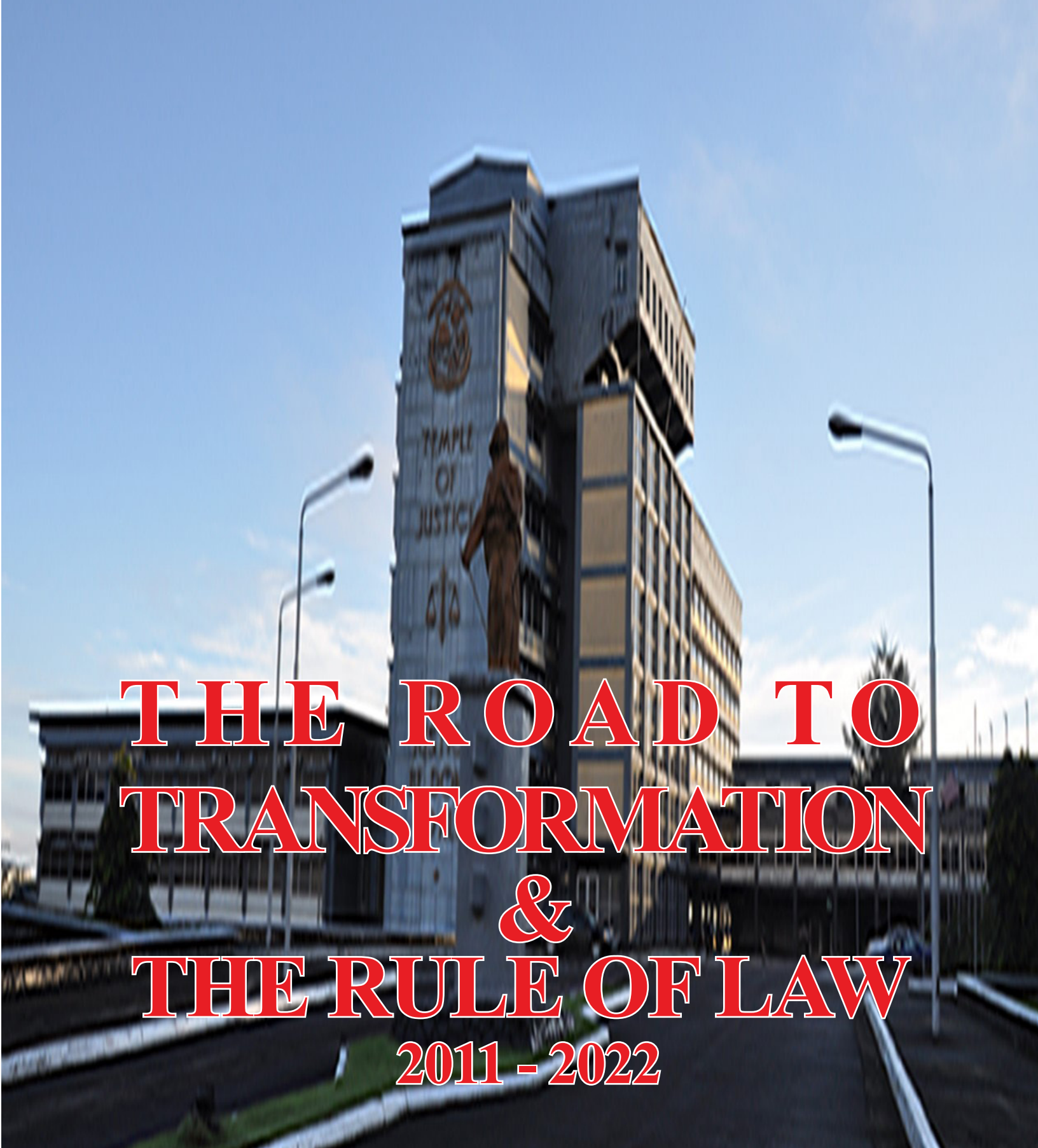


*The*  
LIBERIAN



JUDICIARY

SEPTEMBER 2022



**THE ROAD TO  
TRANSFORMATION  
&  
THE RULE OF LAW  
2011 - 2022**

# Supreme Court Bench Republic of Liberia



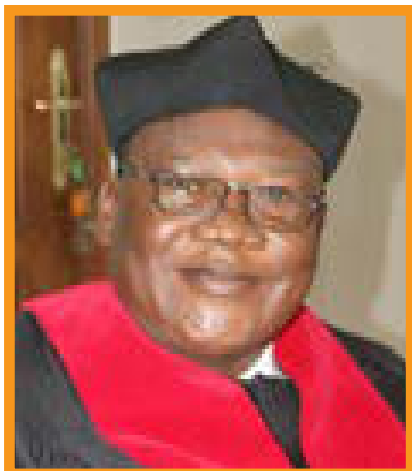
His Honor Francis S. Korkpor, Sr.  
Chief Justice



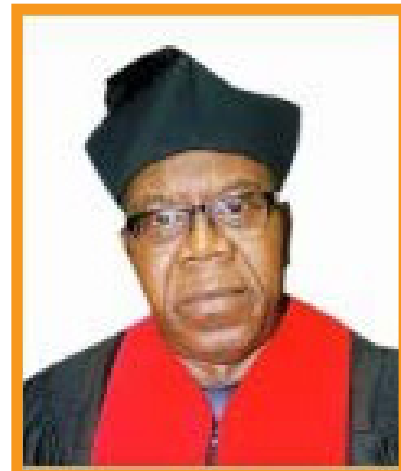
Her Honor Jamesetta H. Wolokolie  
ASSOCIATE JUSTICE



Her Honor Sie-A-Nyene G. Youh  
ASSOCIATE JUSTICE



His Honor Joseph N. Nagbe  
ASSOCIATE JUSTICE



His Honor Yussif D. Kaba  
ASSOCIATE JUSTICE

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**Supreme Court of Liberia**

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Supreme Court of Liberia

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# THE ROAD TO TRANSFORMATION



*His Honor Francis S. Korkpor, Sr.  
Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Liberia*

**I**t was after many years of private law practice, serving mainly as lawyer for the Catholic Church and its affiliate institutions, and human rights advocacy with the Catholic Justice and Peace Commission that I was first appointed to the Supreme Court Bench in 2004. This was during the National Transitional Government of Liberia (NTGL) headed by His Excellency the late Charles Gyude Bryant. The recommendation for me to serve on the Court was made by some members of the Liberian National Bar Association. The members of the Supreme Court at the time were Chief Justice Henry Reed Cooper, and Associate Justices Francis S. Korkpor, Sr., John L. Greaves, Ishmael P. Campbell and Felicia V. Coleman.

The tenure of the Supreme Court as set by the Accra Peace Accord (CPA) was two years. Thus, after two years of service, all five Justices of the Court resigned to give way to the new democratically elected government headed by President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf to appoint Justices of the Court under a constitutional government. I was the only Justice who was retained and reappointed to

the Supreme Court by President Sirleaf. President Sirleaf said to me that her decision to appoint me was for continuity of the programs and activities of the Court and also based on certain criteria which she considered essential of a Justice, key amongst which are knowledge of the law, integrity and human rights records, amongst others. Others appointed to the Supreme Court by President Sirleaf were Chief Justice Johnnie N. Lewis and Associate Justices J. Emmanuel Wureh, Gladys K. Johnson and Kabineh M. Ja'neh.

When the late Chief Justice Lewis resigned in September 2012 due to illness, President Sirleaf appointed me as Chief Justice. And the people of this country overwhelmingly endorsed my appointment. I cannot recall that there was a single person or institution in this country that raised issue with my nominations, twice as an Associate Justice and then as Chief Justice. I should note that I have no connection that prompted or influenced my appointments to this Court; my preferments were purely based on whatever good those who appointed me saw in me. So, having been blessed with national leadership, I promised that I would not betray the confidence of the Liberian people who bestowed the honor on me.

Serving at various times on the Supreme Court Bench and at the helm of the Judiciary, my Colleagues and I have worked assiduously to improve conditions in the Judiciary. The Henry Reed Cooper Bench was ushered in after the devastating civil war that ravaged this nation and its institutions, including the Judiciary. Therefore, the core concern of that Bench was rehabilitating and repairing court structures. In this regard, the Supreme Court worked closely with the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL). In addition to support received from the Liberian Government, the Quick Impact Program of UNMIL was instrumental in repairing and/or constructing court facilities throughout the country, with emphasis on magistrate

courts. The Cooper Bench is also credited with laying the basis for realistic salary structure for judicial workers, especially Circuit and Specialized Court Judges.

Under the Johnnie Lewis Bench more reform programs were envisioned and some were implemented. Two Judicial Complexes were built in Sinoe and Gbapolu Counties. On the grounds of the Temple of Justice, four new court houses were constructed which now house Criminal Court “C”, Criminal Court “D” and the Civil Law Court and the proposed Second Division of the Civil Law Court. The James A.A. Pierre Judicial Institute was established to train support - staff and give refresher courses to judges and magistrates; the Institute also took on the task of recruiting and training “professional magistrates.” The Public Defense Program was also established.



*His Honor Francis S. Korkpor, Sr.  
Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Liberia*

Because I served as Senior Associate Justice on the two previous Supreme Court Benches mentioned above, I was a part of the decision on all reform initiatives as well as the implementation

thereof. Thus, when I took on the mantle of leadership as Chief Justice, we continued with the reform programs and projects started by the former Chief Justices and embarked on many new ones. Let me therefore seize this opportunity to say a few words reflecting on my sojourn at this seat of high honor, touching on some of the reform programs that my Colleagues and I, together, have undertaken to improve conditions in the Judiciary.

1. We have constructed additional Judicial Complexes in Gbarnga Bong County, Barclayville, Grand Kru County; Zwedru, Grand Gedeh County; Sanniquellie, Nimba County; and Tubmanburg, Bomi County which are in full use today. Currently, Judicial Complexes are being constructed in Fishtown, River Gee County and Cestos City, Rivercess County. A judicial complex is a structure consisting of several court facilities such as the circuit court, debt court, labor court, tax court, revenue court, traffic court and magistrate court, etc. A judicial complex also has offices for the county attorney, public defender and probation and parole officers. The availability of many courts and offices of judicial actors in one central location promotes easy access to justice.

2. We have also built and continue to build many magistrate courts throughout the country either with direct funding from the Government of Liberia or development partners.

3. The Office of the Court Administrator has been improved and invigorated; three new Sections, the Inspectorate Section, the Public Affairs Section and the Project Section have been created for efficiency and productivity.

4. We have successfully conducted three Cycles of the Professional Magistrate Training Programs. The objective of the program is to train and deploy the total of three hundred (300) college graduates as associate magistrates. The program has proved to be highly successful in enhancing the knowledge of the law and performance of associate magistrates who man our courts of first instance.

5. We established the Magistrate Sitting Program at the Monrovia Central Prison, (MPC), aimed at curbing or minimizing prolonged detention without trial. The program is yielding fruitful results; we are seeking funding to replicate it in other parts of the country.

6. We have established Criminal Court “Es” in Bong and Nimba Counties to handle sexual genderbased violence cases.

7. In order to engender public confidence in the Judicial Inquiry Commission (JIC), and the Grievance and Ethics Committee (GEC), the two organs working under the aegis of the Supreme Court to curb ethical misconducts in the Judiciary, we expanded the composition of the two bodies. And we continue to take stern actions against Judges and Lawyers who are guilty of corruption or professional misconduct.

8. We have established a National Jury Office at the Temple of Justice with sub-offices in parts of the country; we are working to establish other sub-offices in the entire country in accordance with the New Jury Law.

9. Over the years, we have steadily provided increment in the salaries and remunerations of judges and judicial workers. While the take home pay of judges and judicial workers are yet not at a level satisfactory, especially given the application of what is known as “harmonization” policy, we can say with pride that there has

been some marked improvement. This is making the Judiciary an attractive place to work.

10. At long last, we now have the pension law working for retired Justices and Judges. All Justices and Judges who have honorably retired are today receiving pension benefits through the Judiciary without hindrance.

These are just few of the reform programs and projects we have undertaken since my incumbency as Chief Justice. Detailed accounts are outlined in this book produced by the Office of the Court Administrator through the Public Affairs Section. The implementation of these programs and projects would not have been possible without the support of a number of persons and institutions. To them we are very grateful. In this regard, I thank the former President of Liberia, Mrs. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf for her show of confidence in me, especially for appointing me as Chief Justice. This is the highest honor one can receive in the legal profession. I further thank her for providing support to the Judiciary during her administration.

I also thank President George Manneh Weah for his administration’s support to the Judiciary.

I thank my Colleagues for their immense support. In fact, we are in this together. They have been fullfledged parts of whatever has been accomplished.

And I thank all friendly governments and international donor agencies for their support.

**His Honor Francis S. Korkpor, Sr  
Chief Justice of the Supreme  
Court of Liberia**

# OVERVIEW

## *Constitutional and Legal Framework*



*His Honor Francis S. Korkpor, Sr.  
Chief Justice  
Supreme Court of Liberia*

The Constitution of Liberia (1986) establishes an apex court, The Supreme Court of Liberia, comprising the Chief Justice and four Associate Justices, with jurisdiction to determine all appeals arising from subordinate courts that are established by the Legislature. The original jurisdiction of the Supreme Court is engaged only in cases involving constitutional issues and where ambassadors, ministers or a county are parties. The Constitution empowers the Supreme Court to make rules concerning judicial and legal practice that apply to all courts of law.

Currently, an omnibus legislation the Judiciary Law of 1972 organizes the administration of justice in Liberia. The legislation divides Liberia into fifteen judicial circuits aligned with administrative counties and designates a Circuit Court whose jurisdiction covers its respective county, except for Montserrado County where civil and criminal jurisdictions are vested in two Circuit Courts respectively. Additional courts established at county level are vested with specialized jurisdictions, namely the Debt Court, the Monthly and Probate Courts, the Tax Court, Traffic Court, the Juvenile Court and the Labour Court.

The legislation provides for the qualifications and tenure of judges, for the judicial calendar terms and for judicial writs as well as procedures for disposal of cases. Magisterial Courts are established at district levels and the legislation regulates their operation and the tenure of their judges. The Judiciary Law further provides for the different functions of court officials including marshals, sheriffs, constables, clerks and attorneys, as well as for a jury system and for litigation involving indigent parties. Finally, it provides for the financial management of fiscal allocations to the Judiciary and court revenue, under the administrative oversight of the Chief Justice.

The Criminal Procedure Law of 1969 sets out the responsibilities of prosecutors, public defenders and jurors in the criminal justice system. Procedures have been stipulated for dealing with indictments, committal for criminal trial, witnesses, and pleas. For civil cases, the Civil Procedure Law of 1972 is applicable.

The Liberian Judiciary embarked upon the road to transformation by adopting its first Strategic Plan 2011 – 2013 to chart the groundwork for rebuilding its mandate in the context of the third pillar of the Poverty Reduction Strategy developed in 2008, notably, “strengthening governance and the rule of law”. This alignment built on two factors:

- (i) the situation of an ongoing transition after fourteen years of conflict, during which courts were destroyed and rendered ineffective and
  - (ii) the dire need for sustainable development, which includes functional courts to adjudicate cases and underpin economic development.
- Given these factors, the Judiciary adopted strategic targets to rebuild court houses, reconstruct registries and records, to recoup judicial human capacity and expertise, and to make the Judiciary more effective across the country. This was to ensure rising expectations from Liberians who are united in their demand for an independent, accessible, fair and accountable judicial branch of government are met.

## Vision Statement

An independent judiciary delivering timely and effective justice for all Liberians.

## Our Principles and Values

Our values and principles guide our behaviour and shall be reflected in our everyday activities and affect the way we work together. They shall also be reflected in our dealings with key stakeholders. Our values are the fibre with which we weave a culture that will induce passion and provide the organizational motives and force to drive our strategic intentions.

Our values and principles are:

- » Preserve, protect, defend and uphold the Constitution of Liberia
- » Fair, effective, accessible and expeditious justice for the Liberian People
- » Impartiality and non-discrimination (underlined in art. 8, of the Constitution of Liberia)
- » Integrity and honour (underlined in the Judicial Canons)

## Our Mission

“We interpret the law to ensure the protection of rights for all, as guaranteed under the Constitution of the Republic of Liberia. To achieve this, we deploy highly trained personnel, supported by modernized systems and structures. Our conduct will be guided by uncompromising ethical values as a means of promoting fundamental justice and inspiring public confidence in the Judiciary.”

## Organizational Transformation

» The organizational transformation encompasses managerial supervision, policy guidance, technical expertise and administrative and financial resources required to effectively and efficiently execute the vision and mission of the Judiciary Branch of Government. Within this framework and the full commitment to transforming this Branch of Government, the following actions were taken to set the Liberian Judiciary on the trajectory of reform and transformation.

» The expansion and restructuring of the Office of the Court Administrator, creating thereunder the Project Office, the Court Inspectorate Unit, the Department of Public Information and the Case Management Unit.

» The restructuring of the departments of Personnel, Finance, Procurement, Maintenance, Asset Management and Documentation.

» The establishment of the James A. A. Pierre Judicial Institute and the National Office of Jury Management.

» The reorganization of the Office of the Clerk of the Supreme Court of Liberia.



# OFFICE OF THE COURT ADMINISTRATOR

Consistent with the Vision and Mission of the Judiciary; in recognition of the vital role of the Judiciary in the delivery of justice to the people; and due to the important nature of the judicial services offered through the Liberian court system; the Office of the Court Administrator was created as the administrative arm of the entire court system, with the primary objective “to organize and manage non-adjudicatory matters” under the direction of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.

The Court Administrator (must be a Counsellor of the Supreme Court Bar) is currently selected by a process that includes a nomination by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, endorsed by majority of the Associate Justices; and the nominee forwarded to the President of Liberia for Appointment.

## **Duties and Responsibilities of the Court Administrator shall include, but not limited to the following:**

- The collection of judicial data and preparation of court statistics.
- Supervision of all judiciary personnel throughout the country, except judges who shall report to the Chief Justice or the Courts of record which function according to rules governing Court administration, as promulgated by the Supreme Court, and basically to assist the Chief Justice, in performance of all duties which his/her administrative responsibilities impose upon him/her.
- He/she shall prepare and submit to the Chief Justice, an annual report of the administrative operations of the Judicial Branch; and this report shall be submitted on or before 30th September of each year. A statistic of the trial and disposition of cases in all of the courts or the country shall be kept up to date in his/her office, and he/she shall make a monthly report thereon to the Chief Justice, for effective and efficient management of the courts.



*Cllr. William B. Kollie: Asst. Court Administrator*



*Cllr. Elizabeth J. Nelson: Court Administrator  
Supreme Court of Liberia*

In addition to the above mentioned, the Court Administrator’s Office has overall responsibility for the delivery of continuous and efficient court services, and provides technical assistance and administrative support to the various departments of the Court, including other Court businesses such as personnel, fiscal operations, budget, information systems, public relations, and liaison functions with various groups and agencies.

## **The Court Administrator:**

- Manages the daily operations of the courts. The duties include acting as a court liaison, managing the court’s budget and directing court employees.
- Plans and oversees a courthouse’s administrative operations, facilities, budget and case management procedures;
- And acts as a liaison between the Court and public or private organizations, as well as government. In the process of enhancing overall administrative effectiveness, the Court Administrator on a day-to-day basis is involved in the following functions:

## □ Human Resource Management:

The recruitment, selection, training, developing, and counseling of court employees; establishing ethical standards and standard operational procedures; administering wage, salary and performance appraisal and reward systems; and facilitating personnel matters for judicial staff.

□ **Fiscal Administration:**  
Preparing court budgets; administering accounting, purchasing, payroll, and financial control functions; and guiding the budget through the government review processes (Finance Ministry & Legislative oversight Bodies).

□ **Case-flow Management:**  
Evaluating pending caseloads, developing, and implementing systems (both automated and procedural) that support effective calendar management.

□ **Technology Management:**  
Evaluating opportunities for technologies that expand the capacity of the court system. These include the use of personal computers to navigate online information systems; provision for the electronic transmission of and access to data, images, and other files in automated records management and retrieval systems, and other emerging technologies for video and telecommunications systems; assessment of computer-assisted systems that can improve the performance of the courts.

□ **Information Management:**  
Developing capacity to deliver information to decision makers at critical events; monitoring system performance to milestones established by the court; informing the court system employees of events that are outside the performance measures established by the court and triggering the appropriate means of intervention(s); providing electronic access to court information for Attorneys, Litigants, Governmental agencies, and the public.

□ **Jury Management:**  
Managing the Jury system in the most efficient and cost-effective way.

□ **Space Management:**  
Managing physical space to assure access to all citizens, providing adequate room for work and circulation; and instilling public confidence in the Judiciary system.

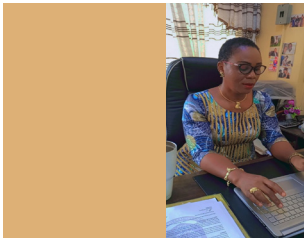
□ **Intergovernmental Liaison:**  
Acts as a liaison to other governmental agencies and departments, to promote collaboration, integration of systems, and facilitation of change, while maintaining the integrity of the court as an independent but equal branch of government.

□ **Community Relations and Public Information:**  
Acting as a clearinghouse for the release of information to the media and the public; collecting and publishing data on pending and completed judicial business and internal functions of the court system.

□ **Research and Advisory Services:** Identifying organizational problems and recommending procedural and administrative changes.

□ **Secretarial Services:**  
Acting as staff for judicial committees or organizations.  
All such functions of the Court Administrator are performed through various administrative, technical, and specialized departments and units within the Judiciary Branch of Government.

## STAFF OF THE COURT ADMINISTRATOR'S OFFICE



*Mrs. Roberta Barclay-Francis,  
Admin. Asst. of the C. A.*



*Mrs. Cecelia O. Mensah, Secretary:  
Office of the C. A.*



*Ms. Delphine Johnson, Exec. Sec.  
Office of the C. A.*



*Ms. Joanna Cuffy, Office Asst.  
Office of the C. A.*



*Ms. Frances Welleh, Messenger  
Office of the C. A.*

# JUDICIARY PROJECT OFFICE



*Mr. Daniel Clarke, Project Officer*

The effective administration of justice is vital to the safety, security and prosperity of Liberia. Following the end of Liberia's civil conflict in 2003, a period of reconstruction and reforms commenced. With UNMIL support, assessment of the Judiciary was conducted leading to the rebranding of the Office of the Court Administrator and the establishment of several operational units within the Court Administration Office, one of which being the Project Office.

The Judiciary Project Office is couched within the Office of Court Administration under the direct oversight and supervision of the Court Administrator. The Project Office supports the formulation, implementation, supervision and reporting on all judicial projects, which have attracted national and international financing and partnerships geared towards the achievement of the constitutional mandate of the Judiciary.

Following swearing-in as Chief Justice of the Honorable Supreme Court, His Honor, Francis S. Korkpor Sr. recruited a first time Judiciary Project Planning Officer, on 1st June 2013 to serve as Manager of the Project Office. In this capacity Attorney-At-Law Sandra K. Howard working under the overall guidance and direct supervision of the Court

Administrator initiated a project process which with time, yielded in the establishment of a fully operational, well-staffed and efficient functioning Judiciary Project Unit comprised of four professionals.

## RESPONSIBILITIES / FUNCTIONS OF THE PROJECT UNIT:

- (a) Facilitate/supports the development process of the overall Strategy of the Judiciary, and the time-bound Strategic Plan for the Judiciary;
- (b) Take the lead in the design and implementation of the Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) Frameworks in the roll-up of the Judiciary Strategic Plan;
- (c) Facilitate the development of sub-projects under the Strategic Plan in coordination with the relevant sections of the Judiciary;
- (d) Liaise with Sectional Heads in the preparation of Annual Work Plans and Budgets; and coordinate timely coordination and submission of progress reports;
- (e) Provide Technical and Liaison support to all donor-funded projects;
- (f) Prepare strategic operational plan for the Judiciary Projects including the Annual and Quarterly work plans.
- (g) Regularly update the Court Administrator about the progress of the projects and- supervise

financial monitoring and procurement matters.

- (h) Maintain inventory of all on-going projects in the Judiciary.
- (i) Provide support to workshop(s)/ Seminar(s) and other programmed activities.
- (j) Provide assistance to various Department and Sectional Heads to monitor timely submission of Project Reports.
- (k) Prepare Project related financial requests and expenditure statements as and when required.
- (l) Provide assistance to the Project Management Team [comprising the Architectural Engineer and the Assistant Engineer] in monitoring, evaluation and reporting on program progress in line with the Judiciary Results Monitoring and Evaluation Framework.
- (m) Assist the Office of the Court Administrator in securing the development and implementation of development projects related to the Judiciary; and,
- (n) Any other relevant tasks and other duties as may be assigned by the Court Administrator

#### PROJECT UNIT CONTRIBUTION TO ON-GOING JUDICIAL REFORM:

##### 1.1 REPORTING

- Compilation of the FIRST SERIES OF JUDICIARY PERFORMANCE REPORTS - During the period under review, the Project Office initiated the crafting of a First Series of Judiciary Performance Reports - as summary reports prepared by the Office of the Court Administrator of the independent Circuit JUDGES' RETURNS submitted to the Judiciary by Assigned and Resident Circuit Judges of the various Judicial Circuit Courts in account of the level of execution of their various mandates during the specific Judicial Term under review. The Performance Reports [PRs] are submitted on a quarterly basis, and form the bases of summary inputs to the Office of the Chief Justice; in His Honor's administrative oversight role and responsibility for apprising the Judiciary of the overall performance of the Liberian Judiciary. The findings of the PRs are important as well as critical for measuring the various levels of execution by the Courts towards meeting and or facilitating the achievement of the general

and specific mandates of the Judiciary; and, the tracking of existing challenges which impede progress towards the obtainment of certain goals and objectives within specific Circuits;

- Compilation of the FIRST SERIES OF JUDICIARY MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS - The Judiciary Management and Administrative Reports which are derived from the aforementioned Judiciary Performance Reports are crafted each quarter by the Project Unit; with the aim to guide the Court Administrator in the effective and efficient discharge of her administrative and management duties and corresponding tasks; thus accounting for the administrative and management related issues emanating from the Judicial Circuit Courts during each term under review;
- Compilation of Section Heads ADMINISTRATIVE QUARTERLY AND ANNUAL REPORTS

##### 1.2 CONTRIBUTION TO JUDICIARY'S SYSTEMS, PROCESSES AND DECISIONS DEVELOPMENT

The Project Office supports the development of systems and processes within the Judiciary to promote efficiency and effectiveness in the implementation of judicial activities.

- Collaborated with Judiciary Personnel Department and Sectional Heads to complete review of all job positions within the Judiciary leading to the preparation of the Competency Profile (ToR) and Telephone Directory.
- Supported the process, with the preparation of proposals, to expand the jurisdiction of Magistrates' Courts in order to reduce Circuit Court burden:
- Developed a first draft judiciary human resource policy manual and employee's handbook dated 2013 and revised November 10, 2014.
- Developed and concluded proposals with UNDP for capacity building support to various Department of the Judiciary:
  - a. Public Affairs – Printing and production equipment and supplies
  - b. Public Defenders – Deployment of six

additional Public Defenders supported with motorbikes, laptops and stationery

c. Supported development of the Court Cost Fees and Fines legislation and obtained donor support to develop, produce and deploy 50 Court Cost Fees and Fines Bulletins at 50 Courts across Liberia.

d. Prepare project proposal for funding support leading to the establishment including furnishing of the Case Management Unit at the Temple of Justice.

e. Obtained UNDP support to hire a local consultant to design the case management software system and trained 25 Clerks and Assistant Clerks of Court to have the capacity to enter court information into the system.

f. Supported the establishment of the Supreme Court Opinion Binding Office currently retrieving and compiling Opinions from 2004 -2021.

g. Secured UNDP funding leading to operationalization of two Criminal Courts “E” in the 8th and 9th Judicial Circuits being Nimba and Bong counties.

h. Secured EU Spotlight support leading to refurbishment and installation of in-camera facility at Circuit in the 7th and 10th Judicial Circuits.

i. Obtained UNDP support leading to fielding a technical consultant to assist the Judiciary draft its strategic plan 2019 – 2023

j. Support the James A. A. Pierre Judicial Institute (JI) with the preparation of funding proposal to facilitate UNDP support for training of the 2nd batch of College graduates as Professional Magistrates.

k. Served as Judiciary Representative on the crafting of the inter-agency regulations governing the processing of Alien Petitions for Citizenship & Naturalization (CNR) dated January 26th, A. D. 2017, and signed on the 24th Day of March, A. D., 2017.



*Ms. Regina B. Wreh-Teah, Program Asst.  
Judiciary Project Office*

### **3.3 CONTRIBUTION TO INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT**

During the period under review, the Judiciary Project Office (JPO) provided proposals and project management support in tangent with the Judiciary In-house Architect to pursue funding in order for the In-house Architect to implement the following infrastructural projects own by the Judiciary:

a. Construction and operationalization of four Magisterial Courts supported by the Government of Sweden. Four [4] Magisterial Courts constructed in four (4) prioritized target Administrative Districts (comprising numerous towns, villages and communities) within the project area: (Bong 1, Lofa 1, Nimba 1, and Montserrado 1).

- 1st Judicial Circuit, Montserrado County, Liberia (OMEGA Magisterial Court)
- 8th Judicial Circuit, Nimba County, Liberia (Kahnplay City Magisterial Court)
- 9th Judicial Circuit, Bong County, Liberia (Botota Magisterial Court)
- 10th Judicial Circuit, Lofa County, Liberia (Vahun City Magisterial Court)

b. Construction and operationalization of one Magisterial Court supported by UNDP

- 14th Judicial Circuit, Rivercess County, Liberia (Yarparh Town Magisterial Court)

c. Construction and operationalization of one Magisterial Court supported by UNMIL

- 1st Judicial Circuit, Montserrado County, Bushrod Island Magisterial Court

d. Construction and operationalization of Circuit Courts supported by GoL:

- 7th Judicial Circuit Court Complex, Grand Gedeh County, Liberia
- 8th Judicial Circuit Court Complex, Nimba County, Liberia
- 11th Judicial Circuit Court Complex, Bomi County, Liberia
- 14th Judicial Circuit Court Complex, Rivercess County, Liberia (on-going)

Through these activities and interventions specified above, the Judiciary has enhanced its service delivery capacity in its dispense of justice through the court systems, with improved access to justice for indigent and vulnerable groups.

# THE COURT INSPECTORATE UNIT

The Court Inspectorate Unit (CIU) was established within the Office of the Court Administrator to provide services relating to judicial supervision, monitoring, inspection, evaluation and audit. The Unit reports to the Chief Justice through the Court Administrator on the status, activities, and performance of all courts in the Republic of Liberia with the aim to ensure that these courts have developed the requisite capacities to dispense justice in line with the rules of Law and to enhance access to justice for party litigants.

The CIU is headed by a Head Court Inspector who is responsible to supervise the Unit and its staff-ers, and to ensure the efficient administrative and operational functioning of the unit, ensuring the courts receive the necessary support to enhance the delivery of justice.

The Unit conducts physical monitoring and eval-ua- tion of judicial and non-judicial actors includ- ing ad- ministrative and support staff in the Circuit Courts and other court jurisdiction, which are contained in Monthly and Quarterly Reports to the Supreme Court on the state of performance of the courts to ensure the rules of procedures are imple- mented by the courts for prompt decision making; the Unit provides central administration with information of cases on the dockets, personnel attendance, proper inventory of cases, information on pretrial deten- tion, amongst others. The reports are generated from the development of monitoring charts, forms and questionnaires.

## Achievements of the CIU

Over the years the work of the Court Inspectorate Unit has achieved the following results;



*Mrs. Agnes Wilson-Perkins: Chief Court Inspector*

- In 2016 the CIU profiled all courts within the 3rd, 4th, 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 12th, 14th & 15th Judi- cial Circuits with the objective to inform central administration on the physical condi- tion of the courts, location, total number of staff (Male & Female) and the actual number of courts per circuit.
- » The CIU ensures the regular reporting of the court cost, fees and fine, which is a major back up to the Judiciary budget.
- » The CIU ensures that courts are submitting monthly and quarterly reports on cases adjud- cated, dismissed and pending on a regular basis.
- » The CIU collected and submitted detailed data on phone, names and position of personnel for the production of a telephone directory for the judiciary.
- » Due to the monitoring duties of the CIU, the Judiciary has attained marked improvement in the regular attendance of the staff to work which is a positive change in the work attitude.



*Mr. Lewis R. Howard: Court Inspector*



*Mr. Richard W. Boandolo: Court Inspector*



*Mr. S. Robert Johnson, II: Court Inspector*



*Mr. Stanley S. Woods: Court Inspector*

# JUDICIAL PUBLIC INFORMATION SECTION



*Atty. Darryl Ambrose Nmah, Sr.  
Director of Public Information*

**T**he fact that democracy is primarily about the promotion of individual and collective rights, freedoms and responsibilities of the people, it is vitally important that those people hold firm their faith and trust in the branch of government responsible for guaranteeing such fundamental rights and freedoms.

The Liberian Judiciary headed by His Honor Chief Justice Francis S. Korkpor Sr. and from his predecessor, His Honor Chief Justice Johnnie N. Lewis, has embarked upon series of reforms and transformative measures within the system gear towards improving the administration of Justice within the Country.

However, these measures and transformation were not being exposed to the public as the “NEW BRAND IMAGE” of the Liberian Judiciary.

Hence the need to rebrand the Liberian judiciary as the ‘true administrator’ of justice for all in Liberia.

The rebranding of the Liberian judiciary took

into consideration series of actions to be taken by agents of the Judiciary Branch of Government, specifically establishment of a vibrant Public Affairs Unit under the offices of the Court Administrator, to win significant and sustained public trust and confidence in the system.

Such actions were positioned into two (2) categories, namely.

1. Internal Image Building (Rebranding) &
2. External Image Building (Rebranding)

## **THE INTERNAL IMAGE BUILDING (REBRANDING):**

This aspect of Rebranding the Liberian Judiciary most significantly focused on changing the mind-set and attitude of actors within the judicial sector to include judges, magistrates, clerks and administrative support staff and lawyers.

Public perception, be it negative or positive, is mainly formed and developed based on personal interactions, visual observation or hearsay and it is for such reasons that judicial

actors, especially employees within the Judiciary Branch of Government needed to take a totally new approach in the performance of their duties and interactions with members of the public.

This aspect of the rebranding included:

- Quarterly orientation of Judges & Magistrates on the rebranding concept and their role as primary agents of this brand.
- Quarterly orientation of Ministerial Officers of the courts on the rebranding concept and their role primarily as agents of this brand.
- Periodic engagement with administrative support staff on the rebranding concept and their role as agents of this brand.



*Kortee Smith, Media Officer  
Public Information*



*Romeo Quoi, Web Manager  
Public Information*



*Mr. Zito F. Slebah, Deputy  
Director of Public Information*

### **THE EXTERNAL IMAGE BUILDING (RE- BRANDING):**

This aspect of the rebranding concept focused primarily on providing extensive public awareness on the following:

- The functions of the Liberian Judicial System.
- The extensive reforms initiated within the system and its intended purpose.
- Building the confidence of the public by providing easier access to judicial programs.
- Providing public understanding of Opinions of the Supreme Court and rulings of subordinate courts of our country.
- Protecting the sanctity and integrity of the Judiciary and its functionaries (Justices, Judges, Magistrates, Lawyers and others).



*Flomo Wolobah, Web Master  
Public Information*



# PERSONNEL DEPARTMENT

The Personnel Division, like other Divisions/Sections, is responsible for the development and management of human capital. The Division has experienced massive transformation in its structure, functions and capacity over the last twelve (12) years. It has transformed its Human Resource Management and Development processes ensuring employees job security, health care, capacity building, gender balancing, staff 's motivation, honorary retirement of staff and improving the livelihood of citizens through employment over the years.

In collaboration with the Court Administrator's office, the division has worked at insuring that all policies of the Judiciary and the Civil Service Standard Order are implemented to the fullest. Below are summaries of the achievements over years under review:

- » Instituted a vetting committee to interview candidates for high profile positions such as Administrative Assistant, Project officer, Public Defenders, Directors, Asst./Deputy Directors, Clerks, etc.
- » In collaboration with the project officers compiled employee's policy manual and Directory of the judicial Branch of Government.
- » In collaboration with the Scholarship Committee, vast number of employees were sponsored for local and international scholarships including the Louis Arthur Grimes school of Law and Bilateral Scholarships.
- » In collaboration with the James A. A. Pierre, Judicial Institute, we were able to train, employed and assigned about 300 hundred Associate Magistrates.
- » The health status of employees are prioritized through Group Insurance thus leading to health benefits of all employees.
- » Updating the personnel records in an electronic Database system.
- » Courts around the Country are regularly visited and evaluated.
- » The Division has also honorably retired

about 300 employees who attained retirement age according to law and have received their benefits.

## Finance Budget & Planning Section

Under the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) the driver to National development onward to the PAPD of which the Judiciary remains a major partner, the Budget & Planning Section, in close consultation with the office of the Court Administrator, designed and adopted what was termed as the transformation tools with the following key objectives:

1. The Judicial Infrastructural Initiative- construction of Court houses.
2. The modernization of the various Court staff through budgetary allocation by initiating trainings, workshops, and seminars.
3. Provide budgetary tools that enhance the smooth operations of the Public Defense Program.
4. Provide budgetary allocations for the increment in incentives and benefits for Judges and Staffers of the Judiciary. etc.

The Budget and Planning section along with the Court Administrator office made the case at various sectorial meetings expressing the urgent need for the construction of Court houses so as to ensure and secured the independence of the Judiciary. The Section worked closely with the Architectural Consultant Office to develop and cost the Circuit Court complex and that of the Magisterial Court designs and drawing. We also served on the panel during the selection processes of qualified contractors in the awarding of contracts. Our role was to ensure not only contractors with lower bid win the contract but to examine the contractor's ability in the full completion of said contract with value for money on mind.

We were also instrumental in making the case for the up grading of the various Courts around the Country so as to enhance productivity at the level of the Courts. We argued and secured funding within the National Budget to provide computers and 5Kva generator to every Circuit Courts around the Country and few selected Magisterial Courts.

This on-going modernization process is now being extended to the training of Clerks so as to enhance court record tracking under the Case Management Program (CMP).

We played an important role in the capacity building of staffers especially the replacement of unqualified Court Staff with qualified ones. The training and deployment of college graduates to serve as associate magistrates in the rural counties has contributed immensely in boosting the capacity of the judiciary. We also ensured and secured funding through the national budget to accommodate this tremendous improvement in the delivery of justice through the court system. We negotiated at higher level to provide better incentives and benefits for judges and staffers of the Judiciary. In our quest to bring about equity in salary across government, we analyzed and compared the salaries of employees in similar category and made the case thus leading to our judges and staffers salaries to be adjusted even though we are yet to fully accomplish our goal but significant improvement has been made in this direction.

## Procurement Department

The establishment of the Public Procurement and Concession Commission (PPCC) in 2006 and the amendment and restatement of the PPCC Act of September 10, 2010, which gives right to every procuring entity of the government of Liberia to establish a procurement unit to spearhead procurement activities on behalf of that entity, the Judiciary in this undertaking has an established procurement unit that is clothed with the role and responsibility to manage every procurement activities at the Judiciary.

The Procurement Department is the arm of the Judiciary authorized to carry out procurement activities on behalf on the Judiciary in compliance with the PPCC law.

Therefore, the role and significance of this Department is very paramount to the day-to-day operations of the Judiciary in that the acquisition of goods, services and works depends solely on the Procurement Department.

The role of the Procurement Department encompasses but not limited to the following: Serves as the arm of the Judiciary authorized to procure on behalf of the Judiciary.

Prepare Annual Procurement Plan and submit same to PPCC, through the Procurement Committee for approval.

Ensure that all procurement processes are in compliant with the Public Procurement and Concession Commission (PPCC) law.

Provide support and guidance to the end users/ customers in market analysis and engaging initial market dialogue, where appropriate.

Challenge end users requirements for cost- effectiveness and need, taking account of whole life cost and corporate social responsibility/ sustainability issues

Ensure that procurement decisions are aligned with the rules and regulations of the PPCC.

Identify and engage other subject matter experts as required.

Ensure that all procurement processes are competitive and making available as much information that suppliers reasonably need to respond to the bidding process.

Understanding and complying with the PPCC law relating to goods, services or works to be procured. Notifying the outcome of bids promptly and within the bounds of commercial confidentiality, debriefing winners and losers on the outcome of the bidding process to facilitate better performance and future occasions.

Ensure that adequate contract and supplier management arrangements are in place Prepare and submit procurement reports to administration for onward submission to PPCC. For the period under review, 2012 to 2022, there were numerous achievements accomplished by the Procurement Department, which are but not limited to the following:

Prepared Annual Procurement Plans that were approved by PPCC to carry out procurement activities for the period under-review.

Attended training workshops on procurement compliance, internal audit control, framework contracting, Joint United Nations Development Program-Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply (UNDP-CIPS), the third Annual National Procurement Forum that addressed lot of national issues effecting the procurement processes and way forward.

The Department of Procurement conducted bidding processes for goods, services and works in compliance with the PPCC Act. Some of the bidding processes carried out by the Department of Procurement for the procurement of goods,

services and works are but not limited to:

## Asset management Department

There has been rapid transformation of the Judiciary Branch of Government during the period under-review. The period (2012 – 2022) witnessed the emergence or creation of several fundamental units to strengthen the Judiciary and promote accountability and the rule of law. Amongst those units created, the Asset Management was birthed on the 23rd of May 2017.

Prior to the AMU establishment, The General Service Agency was the sole entity responsible to code all government assets (vehicles, equipment, and furniture) across the country according to chapter 51 of the Executive law of 1972. However, such policy was not yielding the much-needed results as anticipated - thereby resulting to Judiciary in its quest to fight corruption enacted her own Asset team in consultation with the GSA to achieve there much needed result.

The primary reasons for its establishment are to maintain a control system (recordkeeping, database management, physical verification and coding), timely allocation of assets, and proper storage of assets, check and balance, and accountability of all fixed Assets owned by the Judiciary. Prior to the inception of this Unit, there were no effective tracking and verification of assets across the Judiciary Branch of Government. As the result, the likelihood of misplacement of assets and thievery was the order of the day.

The inability to account for items donated to the Judiciary by its partners was a major stumbling block for past administrations. It was expedient on the part of this Administration to have established the Asset Management Unit that has curtailed some of these things. In addition to that, The Unit has made tremendous progress with regards to tracking, coding and verification of all judicial



*Visual sample of the Asset Management work*

assets across the country. The Unit was successful in setting-up a comprehensive database through an Asset Registry Database; the database is structure in a very unique way that has the followings: the description, classification, date of purchase, date of usage, accumulated and depreciation cost, net book value, funding source, assignee unit, assigned person, series number and conditions. The Asset Management Unit over the years has lived up to its intended purpose and we are proud of our amazing team for the hard work and their enormous sacrifices.

## Maintenance Department {The people That Matter}

The Maintenance Department is one of the largest departments with the largest manpower (skilled and unskilled) men and women, numbering over 100 employees, headed by a director and two (2) deputy directors. The Department is charged with the responsibility to ensure a clean and sanitarly conducive working environment within the Judiciary.

When Liberia experienced an outbreak of the Ebola Virus Disease in 2014, essential staff of the Maintenance Department remained at work to ensure that the offices of the Judiciary were safe and healthy to work by regularly sanitizing offices, bathrooms, setting up of hand washing stations at vantage points in and out of the Temple of Justice Buildings/Compound as to help prevent the spread of the virus.

Similar task was performed by the Department in 2020, when there was an outbreak of the Corona Virus Disease.

### **Transformation Within The Last 10 Years!**

Within the ten (10) years period, our achievements and transformation are listed as follows:

- » Recommend the hiring of young and energetic manpower to fill in vacant spaces created as the result of death and pensioning of aged and sick staff of the department resulting to a more efficient and effective workforce.
- » Capacity enhancement of staff resulting to elevation of the job to other departments and higher positions within the department.

The Maintenance Department will remain committed and hard working in serving its purpose to this Judiciary Branch of government always.

# The James A. A. Pierre Judicial Institute

In 2008, the Supreme Court established the James A. A. Pierre Judicial Institute to address the training needs of all judicial officers and staff. The Institute was established pursuant to Section 21.1 of the Judiciary Law of Liberia with the goal to promote the highest level of professional standards of integrity, competence, and leadership within the Liberian Judiciary.

## Mandate /Functions

The mandate of the James A.A. Pierre Institute is to provide continuous professional judicial training to judicial personnel and other justice sector actors. The mandate of the Institute is captured in the Chief Justice's memo dated 19th March 2008 establishing the Institute and which provides that the functions and responsibilities of the Institute shall be to undertake the coordination of all judicial training programs in Liberia. This is to ensure that the contents of curricula for the training of judiciary personnel are not only standardized, but that they also conform strictly to the training policy goals set by the Institute.

The Functions of the Institute include:

- (a) Design, organize and conduct training programs, seminars, conferences, symposia and related programs for judges, magistrates, court clerks and other judicial personnel.
- (b) Promote legal skills training as an integral part of career development of judges, magistrates, administrative staff, and other justice sector actors.
- (c) To develop training policies and goals for judicial personnel and other justice sector actors in Liberia.
- (d) Ensure that the contents of curricula for the training are standardized and strictly comply with training policy and goals set by the Institute.
- (e) Design, organize and conduct training and other capacity building programs that address other specific needs and problems within the justice system.

- (f) Promote and coordinate judicial training, research, and development as an integral part of improving judicial administration and the rule of law with the aim of ensuring accessible, timely and effective justice.
- (g) Undertake research and produce publications, reports and recommendations in respect to relevant aspects of the law and administration of justice.
- (h) Organize and conduct conferences, workshops, seminars and symposia for the purpose of enhancing skills of work efficiency and professional skills of personnel performing legal tasks in quasi-judicial bodies.
- (i) Receive, consider, review, and advance on its own initiative, proposals for the capacity building that may be made or referred to it by the Legislative, Executive or Judiciary Branch of Government.
- (j) Undertake research and compilation of current law pursuant to any capacity building program for judicial sector actors.
- (k) Solicit for funds to support any projects or programs undertaken or to be undertaken by the Institute;
- (l) Promote and facilitate participation by the public in any work of the Judicial Institute through seminars, workshops, conferences and other public meetings.
- (m) Encourage national and international cooperation and networking in the performance of the functions of the Judicial Institute.
- (n) Control, supervise and administer the assets and funds of the Judicial Institute in such manner and for such purpose as best promote the purpose for which the Institute is established.
- (o) Award certificates to those trained in the Institute; and
- (p) Do such other things as may be conducive and necessary for the attainment of the objects of the Institute.



# ACHIEVEMENTS



Over the years, the Judicial Institute planned and coordinated all judicial training programs intended for judicial actors in Liberia.

Between 2010 and 2020, the Institute, in collaboration with International Development Partners, recruited and trained 240 college graduates to serve as associate magistrates within the Judiciary. In addition to the Professional Magistrate Training Program, the Institute runs comprehensive as well as specialized training programs for other judicial officers and staff, including in-service Judges, Magistrates, Public Defenders, Prosecutors, Clerks, and Ministerial Officers.

In recent years, the Institute in collaboration with international partners (IDLO) has developed and rolled out several specialized pieces of training in trafficking in persons for judicial actors across the nation. Similarly, the Institute in collaboration with UNICEF developed a training manual and curriculum for child justice and subsequently rolled-out training for judicial

actors across Liberia.

Notwithstanding, the immense progress and impact made by the JTI, it was realized that the JTI had no specialized course on women's rights, nor did it have gender mainstream in its curriculum. Therefore, in order to address these shortfalls, the Honorable Supreme Court, through the Chief Justice of Liberia, requested support from UN Women to develop specific modules on women's rights and mainstreaming Gender into the Institute's Curriculum as well as provide training for trainers who will train and/or facilitate the course. Towards this end, UN Women Liberia is supporting the mainstreaming of gender and women's Human Rights in the JI curriculum and hired an International Consultant to lead this process in collaboration with the faculty of the Institute. The JTI now has a curriculum covering women's right and gender mainstreaming and has been involved in the training of judicial actors in these areas. As this document is being submitted, The JTI, in collaboration with the UNDP, has scheduled two trainings on SGBV for thirty (30) participants each, to include Judges, Magistrates, Clerks, Court Officers, the Police, Medical Practitioners, and CSOs, in Zwedru, Grand Gedeh County (May 23, 2022 – May 27, 2022) and Voinjama, Lofa County (June 13, 2022 – June 17, 2022). The need for trainings in these counties grows from the proposed Sexual Offenses Divisions to be established in the Seventh Judicial Circuit and the Tenth Judicial Circuit respectively.



# PMPT Graduation 2020



# Clerks of Court in Training





# THE PUBLIC DEFENSE PROGRAM

The Supreme Court of Liberia, having realized that many defendants could not afford to hire the services of private lawyers thereby having them languish in pre-trial detention for offenses ranging from misdemeanor to capitol offenses, established the Public Defense Program of Liberia.

The Public Defense Program has made significant progress for the period under review in reducing pre-trial detention throughout the country and representing indigents in many criminal cases especially sexual offenses at the various Circuit and Magisterial court levels. The Program, since its establishment in 2009 till now, has a total of thirty-seven (37) lawyers consisting of eight (8) females and twenty-nine (29) males throughout the Republic of Liberia with

at least two (2) Public Defenders assigned in each county. Montserrado County being the largest in terms of case load, has fourteen (14) Public Defenders assigned in the county at the various Criminal Assizes (A, B, C, D & E) and the Magisterial Sitting Program established within the Monrovia Central Prison to fast-track pre-trial detention hearings within the prison.

Lawyers of the Public Defense Program have organized themselves as an association aimed at fostering unity, coordination and the pursuit of mutual support and welfare. The National Association of Public Defenders of Liberia (NAPDOL) is the parent association of all public defenders within the Republic of Liberia.

## 4TH NATIONAL CONVENTION OF NAPDOL IN PICTURES





# CENTRAL OFFICE OF JURY MANAGEMENT

For many years the trial process in court was challenged with the selection of jurors and the quality of impaneled jurors, prompting the need for a reform to the jury system.

In 2012 several new acts were passed by the Liberian Legislature amending existing jury laws or creating new laws. The new laws demonstrate efforts to reform and strengthen the jury system, as an effective mechanism in the trial process. One of the most significant additions to the law was the creation of the Central Office of Jury Management: Civil Procedure Law §23.1.1 “The Central Office of Jury Management is hereby created as an entity of the Judiciary. A Jury Manager who shall head the Central Office of Jury Management shall be appointed by the Supreme Court...” Prior to the establishment of this office, jury selection process was very subjective, which meant that list of jurors was submitted to the clerk by commissioners, City Mayors and in some instances the very lawyers who were parties to the suit to compose a venire of grand and petit jurors for the following term of court. This process also meant attorneys would question jurors about their qualifications instead of determining if a juror had a bias in the case. The new law now however places the burden of determining a juror’s qualifications on the Office of Jury Management and allows attorneys more time to determine if a juror has a bias that would prevent him/her from rendering a just verdict.

Public officers in the executive, legislative and judicial branches of the Republic of Liberia or any political subdivision thereof who were actively engaged in the performance of their official duties including Physicians, clergymen, teachers, and nurses who were actively engaged in the practice of their professions; and lawyers, whether actively engaged in their



profession or not were not exempted from jury duty as per the old law.

Objective eligibility requirements have been established by the new law where in any citizen of the Republic, male or female, who has attained the age of twenty-one years is competent to serve as a grand or petit juror in the county in which he or she resides, provided that he or she is able to speak, read, write and understand the English language and is not incapable by reason of mental or physical infirmity of rendering jury service.

The significance of the office of jury management to the justice system is that it seeks to identify practices that promote broad participation by the communities in the jury system. Jury identification and selection processes have proven to be efficient and cost effective. An example is the reduction in the cost for jury sitting per term in each court from 150,00USD to 45,000.00USD to 30,000.00USD per each court term. The OJM has also developed effective voir dire practices so as to encourage jurors to provide full and accurate disclosure of potential biases thereby increasing public confidence in the fairness and impartiality of the impaneled jurors.

The new law requires mandatory orientation of prospective jurors ahead of each term of court opening to ensure that jurors are made aware of their functions and duties in court.

Since its establishment in 2015, the Central Office of Jury Management has selected and summoned 25,170 prospective jurors from across seven counties: Montserrado, Bong, Nimba, Grand Gedeh, Lofa, Bassa, Bomi, and Margibi. The OJM has also exerted sustained efforts towards the full implementation of the New Jury Law though local offices of jury management are yet to be established in all the

counties as contemplated by the New Jury Law due to inadequate resources.

The OJM has developed a model juror summons that is understandable and has consumer appeal; developed jurors procedure manual for a uniform practice across the country; created a system that encourages employers to respond swiftly to jurors summons.



# NATIONAL OFFICE OF JURY MANAGEMENT HONORS CHIEF JUSTICE KORKPOR!



## JUDICIAL RETREAT 2017: “STRENGTHENING THE RULE OF LAW IN LIBERIA THROUGH ENHANCED JUDICIAL PERFORMANCE”



The Judiciary Branch of the Liberian Government, under the leadership of His Honor Francis S. Korkpor, Sr., Chief Justice of the Republic of Liberia, held a three-day judicial retreat for Justices and Judges of the Republic from May 17 - 20, 2017.

The judicial retreat, which brought together the Supreme Court Bench, all Circuit and Specialized Court Judges as well as Stipendiary Magistrates from around the country, was in execution of the strategic plan developed by the Judiciary geared towards enhancing its core values of competency, integrity, transparency, diligence and tolerance.

The retreat for judges was necessary for the Judiciary to build upon a credible system of accountability, to reflect and discuss issues on the way forward for the Liberian Judiciary, objectively assessing the Judicial system as to its effectiveness, progress and impact made on the general public by the predictability of outcome of cases, relying on the development of various principles of law and current case laws.

The three-day retreat was meant to create an environment in which judges can sincerely retrospect on their respective roles and responsibilities in enhancing the work of the judiciary; discuss their shortcomings and how to improve thereon; commit themselves to the ideal of dispensing justice fairly, regardless of affiliation, creed and ethnicity and moreover work collectively to dispel the negative notions and perceptions of the Judiciary by working towards enhancing judicial performance through the just dispensation of the rule of law.

This was the first time ever, in the Republic of Liberia that Justices of the Supreme Court, Judges of the Circuits and Specialized Courts as well as Magistrates from across the country gather to evaluate and critique their own performances with the aim of enhancing effectiveness and efficiency within the Judiciary which will inevitably gain the judiciary the respect, trust and confidence of the Liberian people and our international partners alike.

## OPENING SESSION OF THE FIRST JUDICIAL RETREAT



### FULL BENCH OF THE HONORABLE SUPREME COURT OF LIBERIA.

Left –to- Right:

Associate Justice His Honor Phillip A. Z. Banks, III  
Associate Justice His Honor Kabineh M. Ja'neh  
Chief Justice His Honor Francis S. Korkpor, Sr.  
Associate Justice Her Honor Jamesetta H. Wolokolie  
Associate Justice Her Honor Sie-A-Nyene G. Yuoh



Selena P. Mappy – Superintendent Bong County



Cllr. Frederick L. Cherue – A.G/Min. of Justice



H.E. Waldemar Very – DSRSG UNMIL



Mr. Thomas Doe Nah – Prg. Officer Carter Center



*Atty. Darryl Ambrose Nmah, Sr: – PIO Director; JUD*



*Hon. Dukuly – Commissioner, NEC*

## **JUDICIAL RETREAT (2017) IN PICTURES**



# JUDICIAL RETREAT (2017) IN PICTURES Cont...







# THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF TRIAL JUDGES OF LIBERIA (NATJL)



The National Association of Trial Judges of Liberia (NATJL) was established in 1987 when the Ad-hoc Chief Justice of the Honorable Supreme Court of Liberia, His Honor William B. Metzgar, then a judge, recognized the organization of the judges and headed their organized body until 2003 when Judge J. Boima Kontoe was requested to serve as Interim President charged with the responsibility to draw up a constitution for the formal and legal establishment of the organization.

In 2007, the organization was formally established and inaugurated under the name National Association of Trial Judges of Liberia (NATJL) with His Honor Yusif D. Kaba, the Resident Circuit Judge, Sixth Judicial Circuit (Civil Law Court) Montserrado County, as its first democratically elected President. Its MISSION is to seek the well-being of its members whilst maintaining a harmonious relationship with the Supreme Court Bench and the Liberian National Bar Association for effective operation of the Judicial System and the enhancement of the Rule of Law.

The VISION of the NATJL is to endeavor to make their members truly independent, impartial and holistically effective through economics and education pursuits, and by constructively engaging relevant stakeholders.



# Achievements of the NATJL

Over the years, the National Association of Trial Judges of Liberia has made remarkable achievements in advancing the welfare and human resource capacity building of its members, which have brought improvement in the dispensation of justice, as well as pursuing selfhelp infrastructural development aimed at revenue generation for the Association. Some of these achievements are:

- » The initiation of NATJL Members due payment and subsequent establishment of a loan scheme through the instrumentality, consent and approval of the late Chief Justice, His Honor Johnnie N. Lewis.
- » Four (4) acres of land purchased by the NATJL in 2010, in Gbengbar Town, Paynesville, Montserrado County, for the construction of a conference hall to host activities of the NATJL and as well generate revenue for the Association.
- » Dedicated in February 2016, a 3-bedroom guesthouse in Zwedru, Grand Gede County. Built on two lots of land acquired by the NATJL and named in honor of the late Chief Justice of the Honorable Supreme Court of Liberia, His Honor Johnnie N. Lewis, the guesthouse is intended to accommodate mainly assigned Circuit Court Judges and to generate revenue for the NATJL.

» In November 2017, the NATJL applied for and subsequently admitted into membership of the International Association of Judges (IAJ) based in Rome, Italy.

Following its admission into its membership, the IAJ designated the NATJL as its West Africa Focus Association tasked with the responsibility to recruit other West African Countries into the IAJ Membership.

» In 2017, the NATJL was admitted as affiliate member into the Federal Association of Judges based in the United States of America.

» Represented at three IAJ conferences – two in person and one virtual due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 Pandemic:

- A. November 2017, Santiago, Chile
- B. October 2018, Marrakech, Morocco
- C. September 2019, Nursultan, Kazakhstan



## NATIONAL JUDICIAL CONFERENCE (2021)



The Judiciary Branch of Government convened its 4th National Judicial Conference as required by the Revised Rules of the Supreme Court of Liberia.

The Conference brought together hundreds of participants including Justices, Judges, Magistrates, lawyers, financial experts, and other relevant stakeholders to discuss burning issues affecting law, public policy and the Liberian economy.

The National Judicial Conference, which was held at the Ministerial Complex in Congo Town, outside Monrovia, from June 7-11, 2021, was under the theme: The Law, Public Policy and the Economy. Chief Justice Francis S. Korkpor, Sr., in his welcome remarks at the opening of the conference, said the last National Judicial Conference was held in March of 2010, more than eleven (11) years ago under the administration of the late Chief Justice Johnnie N. Lewis.

Chief Justice Korkpor said the Revised Rules of the Supreme Court of Liberia provides that the Court shall hold a National Judicial Conference at least once a year. However due to financial constraints, this has not been possible for a long time until now. According to the Chief Justice, locally and internationally, new laws are constantly being promulgated, while existing laws are repealed or amended to suit the time, condition, and the needs of the people. “This means that we who are in the field of law must keep pace with the changes and developments”, he said

“We must meet from time to time to discuss trending issues in law and the administration of justice and harmonize views for the good of the public. We must continue to acquire/and or enhance knowledge in the law as a means of ensuring certainty in its interpretation,” He noted.

He said this is exactly the rationale for the rule of the Supreme Court which requires that a National Judicial Conference be held at least once every year. The Chief Justice seized the opportunity to thank the administration of His Excellency George Manneh Weah, President of the Republic of Liberia for making funds available for the Conference.

The Chief Justice expressed hope that funds will be provided on a regular basis to make the Conference an annual event as envisaged by the Rules of the Supreme Court. He also extended thanks to the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the American Bar Association (ABA) for also providing financial and logistical support to the Conference.



**H.E. George Manneh Weah**  
*President of the Republic of Liberia*  
*Addresses the National Judicial Conference*

Also speaking at the opening of the conference were, Mr. Justice Nicolas C. Browne-Marke, Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of Sierra Leone, the Swedish Ambassador accredited to Liberia, Madam Ingrid Wetterqvist, the United States Ambassador accredited to Liberia, Mr. Michael McCarthy, the Minister of Justice & Attorney General of the Republic of Liberia, Cllr. Frank Musah Dean, Jr. and the President of the Liberian National Bar Association, Cllr. Tiawan S Gongloe, The five days conference covered the following thematic issues:

- Access to Justice and the Rule of Law.
- Ensuring Accountability and Transparency in the Judiciary
- Improving Land Dispute Resolution as an Incentive for Investment and Economic Growth.
- Business Climate Development in Liberia.



**Cllr. Frank Musah Dean  
Minister of Justice & A. G. (RL)**



**Mr. Justice Nicolas C. Browne-Marke  
Associate Justice:  
Supreme Court of Sierra Leone**



**Cllr. Tiawan S. Gongloe  
President: LNBA**



**E.H. Michael McCarthy  
American Ambassador**



**H.E. Ingrid Wetterqvist  
Swedish Ambassador**

## DAY ONE OF THE NJC: ACCESS TO JUSTICE AND THE RULE OF LAW SPEAKERS



*Cllr. Gloria musu Scott  
Former Chief Justice: Supreme Court of Liberia  
investing in facilities, processes, and Skills fo  
Improved Court Performance*



*Mr. hannibal egbe Uwaifo President: African Bar  
Association Importance of an Independent Account-  
able Judiciary for Democracy & Development*



*His honor ousman f. feika Resident Circuit Judge: 5th  
Judicial Circuit, Grand Cape mount County  
Developing a Standardized merit Based policy to  
monitor and evaluate the performance of Judges to  
Incentivize Judges*

## DAY TWO OF THE NJC: ENSURING ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY IN



*Cllr. N. oswald Tweh asst. Prof. Louis Arthur  
Grimes School of law (UL) Regulating the Prac-  
tice of Law in Liberia: Emerging Issues and Chal-  
lenges (Perspective of the LNBA)*



*Cllr. philip A. Z. Banks III Former Associate  
Justice, Supreme Court of Liberia Regulating the  
Practice of Law in Liberia: Emerging Issues and  
Challenges (Perspective of the Supreme Court)*



*Cllr. Joyce Reeves Woods, Legal Practitioner  
making the Judiciary Inquiry Commission (JIC)  
& Grievance and Ethics Committee (GEC)  
more Responsive to Current Challenges  
and Trends (Perspective of the LNBA)*



*Cllr. Gladys Johnson, Former Associate Justice,  
Supreme Court of Liberia Making the Judiciary  
Inquiry Commission (JIC) & Grievance and Eth-  
ics Committee (GEC) more Responsive to Current  
Challenges and Trends  
(Perspective of the Supreme Court)*

**DAY THREE OF THE NJC: IMPROVING LAND DISPUTE RESOLUTION AS AN INCENTIVE FOR INVESTMENT AND ECONOMIC GROWTH SPEAKERS**



**Mr. Justice Yusif D. Kaba Associate Justice, Supreme Court of Liberia Ensuring the Effective Involvement of the Probate Court in Land Registration, Recording and Tracking Chain of Title**



**Atty. J. Adams Manobah Chairman, Liberia Land Authority Building a Modern and Transparent Land Title Registry**



**Mr. Thomas Doe Nah Commissioner General Liberia Revenue Authority Tracking Chain of Title Through Land Taxation: The Liberia Revenue Authority**



**Cllr. Cyril Jones Asst. Prof. Louis Arthur Grimes School of Law (UL) Modernizing the Criminal and Civil Procedure Laws to Enhance Timely Disposition of Cases.**



**Cllr. F. Juah Lawson Asst. Prof. Louis Arthur Grimes School of Law (UL) Choices for Effective Land Dispute Resolution: Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR), Administrative Determination, followed by Judicial Review versus a Specialized Land Court**

## DAY FOUR OF THE NJC: BUSINESS CLIMATE DEVELOPMENT IN LIBERIA SPEAKERS



**Hon. Samuel D. Tweah, Jr.**  
Minister of Finance & Development Planning (RL)  
Law, Public Policy and the Economy: the Nexus for an  
Improved Business Climate



**Cllr. N. Oswald Tweh**  
President, Liberia Chamber of Commerce  
Legal Barriers and Opportunities for Promoting,  
Protecting and Improving Domestic and  
International Trade.



**Mr. James Strother**  
President, Liberia Business Association  
The State of Liberia-Owned Businesses: What does  
the Law Say?



**Hon. J. Aloysius Tarlue**  
Executive Governor  
Central Bank of Liberia  
Price and Exchange Rate Stability, an Effective  
Collateral Registry, Credit Reference and Digital  
Financial Services.



**Hon. Molewuleh B. Gray**  
Chairman, National Investment Commission of  
Liberia  
The State of Liberia's Investment Climate: What  
are the Lessons Learned so Far?



**Hon. John B. S. Davies**  
President, Liberia Bankers Association  
The Law as a Fulcrum for Collateral Enforcement  
for Commercial Banks Lending



**Mr. Mohammed Majah Barry**  
President, Fula Community in Liberia  
Trading in Peace: Reflections on Access to Justice





# NATIONAL JUDICIAL CONFERENCE (2021) IN PICTURES



**PRESIDENT OF THE LNBA**



**AMBASSADOR OF SWEDEN**



MINISTER OF JUSTICE & ATTORNEY GENERAL, R. L.



AMBASSADOR OF THE UNITED STATES



ASSOCIATE JUSTICE, SUPREME COURT OF SIERRA LEONE

## Conference Participants









# STRUCTURAL TRANSFORMATION

The overarching need for judicial independence could not be overemphasized in the reform agenda of the Liberian Judiciary. The time has come that the Judiciary, an independent branch of government, is housed in its own facilities throughout the country, conducive for work and free from outside influences.



“A judicial complex is a structure consisting of several court facilities such as the circuit court, debt court, labor court, tax court, revenue court, traffic court and magistrate court, etc. A judicial complex also has offices for the county attorney, public defender and probation and parole officers. The availability of many courts and offices of judicial actors in one central location promotes easy access to justice. We have constructed additional Judicial Complexes in Barclayville, Grand Kru County; Zwedru, Grand Gedeh County; Sanniquellie, Nimba County; and Tubmanburg, Bomi County which are in full use today. Currently, Judicial Complexes are being constructed in Fishtown, River Gee County and Cestos City, Rivercess County”.

His Honor Francis S. Korkpor, Sr. Chief Justice



## 1ST JUDICIAL CIRCUIT MONTSERRADO COUNTY OMEGA MAGISTERIAL COURT

**T**he OMEGA Magisterial Court within Montserrado County, District # 5 locality was constructed because the capacity of the existing Paynesville City Court is unable to satisfy the service needs of this very populous area of the county



## 7TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT GRAND GEDEH COUNTY



**A**t the 7th Judicial Circuit Grand Gedeh County, the old structure that housed the court was small and inadequate to host the various service delivery activities of a Circuit Court. That structure could not contain some of the other courts such as Criminal Court “E”, which needed to be operational at the Circuit Court

The construction of a new judicial complex was therefore one of the on-going Judicial Infra-structural Reform intended to create a one-stop court facility with capacity to host other courts and create access to various types of judicial services following the end of the civil conflict.



In the specific case of the 7th Judicial Circuit, the small old court structure has been refurbished and converted into a Criminal Court “E” with support from EU Spotlight Project thus creating a dedicated and specialized court in Grand Gedeh County



# 8TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT NIMBA COUNTY



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**“When I took on the mantle of leadership as Chief Justice, we continued with the reform programs and projects started by the former Chief Justices and embarked on many new ones”.  
Chief Justice Korkpor.**

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**A**t the 8th Judicial Circuit Nimba County, The Circuit was operating out of the old Administrative Building own and operated by the Executive Branch of Government, where the need for space was hotly contended with other functionaries’ equally using the structure, a situation which adversely affected the independence of the Judiciary Branch of Government because the space was grossly inadequate for the activities of the Circuit Court.



Also on this compound is a separate structure that houses Criminal Court “E”. This is the court that deals with sexual gender based violent cases. These are mostly rape cases



We also have a separate structure that serves as living quarters for the resident circuit judge of this county and the assigned circuit judge who will preside here.



## KARNPLAY CITY MAGISTERIAL COURT



## DUO CITY MAGISTERIAL COURT



# 9TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT BONG COUNTY

In consideration of the strategic security road map for Liberia, the redesigning and construction of the 9th Judicial Circuit Court Complex was overseen by the administration of Chief Justice Korkpor.

This Complex houses the Circuit, Specialized Courts, including the Sexual Offenses Division (Criminal Court “E”) as well as the Gbarnga City Magisterial Court.

## BOTOTA MAGISTERIAL COURT



# 11TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT BOMI COUNTY



Lie the 8th Judicial Circuit Nimba County, the 11th Judicial Circuit Court of Bomi County was also operating out of the old Administrative Building own and operated by the Executive Branch of Government, where the need for space was hotly contended with other functionaries' equally using the structure, a situation which

adversely affected the independence of the Judiciary Branch of Government because the space was grossly inadequate for the activities of the Circuit Court. Hence the need for adequate and dedicated court space for judicial service delivery as part of judicial reforms and modernization of the courts thus creating access to justice in the county.



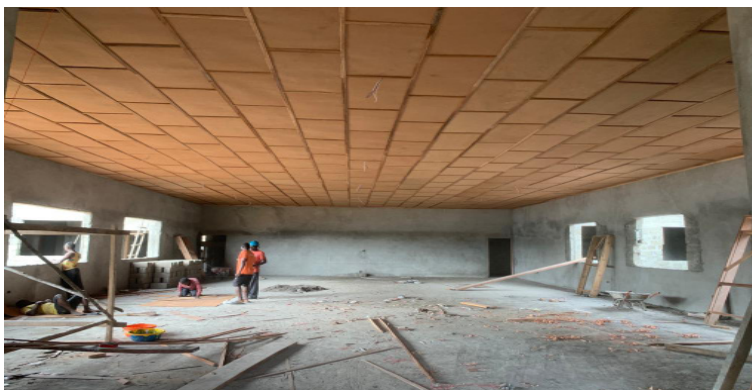
# 14TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT RIVERCESS COUNTY



In the specific case of the 14th Judicial Circuit, the judiciary is putting a Circuit Facility to include a dedicated Criminal Court “E” as part of modernization and the provision of judicial services where it has been either inadequate or non-existent.

The Circuit Court is being hosted in the court

building provided by UNMIL intended for the Magisterial Court in Cestos City, as there is no dedicated Circuit Court structure in the County, hence the desire on the part of the Chief Justice to have a dedicated circuit court facility in the 14th Judicial Circuit aims to create such a facility there and at the same time modernized the face of the Judiciary in Rivercess County.



# SUPREME COURT OF LIBERIA



*From left to right: His Honor Joseph N. Nagbe, Her Honor Jamesetta H. Wolokolie, His Honor Francis S. Korkpor, Sr., Her Honor Sie-A-Nyene G. Yuoh, and His Honor Yussif D. Kaba*



# OFFICE OF THE CHIEF JUSTICE



*Cllr. Elisha J. T. Forkeyoh, Law Clerk to the C. J. & Cllr. Andrew N. Nimley, Jr. Admin Asst. to the C. J.*



*Atty. Francis Koko Gray, Special Asst. to the C. J.*



*Mr. Daniel Stane, Secretary Office of the C. J.*



*Senior Class of the Firestone High School (2022) Visit to the Supreme Court of Liberia*



*Senior Class of the C. T. Gray High School (2022) Visit to the Supreme Court of Liberia*



*Mrs. Davidetta Kotty, Executive Asst. to the C. J.*



*Mrs. Esie Baffour-Sanvee, Executive Secretary to the C. J.*



**LET JUSTICE BE DONE TO ALL!**

