Bomi, Bong, Grand Bassa, Grand Cape Mount, Grand Gedeh, Gbarpolu, Grand Kru, Lofa, Montserrado, Maryland, Margibi, Nimba, RiverGee, Rivercess and Sinoe counties respectively.

12. From June – August 2016, the INCHR with support from UNDP undertook a nationwide tour. The tour was intended for Commissioners with oversight for counties to acquaint themselves with local county officials as well as Justice and Rule of Law actors, county Human Rights defenders, CSOs, and traditional chiefs and elders. The county tour was also intended to begin plans to establish county human rights committees or networks, and to establish INCHR county offices. The county visit was also for the Commissioners to get abreast with human rights conditions in their respective counties of oversight. This tour provided the opportunity for the Commissioners to join the county Human Rights Monitors to access the conditions of prisons and gathered first-hand information.
13. The Teams also met and had open discussions with concerned stakeholders from diverse organizations including the Ministry of Justice (Bureau of Corrections & Rehabilitation, the County Attorneys and Defense counsels and elements of the Judiciary/Circuit judges and magistrates), Alternative Disputes Resolution personnel, as well as members of civil society. A standard empirical questionnaire on human rights and prison was utilized during interviews with Corrections personnel, whilst meetings with other interlocutors was less structured and instead focused on their respective institutions perspectives on the proximate causes of a high prison population in their counties or areas of operations.
14. Where INCHR obtained information from secondary sources, such as reports on the conditions of prisons and prisoners in Liberia from other institutions and partners, the Commission ensured that the information provided were factual and corroborated with the findings of the INCHR primary data. The INCHR also reviewed the Bureau of Corrections and Rehabilitation (BCR) at the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) annual reports of 2015 and this Thematic Report corroborates the information provided in the report.

#### **IV. Constraints**

15. However, despite this report highlights various issues and conditions of the prisons and prisoners in Liberia, it is not exhaustive. Poor road conditions, lack of mobility and inadequate resources limited the INCHR monitoring visits that the information provided on the prisons in this report are not monthly especially for 2016. In addition, it was difficult to get substantive reports on the conditions of prisons and prisoners so as to do a more comprehensive trend analysis of the conditions of prisons and on efforts that have been employed to help address various human rights violations.

#### **V. Present conditions of prisons and prisoners in Liberia**

16. Human Rights conditions in Liberia's prisons have deteriorated on several fronts, due in large measure to the increasing prison population. The prison population

continues to grow at a steady rate. In addition, the conditions of prisons and detention facilities across Liberia remain very appalling and this condition has persisted, at least over the last six years. This thematic report reminds the government of its obligations to respect and uphold human rights by addressing the inhuman treatment of prisoners and improve prisons conditions in Liberia.

17. Beginning with the Monrovia Central Prison (MCP), while a number of prolonged-pretrial detainees are charged with rape, a non-bailable offense in Liberia, and a number is charged with arm robbery, still a very huge number are charged with very petty crimes. For example, INCHR monitoring and investigation at the MCP established that 40% of the pretrial detainees are charged with Rape and/or Statutory Rape, 40% with Armed Robbery and 20% with various crimes: Theft of Property, Aggravated Assault, Murder, etc. In addition, where the MCP was designed to accommodate 374 inmates, the facilities currently holds the total of 1,032 inmates, more than tripling its capacity. The majority of inmates are males; women and minors comprise a small percentage of the population. Again at the MCP, Liberia's main prison located in the Nation's Capital, Monrovia, INCHR captured 211 cases of pretrial detainees from May 9, 2016 obtained from the pretrial detainees' updated records of the Monrovia Central Prison Records Section. Interviews were conducted with almost all of the 211 cases of pretrial detainees who complained about over crowdedness of the cells, no proper medication, inadequate feedings, limited toilet facilities in their blocks or units, and that they have not gone to court since their detention. Some of the pretrial detainees interacted with have been detained from January 2010 up to present and have not had their day in court ever since their detention at the MCP. The investigation also shows that very few of the detainees' cases are transferred to Circuit Courts with no records relating to an indictment or complaint.
18. In addition, prison conditions at the MCP continue to raise serious human rights concerns and thus require immediate actions on the part of the Liberian Government. One of the facilities referred to as block F building is self-contained; meaning each cell has its own bathroom and toilet and the building is divided into six (6) wings, it holds 50% of the prison population. The previous facilities such as Blocks D,E,MC and NB are not self-contained. Each building has general bathrooms and these facilities, especially Block D,E,NB hold pretrial detainees. Thus confirming the claims made by pretrial detainees regarding the poor toilet, bathroom facilities of the cells and over crowdedness of the cells. While at the MCP the INCHR consultant visited the Health Center within the MCP, and was informed that inmates are properly cared for when sick and if a case is above the Center's control, they are referred to the John F. Kennedy (JFK) Medical Center in Monrovia and the Redemption Hospital in Bushrod Island. The head of the feeding center informed that the inmates are fed twice a day (breakfast and dinner with double portions), which runs contrary to the claims of the inmates that they are fed once a day. However, in the majority of the prisons across the country, prisoners are fed only once a day. Prison overcrowding remains an urgent problem for the Ministry of Justice, Correctional Department to deal with; if not handled, the problem will continue to worsen and cause serious consequences for prisoners' health and for prison security and stability – ultimately constituting gross violations of the rights of the citizens and those within the Liberian borders.



19. At the Metro (1) Police Depot on Front Street, Central Monrovia there are no toilet facilities for inmates. Prisoners use empty oil containers for urinating and toileting in their cell
20. At the Gbarnga Central Police Station there is no sitting capacity for alleged perpetrators, most of the inmates are in a single cell and sit on cement blocks, while others sit on the floor or stand all day. Also at the Gbarnga Central Prison, Human Rights monitors observed and documented a total of 132 inmates. The original capacity of the prison stands at 130. Eight-four (84) of the 132 inmates are pretrial detainees.
21. This is similar for the Voinjama Central Prison, INCHR Human Rights monitors also documented the total number of inmates at 72, although the prison was built to host a maximum of 40 inmates. Forty (40) of the 72 inmates are pre-trial detainees there are no functioning toilet facilities, resulting to inmates using gallons to urinate and toilet, a potential for health hazard. It is worth noting that the Voinjama Central Prison has solar panels providing power up to 24 hours since June 2016, which is significant improvement.
22. With regards to the Sanniquillie Central Prison, in Nimba County, INCHR Monitors reported that there is little or no medical treatment for inmates, resulting to inmates being constantly ill; and that there are no rehabilitation or skills training programs available for inmates. INCHR was informed that since 2010 there have been no mattresses available for inmates, including juvenile, convicts or detainees. The inmates (juvenile, convicts and detainees) sleep on blankets. However in the female cell there were a few mattresses for 5 female prisoners. Meanwhile on medical checkups of inmates of prisons at the Sanniquillie Prison, BCR officials at the MOJ referred the INCHR to the County Health Team in Nimba County to clarify on assigned nurse(s) at the Prison, while on the rehabilitation of prisoners BCR informed that apart from soap making that stalled due to lack of market for the products, small gardening and animal husbandry as well as adult literacy program is active in the facility with 14 inmate participants including 2 females.
23. Regarding the health of the prisoners, the Prison Superintendent at the Sanniquillie Central Prison informed the INCHR that health workers do pay regular visits to the prison to treat prisoners. A small health post is constructed in the vicinity of the prison but INCHR monitors have not been fortunate to see it opened. Still on the Sanniquillie Central Prison, Nimba County, monitors during regular prison monitoring, observed and documented a total number of inmates at the prison as of January 2016 at 178. Of the 178 inmates, 110 are pre-trial detainees. 4 of the 110 pre-trial detainees are Juvenile (below 18 years). Unfortunately, these programs were not shown to the INCHR Commissioner who visited the prison in August 2016 to monitor the prison.
24. Due to constant monitoring and constructive engagement of county officials as well as prison authorities on the increased number of pretrial detainees by human rights monitors of INCHR, the United Nations Mission in Liberia Human Rights Officer (UNMIL/HRO) and Justice and Peace (JPC) Monitors, there was a recorded decrease in the number of inmates and pre-trial detainees at the Sanniquillie Central

Prison in the month of February 2016. During this period, monitoring by INCHR in the county documented 144 inmates and 92 pre-trial detainees. However, for the month of March 2016, the Sanniquellie Central Prison had an increase in the total number of inmates, totaling 172 of which 151 were pre-trial detainees, while in August 2016, the prison records at the Sanniquellie Central Prison showed a total of 190 inmates (in a prison built for 74 inmates) of which 61 were convicts while 119 were pretrial detainees.

25. Further related to the conditions of the prisons as well as detention facilities in other parts of the Country, INCHR reports show that Police cells in Sanniquellie, Nimba County, has no toilet facility, resulting to perpetrators using the withholding cells for urinating, toileting and eating.
26. In Maryland County at the Harper Central Prison, there were 76 inmates at the prison comprised 47 convicts and 29 pre-trial detainees. The prison has a space for solitary confinement which the Superintendent said is not being used but inmates complained of being detained there. There were also reported cases of torture and inhumane treatment of inmates and arbitrary detentions. Notably among the pretrial detainees is a group of twelve alleged murderers from Grand Kru who had been in prison since January 25, 2016 without trial. That number has since reduced to eleven due to the death of one of them. Conditions at the prison are dehumanizing, filthy and subject inmates to health hazards. However, BCR has informed that the Harper Prison has water network and maintenance team trained by ICRC to care for sanitation repairs among others. The facility is without interior light though the exterior of the building has light. There is a level of separation of prisoners but there are cases of convicts and pretrial detainees being placed together. The inmates sleep on thin mats as they are without mattresses. However, according to BCR officials, the ICRC supplied the prisoners mats and blankets. BCR also indicated that supplies from Monrovia to that part of the country are not limited to BCR due to roads condition which is a national problem. At the Harper Central Prison, prisoners are fed once a day but in some cases go days without food due to limited supply from Monrovia. The Harper Central Prison has a better facility when compared with most of the other prisons across the country. However, some prisoners are placed in darks rooms without ventilation as a form of punishment. Meanwhile, at the Prison compound, the INCHR team bumped into a three days training workshop organized by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). The objective of the training was to train inmates and correction officers to be able to cater to the sanitation of the prison.
27. In Grand Kru, there is not a prison facility but cells at police station that BCR has been allowed to use. The ICRC provides blankets and mattresses to the facility however, the conditions of the cells and prisoners remain appalling. The prisoners are fed once a day and sometimes the food is without soup - only the plain rice is fed. The inmates are not granted regular sunbath and have no access to medical attention as the medical staff assigned to the facility is nowhere to be found. The BCR/Police keep inmates in detention without documentation. Pretrial detention is also prevalent at the cells. Also one of the two rooms in the police station is being used as holding cell which is unhygienic and suspects are detained beyond the statutory 48 hours period. Police Holding Cells are being used to hold pretrial

detainees before they are transported to the Harper Prison pending trial. There is a need to construct a prison facility in the county.

28. In River Gee County, the prison cells are in poor sanitary conditions and the standard for protection is low. Prisoners do escape easily through the ceiling – some which BCR has informed is not the case anymore. In terms of feeding, the inmates have regular breakfast from the prison's farm and lunch from the prison's supply. There are 8 correction officers who manage the facility, but 5 of them are volunteers. Inmates who are convicted are kept with pretrial detainees and a mentally unstable inmate is also kept with them. The inmates like those in Harper and Barclayville prisons are not uniformed. Unlike most other prisons, prisoners sleep on mattresses provided by the ICRC.
29. In Margibi County at the Kakata Central Prison, the condition of the prison and prisoners is also appalling. Food is inadequate, prisoners with disabilities are not kept in separate cells, while convicted criminals and pretrial detainees are placed in the same cell. The original prison occupancy is 60, while as of August 2016 the current occupancy was recorded as 124, out of which 73, inmates are pre-trial detainees.
30. At the Greenville Central Prison in Sinoe County, and the Buchanan Central Prisons in Grand Bassa County, the condition of the prisons and prisoners is also appalling with pretrial detainees accounting for more than 50-90% of prison population. For example at the Greenville Prison the original prison capacity is 25 while the total prison population stands at 30, of which 28 are pretrial detainees. At the Buchanan Central Prison, there is a total of 64 inmates out of which 27 are pretrial detainees. The prison was built with a capacity of 47 persons. The charges in these two prisons as in the case of most of the prisons across the country, are contempt of court, armed robbery, thief of property, gang rape, statutory rape, rape, misapplication of entrusted property, simple assault and debt.
31. In Bomi County, at the Tubmanburg Prison, INCHR monitors observed and documented clogged sewage at the prison which has led to the flowing of feces in the cell and prison yard causing bad odor. Presently, the roof of the prison is damaged which has caused serious leakages of the entire facility. Access to legal services is very limited and sometimes not available to pretrial detainees. There are also no mattresses, clothing, supplies or toiletries, shavers, soap etc. for use by the prisoners. Also there is very limited preliminary medical examination before prisoners are admitted in prison. Meanwhile, as in the case of the majority of the prisons in Liberia because of the lack of mobility the prison superintendents and staff find it difficult to take prisoners to health facilities. The total number of prisoners is 44 with pretrial detention at 28 - four of which are pre-trial detainees, who have never been to court for the past 2 years. It is good to note that presently the facility is provided with solar panels through UNMIL Quick Impact Project (QIP) as a source of electricity since June 2016.
32. In Cape Mount County, the prison is an ordinary warehouse with no facility to house a central prison. The ventilation is also very poor. There are also cases of solitary confinement at this temporary prison being reported. Most times prisoners

are not treated when they fall ill. In addition convicted criminals are not separated from pretrial detainees and juveniles, while females prisoners are being kept in the hallways. Meanwhile a new prison is under construction and it is hoped that when completed it will address these challenges.

33. At the Zwedru Correction Palace in Grand Gedeh County, there are a total 98 cells with 37 beds. However, only 18 of the cells have beds. Out of a total of 213 inmates presently at the prison only 35 have mattresses, and another 33 have mats on which they sleep. Unlike most of the prisons across Liberia the Zwedru Correction Palace is not overcrowded – there are 12 empty cells without inmates at all but these cells are also without any beds, mattresses or mats. The Prison capacity is 274 with 213 inmates presently being incarcerated. The Correction Palace is divided into Blocks: Block A has 14 cells where two females inmates are separated in 1 cell each. The remaining 12 cells are the empty cells mentioned above. In Block B there are 14 cells with all male – 5 of the cells have mattresses, while the other 9 cells have only mats. In Block C, there are 14 cells with all male inmates. 10 cells have beds, while 4 have mats. For Block D, there are 14 cells – with all male inmates, there are 4 cells with beds, 6 cells with mattresses and 4 cells with mats. For Block E, there are 42 cells with all male inmates. There are 4 cells with beds, 22 cells with mattresses and 18 with mats. INCHR monitor spoke with inmates who complained that bathrooms that are very dirty with slams that are certainly not conducive. This condition is similar to other prisons in Liberia. The Prisoners at the Zwedru Correction Palace also told INCHR monitor, that although they are fed twice a day, the food is usually served in very small quantity. It was also observed during INCHR monitoring visit, that prisoners are not separated by uniform which usually distinguished convicted prisoners from detainees. There have also been no electricity at the Correction Palace for the past three weeks due to gasoline and fuel shortage, this information was confirmed by prison authorities at the Zwedru Correction Palace in Grand Gedeh County. The total number of prisoners at the Correction Place stands at 213, with 58 pretrial detainees as of the submission of this report. The inmates are involved in agriculture to help feed them.
34. These conditions are similar in Grand Gedeh County where at the Ziah Town Police Depot, in Konobo District, there are no separate cells for males and females, both sexes are held in the same holding cell and toilet facilities at the Police Depot are not conducive at all. There is a constant leakage of water from the toilet into the cell where alleged perpetrators are kept without food and water.
35. In RiverCess County, the structure used as a detention center is divided into 4 cells. In all of these cells there are damaged ceilings with constant leakage during rainy seasons. These cells are also overcrowded with prisoners, many of which are pretrial detainees. Food supplies is irregular and prisoners eat once or twice a day and are made to used bathrooms that are very dirty and not conducive. Furthermore, the prison has no electricity and is barricaded with a very short fence that does not completely surround the prison premise. There are also no particular uniform separating, inmates from convicts. There are presently 40 inmates out of which 17 are pretrial detainees.

## **VI. Legal and policy framework related to prisons and prisoners**

36. As mentioned earlier, this Thematic Report not only looks at the conditions of prisons and prisoners but also wants to flag human rights violations that need to be corrected. These violations must be seen both with respect to legal and policy frameworks related to prisons and prisoners especially related to internal and regional human rights frameworks and standards, as well as domestic and legal policy framework for the protection of human rights, as discussed below:

### **A. International and regional human rights framework**

37. Liberia is under obligations to protect, respect, promote and uphold human rights of all persons within its territorial confines in line with international treaties, and standards to which Liberia is a party. For example, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) provides for an accused person right to a speedy trial which is a human right guaranteed to all persons. In addition, the ICCPR and the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (hereinafter, the Torture Convention) both prohibit torture and cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment, without exception or derogation. Article 10 of the ICCPR, mandates that "[a]ll persons deprived of their liberty shall be treated with humanity and with respect for the inherent dignity of the human person." It also requires that "the reform and social re-adaptation of prisoners" be an "essential aim" of imprisonment.

38. Furthermore, several additional international documents flesh out the human rights of persons deprived of liberty, providing guidance as to how governments may comply with their international legal obligations. The most comprehensive such guidelines are the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (known as the Standard Minimum Rules), adopted by the U.N. Economic and Social Council in 1957. It should be noted however, that although the Standard Minimum Rules are not a treaty, they constitute an authoritative guide to binding treaty standards.

39. Other documents relevant to an evaluation of prison conditions include the Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons Under Any Form of Detention or Imprisonment, the Basic Principles for the Treatment of Prisoners, and, with regard to juvenile prisoners, the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice (known as the "Beijing Rules"). Like the SMRs, these instruments are binding on governments to the extent that the norms set out in them explicate the broader standards contained in human rights treaties.

40. These documents clearly reaffirm the tenet that prisoners retain fundamental human rights. As the most recent of these documents, the Basic Principles for the Treatment of Prisoners, declares:

*"Except for those limitations that are demonstrably necessitated by the fact of incarceration, all prisoners shall retain the human rights and fundamental freedoms set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and, where the State concerned is a party, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*

*and the Optional Protocol thereto, as well as such other rights as are set out in other United Nations covenants.”*

41. Significantly, the Human Rights Committee has also stressed that the obligation to treat persons deprived of their liberty with dignity and humanity is a fundamental and universally applicable rule, not dependent on the material resources available to the state party.

#### **B. Domestic and legal policy framework for the protection of human rights in the context of prisons and prisoners**

42. According to Liberian law, pre-trial detainees should not be detained without trial for more than two successive terms, meaning, six months, without being brought to trial. Liberian law provides that accused persons who are arrested, should be charged and forwarded to court within forty eight (48) hours. Chapter 3 Article 21(f) of the Liberian Constitution provides for an accused person right to a speedy trial which is a human right guaranteed to all persons. Chapter 2 of the Criminal Procedure Law of Liberia provides that one accused of the commission of an offense, or suspected of the commission of an offense is to be accorded his rights as contained therein, which include but is not limited to speedy trial. In addition, the Liberia Criminal Procedure Law, chapter 18, section 18.2 provides: "Unless good cause is shown, the court shall dismiss a complaint and/or indictment against accused who is kept beyond the statutory period of two successive terms without being tried in a court of competent jurisdiction, otherwise, the court shall discharge him..."

### **VII. Review of Related Literature –(Trend Analysis of Prison Conditions in Liberia)**

43. The conditions of the prisons and prisoners in Liberia as highlighted in this report are certainly not new. Since 2011, the appalling conditions of prisons and prisoners have been flagged in many reports and have been alluded to by the government. For instance, the US State Department report of 2012 on Global Prison Conditions, specifically related to Liberia, highlighted the extended pretrial remand of hundreds of detainees in 2012, which was attributed to the courts' difficulty in processing cases. As mentioned in the report in 2012, an estimated 78 percent of all prisoners in Liberia were pre-trial detainees and while the average length of pretrial detention varied, in some cases the length of pre-trial detention exceeded the maximum length of sentence that could be imposed for the alleged crime.
44. Presently as of August 2016, prolonged-pretrial detention across Liberia is put at 65%. The poor conditions of prisons and prisoners are also lifted in the US State Department Report on Liberia for 2013 released on May 5, 2014. In August 2012, Liberia's Solicitor General reported that the Monrovia Central Prison was holding 1,015 inmates in a space designed for 374. Also in its report entitled the Appalling Prison Conditions in Liberia must be improved, released in September 20, 2011. Amnesty International highlighted that some prison conditions in Liberia are so poor that they violate basic human rights with inmates crowded into dirty cells without adequate food, water or healthcare. The report highlighted that despite good intentions and welcome steps taken by the government to improve the system, these

are however not enough. The report called for rather practical steps to be taken to reform Liberia's prisons. (Ref Amnesty reports of May 23, 2013 and September 2015).

45. As mentioned in this report the appalling conditions of prisons in Liberia range from lack of running water or proper water facilities, the smell of sewage still overwhelms some of the prisons cells. In addition, bedding is scarce and inmates often do not have a mattress or blanket in several of the prisons in the counties. Almost all inmates complained of body aches and rashes because they had to sleep on the floor, which is worse in rainy season when the floor is cold and damp. In some cells there are inadequate space for inmates to lie down, while in other prisons due to a lack of floor space some inmates had created makeshift hammocks made of grain sacks slung three or four meters above ground. These conditions as reported here coalesce with that of Prison Fellowship Liberia report in 2014 of inadequate space, bedding, food, sanitation, ventilation, cooling, lighting, basic and emergency medical care, and potable water which contributed to harsh and sometimes life-threatening conditions in the country's 15 prisons and detention centers. (See also the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, And Labor 2014 Country Report on Human Rights Practices released on June 15, 2015).
46. Further the INCHR monitoring confirms that there are limited or no provisions of healthcare for inmates – most of the prisons struggle to provide medical care because of a lack of trained staff and essential drugs. As a result common conditions such as malaria, skin infections and eye problems are often not treated and inmates are only transferred to a hospital in an emergency. Severe overcrowding in some prisons has a serious effect on the health and safety of prisoners. For example, the Monrovia Central Prison, Liberia's largest, was designed to hold 374 inmates but as at June 2016 the total number of inmates was 1035 as compared to 1,012 in 2015 and 839 in July 2011. This has shown a gradual and systematic increase in the number of inmates at the MCP over the last four years. Other poor conditions of the prisons reported systematically between 2011 and 2014 still remains the same today if not worst.
47. This Thematic Report on the condition of prisons also shows the current statistics with regards prison facilities and prisoners in the country. The INCHR in its 2014 Report on the Human Rights Situation in Liberia put the total prison population at 947 inmates, while prison population total (including pre-trial detainees / remand prisoners) stood at 2203 in 2015 (see US State Department human rights report; Prison population rate (per 100,000 of national population) stood at 49 based on an estimated national population of 4.5 million at mid-2015 (from United Nations figures.), while BCR in its 2015 Annual Report put the total prison population at 2104. It is worth mentioning that the State Department released its report May 2015, while the BCR report reflected as at December 2015.
48. In addition, pre-trial detainees / remand prisoners (percentage of prison population) was about 83.0% in 2013; and female prisoners (percentage of prison population) stood at 3.2% (2011); while juveniles / minors / young prisoners (under 18 years of age) including definition (percentage of prison population) stood at 2.7% as at December 2011. The number of prisons establishments / institutions stood at 15 in 2015 - the largest being the Monrovia Central Prison; and the official capacity of

prison system as at 2011 stood at 1164 and occupancy level (based on official capacity) was put at 137.5% in 2011. Presently, the official capacity of the prison system as at August 2016 stands at 1553 while the total number of prisons for the same period stands at 2354. Comparatively, there was an increase in the official capacity of the prison system by 389 (1553 minus 1164) which is an increase of about 33% in official prison population. This shows some progress in rehabilitating prisons with a few additional spaces or in constructing of new detention facilities or cell rooms. Nevertheless, the addition of 389 additional cell capacities when compared with the number of inmates of 2354 is very insignificant and negligible. Again the BCR indicates that prison population fluctuates around 2100 inmates.

49. In addition, when compared with the prison population trend in terms of (year, prison population total, and prison population rate) reports on the prisons in Liberia show the following: in 2011, the total prison occupancy stood at 1,601 about 39% increase in the actually prison capacity; while in 2013, the total prison occupancy stood at 1,827, 43% increase of the actual prisons capacity. When compared with the World Prison Brief – Institute for Criminal Policy Research, and US State Department report, there is an increase in the number of prisoners presently across the country. Despite this high increase, when compared with reports in 2013 where 83.0% was pre-trial detainees / remand prisoners, as of August 2016, the percent of pre-trial detainees / remand prisoners is put at 65%. Again, there is some progress with regards to decrease in the prolonged pretrial detentions – yet very negligible in comparison with the overall increase in the prisons population between 2011 and 2013 of 1827 prisoners as against 2254. As at August 2016, there is an increase of about 427 inmates. (See the tables in Annex 1).

#### **VIII. Efforts of the Government of Liberia to address the conditions of prisons and prisoners**

50. The Liberian Government, in conjunction with UN and other development partners, has taken some positive steps such as improving sanitation in Monrovia Central Prison and including prison health services in a 10-year national health and policy plan. There has been efforts to construct additional and modern prisons facilities as in the case of the Sanniquellie Prison constructed in 2010 with funding from the UNPBF and to renovate and expand existing prisons as in the case of the Gbarnga, Voinjama and Harper Central Prisons also with support from the UNPBF and the Justice and Security Trust Fund (JSTF). Some of these efforts include recruitment, training and deployment of additional Corrections Officers to the counties as well as setting up of efficient record keeping system at the Prisons to keep records of each prisoner.
51. In addition, as a means of meeting one of the targets agreed in the Statement of Mutual Commitments (SMC) by the GoL in 2011 *“Take immediate steps to reduce the unacceptable levels of pretrial detention cases”* the Government with support from her partners set-up and implemented the Magistrates Sitting Program at the MCP and later expanded the program to all magistrates courts in Montserrado, as well as the three capital cities in Bong, Nimba, and Lofa counties. The program, operating out of eight magistrates courts in Montserrado County, disposed a total of 568 cases in five months from August to December 2013. When the program was adequately running, the number of pretrial detainees decreased significantly, an



impact worthy to note. Jail delivery, which is a version of the program in other counties, and the involvement of county attorneys who visit and assess pretrial detention at corrections facilities, had a positive impact on pretrial detention in Buchanan, Kakata, Sanniquellie, Tubmanburg and Voinjama prisons. As a result, the lower average admission rate recorded in November 2013 contributed to the constant population experienced part of 2014. [Ref. the Third Outcome Review of progress in the implementation of the SMC on peacebuilding in Liberia - PBC/8/LBR/1 – April 16, 2014.] Note also that INCHR in its 2014 Annual Report reported a total of 947 inmates.

52. Also in 2011, the Government of Liberia concluded with the UN and other partners the removal or expansion of the MCP to Cheesmanburg, Montserrado County. Prior to the spread of the Ebola Pandemic in Liberia, in 2014 the administrative block of the new MCP was completed while the first cell block was under construction. The new MCP was intended to sit on 30 acres of land but unfortunately has come to a halt due to funding.
53. However, despite these efforts much is desired and more needs to be done before Liberia meets prisoners' basic needs as guaranteed for under the Liberia Constitution and laws, and in compliance with various international treaties, conventions and protocols to which it has either ratified or acceded to. Whatever the circumstance the government has a clear and binding obligation not to expose prison inmates to conditions that constitute cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment, as guaranteed under both domestic and international human rights law.
54. "Under Liberian law, prisoners must undergo a basic health assessment when they come to prison, as these assessments could help control the spread of communicable diseases as well as provide valuable data about pre-existing medical conditions and those contracted while in prison." Therefore it becomes a violation if this procedure is not followed or adhered to.
55. Therefore, immediate action is needed to improve conditions, including access to health care, for Liberia's prison inmates. While all agree that concrete and practical steps must be taken to remedy this situation, because of the scale of the tasks, implementation of interventions is at various stages and some fundamental deficiencies have not yet been fully resolved, key among those deficiencies are: (a) An outdated legal system that creates a backlog of cases on the dockets that in turn leads to prisons over crowdedness with pretrial detainees [see SMC Outcome Review First progress report of March 13, 2012.] (b) There have also been issues regarding insufficient resource allocation and lack of human resource capacity in the correction and rehabilitation sector.

## **IX. Key findings on causes of pretrial detentions and poor prison conditions**

56. Magistrates or judges rent seeking tendencies remain a huge source of unnecessary incarcerations. Several interlocutors informed that incarcerations are money making means for some magistrates and judges; hence, people are incarcerated not merely on the gravity of their offenses, but for monetary gains. For instance, the requirement to file a bond or payment of bond fees has been abused by magistrates and judges.

57. Lack of due diligence on the issuance of writs of arrest by magistrates, city solicitors and county attorneys: the issuance of writs of arrest is commonplace not necessarily because of the merits of the complaints, but in most instances that a complaint has been filed. Very often, thorough investigations are not conducted before the issuance of a writ of arrest. The law provides that a city solicitor or county attorney can review a police charge and modify or even drop the charge, but this is not the case in most situations. The ratios of complaints to actual arrests and subsequent incarcerations remain high.
58. Limited trial period at Circuit Level: the trial period in Liberia at the circuit level is forty-two days (42) days and this is too short and is a source of backlogs of cases. Given the nature of county circuit courts which hear criminal, civil, and probate cases, a forty-two day period is absolutely inadequate to respond to the demands on the courts. Additionally, grand inquest period of sitting also for forty –two days is unlikely to afford prosecutors regular indictment.
59. Lack of knowledge by population onailable offenses: Inadequate number of prosecutors and defense counsels coupled with courts long recess period overwhelm the dockets across Liberia, there are few prosecutors and defense counsels, hence, the dockets are overwhelmed. Because of this lack of prosecutors or defense counsels, prolonged pretrial detentions remain the norm rather than the exception. It is also interesting to note that the long recesses of the courts for the conclusion of each term create backlog of cases. It is time now that Liberia rethinks it court terms, perhaps a year round operational session to meet current demands.
60. Private prosecutors' abandonment of their cases after suspects are incarcerated: A good percentage of private prosecutors perceive just as the ability to incarcerate someone who has offended them, hence, as long as the alleged offenders are incarcerated, they/private prosecutors abandon pursuit of their case. This scenario remains a wicked problem for the legal system. Balancing this delicate problem requires lot of critical judgment. Should the court immediately release a suspect accused of committing a grave crime because the private prosecutor has abandoned his/her case? What happens to the respect for rule of law if alleged offenders are not kept in detention; is there a high likelihood for the aggrieved parties to revert to self-help because they are likely to perceive the courts/legal system as being ineffective?<sup>1</sup>
61. Conditions of detained persons and Facilities: Generally, with very few exceptions namely the Gbarnga Central Prison in Bong County, prisoners are held in facilities that are far below minimum standards. Prisoners lack basic necessities such as adequate food, access to health, sleeping space, hygiene care and recreation. Most prisons are overcrowded and they have little or no mattresses for prisoners to sleep

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<sup>1</sup> These are concerns that were raised by a prosecutor assigned in Bong County. He opines that why it is fundamental for the Government to decongest the prisons by releasing suspects whose accusers are not forthcoming to prosecute them, however, caution must be exercised to avoid immediately releasing accused persons into the communities because of a negative message such immediate release will have on the respect and authority of the Government to punish offenders, something if perceived by the population as being absent will likely increase the incidence of self-help or vigilante justice.

on, thereby forcing the inmates to sleep on the bare floor. The Monrovia Central Prison, a facility built to accommodate at most 370 persons but currently holds on average approximately 1,200 persons is the classic case of overcrowdings in the Liberian prison system.

62. Overall, Correction Officers treat the prisoners humanely, but they / Correction Officers lack enough resources to cater to the prisoners' needs. There was no evidence of systemic physical abuse of prisoners by wardens. Although the law provides for rehabilitation of sentenced prisoners through granting them the opportunity to learn viable skills, there exists very little opportunity for skills programs for prisoners.
63. The erosion of the authority of traditional leaders<sup>2</sup>: Some interlocutors blame the surge in the prison population on the weakened authority of traditional leaders who prior to Liberia's prolonged civil conflict had significant authority to resolve disputes in their towns or villages. The chiefs' moral suasion once afforded them the authority to resolve myriad of disputes including land contestations, disorderly conducts such as altercations between families and or neighbors, and petty theft offenses. But regrettably this is not the case today, because the chiefs' sphere of influence has been significantly depleted such that even the most basic disputes are taken to formal courts-which are quite under resourced to meet with emerging demands.
64. The absence of assigned prosecutors, defense counsels and judges from their assigned counties: One salient element which contributes to prolonged pretrial detentions is the absent of these actors from their assigned counties. When a prosecutor is absent from his assigned county, a detained suspect's charges will not be reviewed to ensure s/he is indicted or released in timely manner consistent with law; also, if the either the defense counsel or judge is absent from the court, even an indicted accused will not have the opportunity to have their day in court. Consequently, backlogs of cases mount.
65. Detention of injured persons in police holding cells: International best practice requires that wounded or sick persons charged with crimes are first given needed medical attention; however, this standard is not been upheld in some Police Holding cells. For example, at the Kakata Police Station, two men who were severely wounded during an altercation were kept in detention without being provided medical assistance. Regrettably, the police officers assigned at that Station demonstrated no understanding of the duty imposed upon by law to assist injured detained persons get immediate medical treatment.

## **X. Conclusion**

66. The continued rise of incoming prisoners to Liberia's prisons, contributes to a worsening problem of overcrowding. As it stands, the prison population has more

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<sup>2</sup> An open discussion with a county official in Bong County highlights the influx of cases to the courts because traditional leaders no longer enjoy the authority they once had to resolve minor dispute in their communities which largely kept their communities in cohesion: that this lack of authority is a proximate cause of every dispute being decided by the formal justice system.

than tripled the majority of the prison's capacity especially at the MCP. Living conditions in the prisons are damaging to the physical and mental well-being of inmates and in many cases constitute clear threats to health. Toilets are blocked and overflowing or simply nonexistent, and there is no running water. As a result, diseases are widespread. Prisons are in bad shape and the facilities are operating below the minimum standards required for prison. The structures are not up to date and the sanitary conditions are appalling. In addition, the separation, placement and treatment of prisoners remain a challenge. These conditions unfortunately fall short, by any measure of UN standards for the treatment of prisoners as well as domestic policies and regulations.

67. The Government of Liberia has the moral responsibility to reform the system and act in a way that protects, respects, and upholds the human rights of its prisoners. The Government should create conditions that will keep the prisoners both physically and mentally alive, and give them a chance to be rehabilitated and restored. Though isolated, inhuman conditions with severe overcrowding and sleeping on cold floors, could amount to torture which also stands in violation of international human rights standards, including the UN Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.
68. Despite some very notable efforts of the Government with support from her partners to help address the appalling conditions of prisons and prisoners in Liberia, not much is being achieved. It is obvious that there needs to be more robust coherent, coordinated and sustained approach to remedy this situation and avert the wanton abuse and violations of human rights in the prisons across Liberia.
69. Whilst the focus of the report is on prisons and conditions of prisoners, the INCHR nationwide visit to the prisons also further exposed Liberia's weak justice system especially in the leeward counties. Courts are often closed and judges are not available for trials thus leading to increase in the number of pretrial detainees. Jurisdiction of cases appears to be a problem especially in Grand Kru, River Gee, and Maryland. On the other hand magistrates and circuit courts are the only judicial institutions available throughout the region for adjudication as such these courts are overburdened with cases. The lack of adequate human-power, logistics and mobility is also a major hindrance to access to justice and protection of human rights – something which needs to be holistically and comprehensively addressed. Finally the INCHR recommends a few concrete actions to the Government that could potentially help address the poor conditions of prisons and prisoners. The INCHR stands ready to provide all the support needed to help achieve the recommendations below.

## **XI. Recommendations**

70. The INCHR recommends the holding of a national conference on how to address the appalling conditions of prisons and prisoners in the Country. This Conference could involve all the relevant justice and rule of law institutions and actors as well as institutions that work for the promotion and protection of human rights and other partners. This recommendation regarding holding of such conference is not new. There have been plans in this regard but have not yet materialize. The INCHR is willing to work with the BCR and other relevant actors to ensure such conference is

held. The conference could decide on a roadmap with clear actions and timeframe to address human rights violations in prisons.

71. The Government must take immediate and practical steps to alleviate the problem of overcrowding in Liberia prisons. This could include the construction of new prison facilities, or the refurbishment and expansion of existing facilities so as to provide more living space per inmates. Introduce non-custodial measures such as parole, suspended sentences, fines, community services and bails. Given the steady increase of prison population over the last six years, the Liberian Government must design a plan to accommodate incoming prisoners with adequate living conditions rather than continue to overpopulate existing facilities. It is obvious that the construction of new prisons facilities will not solve the overcrowding of prison or address prolonged pretrial detentions but could be an interim measure to allow for a much more medium-to-long term progress on prison reforms. Perhaps as the MCP is the most overcrowded and has the highest number of pretrial detainees, the completion of the Cheesemanburg Prison should be given priority. The government needs to lobby for support from her partners to help complete the Cheesemanburg Prison.
72. Pre-trial detention - in accordance with relevant legislation, the Liberian Government must take all necessary steps to prevent excessive pre-trial detention; that is, any detention which surpasses the six-month time limit. This however requires much more coordinated work of the side of all justice actors. The Magistrate Sitting Program has shown some positive actions in this regards, especially from the outset of the program. The Magistrate Sitting Program needs to be accelerated and expanded in areas where pretrial detentions are alarmingly high.
73. Over the last five years the BCR has worked assiduously to recruit and train prison staff, and have also enhanced the capacity of prisons staff that were already in the employ with the MOJ. These trainings have resulted into good record keeping and overall prisons management at various prisons in Liberia by Prison Superintendents and staff. However, the need for recruitment of additional BCR staff and training cannot be overemphasized. In September 2015, the BCR submitted a proposal for funding through the JSTF to help “strengthening the Bureau of Corrections and Rehabilitation through personnel training. This proposal sought to recruitment, training and deploy 140 Entry Level Correctional Officers to 14 BCR facilities and 120 special trained Correctional and LNP - PSU officers to MCP and the National Palace for Correction (NPC). The inclusion of the LNP – PSU officers, was expected to provide support to the correctional officers in case of disturbances, riots, and escorts as necessary. The recruitment and training of new officers and those already in service was endorsed by the Government of Liberia in the Strategic priorities of the MOJ/BCR Strategic plan 2009-2013 and now 2015 – 2019 which is yet to be costed and approved – this was also highlighted in the approved GOL UNMIL Transition Plan of 2015. Adequate staffing is actually required to ensure safe and secure containment of inmates given the currently number of corrections officers in the system.
74. Government should expedite action in the passing of the BCR Strategic Plan and the Prisons Act to empower the Bureau to address some of its challenges and enable it effectively and efficiently manage the prisons and prisoners.

75. As at September 2015, BCR records showed that existing trained staff was 234 and untrained 119 correctional officers working nationwide. Out of the total of 234 corrections officers working, 44 were females. Forty one (41) of the 234 had attended management training while 22 had attended the “training of trainers’ workshop; and 14 had attended the advanced training of trainers’ workshop and 9 had completed the Certified Training of Trainers. The BCR also put in plans to organize classes for the untrained officers who were not going to be catered for in the proposal is submitted to enhance their capacity in work performance. Given that the proposal submitted in September 2015 was intended to be completed between 6 months to 1 year – not later than September 2016, it is obvious the BCR has not been able to train the remaining corrections officers. The INCHR is willing to work with the BCR to organize and facilitate specific trainings on human rights and prisoners.
76. The Government must begin to take action to achieve recommendations on “**Right or Area: 12.6. Conditions** of detention” in the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) – Report on Liberia. During the 2015 UPR on Liberia, Zimbabwe, Morocco and Czech Republic made the following recommendations: 100.93. Continue strengthening the capacity of government institutions, including the judiciary, police, prison service and government ministries, on the application of a human rights-based approach (Zimbabwe) - Source of position: A/HRC/30/4/Add.1 - Para. 93; 100.160. Continue judicial reform to improve access to justice by promoting better coverage throughout the country and by updating its prison system (Morocco) - **Source of position:** A/HRC/30/4/Add.1 - Para. 159; and 100.159. Strengthen the judicial system in order to ensure respect for due process, and reform the system of pre-trial detention (Czech Republic); **Source of position:** A/HRC/30/4/Add.1 - Para. 160. Achieving these recommendations, including strengthening institutions and putting in place or the needed policies.

## Annex I

The schedule below reflects the current prison population and the percentages of convicted and detained inmates. (Source: BCR Annual Report of 2015)

| LOCATIONS OF PRISON FACILITIES | CONVICTED/SENTENCED INMATES |           |           |          | PRE- TRIAL DETAINEES |           |           |          |                 |                    |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------------------|-----------|-----------|----------|-----------------|--------------------|
|                                | ADULTS                      |           | JUVENILES |          | ADULTS               |           | JUVENILES |          | Normal Capacity | Current Population |
|                                | M                           | F         | M         | F        | M                    | F         | M         | F        |                 |                    |
| River Cess                     | 0                           | 0         | 0         | 0        | 15                   | 1         | 0         | 0        | 35              | 16                 |
| Sinoe                          | 5                           | 0         | 0         | 0        | 26                   | 5         | 0         | 0        | 40              | 36                 |
| Bomi                           | 13                          | 1         | 0         | 0        | 26                   | 0         | 0         | 0        | 60              | 40                 |
| Grand Cape Mount               | 12                          | 0         | 0         | 0        | 22                   | 2         | 1         | 0        | 16              | 35                 |
| Montserrado                    | 165                         | 0         | 0         | 0        | 754                  | 14        | 12        | 0        | 374             | 1,011              |
| Bong                           | 39                          | 3         | 0         | 0        | 98                   | 1         | 1         | 0        | 130             | 142                |
| Margibi                        | 30                          | 0         | 0         | 0        | 60                   | 3         | 3         | 0        | 60              | 96                 |
| Bondiway                       | 1                           | 1         | 0         | 0        | 22                   | 0         | 1         | 0        | 16              | 25                 |
| Grand Bassa                    | 26                          | 0         | 0         | 0        | 61                   | 2         | 0         | 0        | 45              | 79                 |
| Gbarpolu                       | 7                           | 0         | 0         | 0        | 20                   | 0         | 0         | 0        | 25              | 27                 |
| Maryland                       | 33                          | 3         | 0         | 0        | 30                   | 0         | 1         | 0        | 36              | 67                 |
| Nimba                          | 59                          | 2         | 0         | 0        | 116                  | 6         | 2         | 0        | 74              | 185                |
| River Gee                      | 6                           | 0         | 0         | 0        | 25                   | 0         | 0         | 0        | 45              | 31                 |
| Lofa                           | 28                          | 2         | 0         | 0        | 42                   | 0         | 0         | 0        | 40              | 72                 |
| Grand Gedeh                    | 184                         | 1         | 0         | 0        | 54                   | 2         | 0         | 0        | 274             | 242                |
| Grand Kru                      | 0                           | 0         | 0         | 0        | 0                    | 0         | 0         | 0        | 0               | 0                  |
| <b>Total</b>                   | <b>608</b>                  | <b>13</b> | <b>0</b>  | <b>0</b> | <b>1371</b>          | <b>36</b> | <b>21</b> | <b>0</b> | <b>0</b>        | <b>2104</b>        |

### Prison population and projections

| County           | Prison          | National Population | Current cell capacity | Projected Prison Population | Juvenile 7.5% | Women 5%   | Men 87.5%    |
|------------------|-----------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|---------------|------------|--------------|
| Montserrado      | Monrovia        | 1,054,836           | 374                   | 1255                        | 94            | 63         | 1,098        |
| Margibi          | Kakata/Bondiway | 234,753             | 90                    | 279                         | 21            | 14         | 244          |
| Grand Bassa      | Buchanan        | 183,486             | 80                    | 219                         | 16            | 11         | 192          |
| Bomi             | Tubmanburg      | 61,008              | 100                   | 71                          | 5             | 4          | 62           |
| Grand Cape Mount | Robertsport     | 44,506              | Makeshift             | 53                          | 4             | 3          | 46           |
| Lofa             | Voinjama        | 440,258             | 60                    | 525                         | 39            | 26         | 460          |
| Gbarpolu         | Bopolu          | 43,756              | Police cell           | 51                          | 4             | 3          | 44           |
| Nimba            | Sanniquillie    | 611,889             | 25                    | 729                         | 55            | 36         | 638          |
| Bong             | Gbarnga         | 367,324             | 130                   | 438                         | 33            | 22         | 383          |
| Sinoe            | Greenville      | 81,725              | Makeshift             | 98                          | 7             | 5          | 86           |
| River Cess       | Cestos          | 33,445              | Makeshift             | 40                          | 3             | 2          | 35           |
| River Gee        | Fishtown        | 89,000              | Makeshift             | 105                         | 8             | 5          | 92           |
| Grand Kru        | Barclayville    | 28,665              | LNP Holding Cell      | 34                          | 2             | 1          | 31           |
| Maryland         | Harper          | 144,680             | Renovated             | 173                         | 13            | 9          | 151          |
| Grand Gedeh      | Zwedru          | 182,836             | 270                   | 218                         | 16            | 11         | 191          |
| <b>TOTAL</b>     |                 | <b>3,602,167</b>    | <b>1,129</b>          | <b>4,287</b>                | <b>322</b>    | <b>214</b> | <b>3,751</b> |

| <b>Name of Prison</b>      | <b>Location</b>              | <b>Original Capacity</b> | <b>Total Number of Inmates</b> | <b>Men</b> | <b>Women</b> | <b>Children</b> | <b>Non-of Pre-trial Detainees</b> |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|------------|--------------|-----------------|-----------------------------------|
| Monrovia Central Prison    | Central Monrovia             | 374                      | 1,032                          |            |              |                 | 711                               |
| Sanniquelle Central Prison | Sanniquelle, Nimba County    | 75                       | 178                            | 165        | 5            | 8               | 111                               |
| Harper Central Prison      | Harper, Maryland County      |                          | 73                             | 70         | 0            | 1               | 31                                |
| Voinjama Central Prison    | Voinjama, Lofa County        | 40                       | 73                             | 73         | 0            | 1               | 41                                |
| Gbarnga Central Prison     | Gbarnga, Bong County         | 130                      | 132                            | 110        | 12           | 0               | 87                                |
| Tubmanburg Prison          | Tubmanburg, Bomi County      | 137                      | 37                             | 27         | 2            | 2               | 27                                |
| Upper Buchanan Prison      | Buchanan, Grand Bassa County | 46                       | 76                             | ---        | ---          | 0               | 17                                |
| Kakata Central prison      | Margibi                      | 60                       | 110                            | 64         | 0            | 1               | 64                                |
| Zwedru Corrections Palace  |                              | 274                      | 249                            | 57         | 0            | 1               | 58                                |
| <b>Total</b>               |                              | <b>1136</b>              | <b>1960</b>                    | <b>566</b> | <b>19</b>    | <b>14</b>       | <b>1147</b>                       |
| Greenville                 | Greenville, Sinoe County     | 25                       | 27                             | 25         | 2            | 0               | 22                                |
| Fish Town                  | Fish Town Rivergee County    | 45                       | 27                             | 25         | 2            | 0               | 20                                |
| Bopulu                     | Gbarpolu County              | ---                      | ----                           | ---        | ---          | ---             | ---                               |
| Barclayville               | Grand Kru County             | 4                        | 7                              | 7          | 0            | 0               | 5                                 |
| Cestos City                | Rivercess County             | 45                       | 40                             | 21         | 1            | 1               | 17                                |
| Zwedru Corrections Palace  | Zwedru, Grand Gedeh          | 274                      | 249                            | 57         | 0            | 1               | 58                                |
| Robertssport               | Grand Cape Mount             | 24                       | 44                             | 44         | 0            | 0               | 28                                |
| <b>Total</b>               |                              | <b>417</b>               | <b>394</b>                     | <b>179</b> | <b>5</b>     | <b>2</b>        | <b>160</b>                        |