

## County Dev. Funds —Grand Bassa CBOs

On June 04, 2014, the Grand Bassa CBOs in association with SAMFU with funding from TrustAfrica, presented to the Grand Bassa County authority a position statement highlighting issues surrounding the management of the county development fund. A well attended event covers many issues that are affecting the livelihood of its citizens. The population of Grand Bassa once decided their priorities were health, education and infrastructure. To meet and satisfy those basic needs of our people, the County Council must make sure that projects are well planned and fully implemented considering:

- ◇ The decision making process for the County Development Funds at the county council should be participatory.
- ◇ The County Development Fund reporting system is not clear but very confusing.
- ◇ Faulty Project vetting and monitoring processes
- ◇ The result of the County Development Fund/ Social Development fund.

They argued that with all these issues, the county council continue to approve newer projects ignoring older projects that weren't completed. They therefore recommended that the government of Liberia ensure the schedule of the County Council meeting be made known to the population in advance of not less than two months. Also that the selection process of participants be publicized and transparent, that names of People attending the meeting should be made known at least a month in advance so that the population can know those representatives and talk with them about their concerns. The County Council should prioritize the completion of stalled projects, instead of making decisions about many new projects, so that the little available resources can be used for the benefit of the population. The Information flows and transparency must be guaranteed, because if the people don't know what is going on and have no way to find it out, they will get confused and only blame their representatives. These recommendations are not only restricted to Grand Bassa County but can also be used in other counties.



## RSPO meeting in Sinoe County

The Round Table on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) is an international body and was established in 2004 with the objective of promoting the growth and use of sustainable oil palm products through credible global standards and engagement of stakeholders. The RSPO visit to Liberia was based on complaints filed by three communities in Sinoe County (Butaw District, Lower KULU and Shaw BO people in Tarjuwon district), and Nimopoh where the company is presently operating. The complaints were

based on how the company was carrying out its Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) process and the visit was centered on the following objectives: (1) To brief the nongovernmental organizations (NGOs)/civil society organizations (CSOs) and Golden Veroleum Liberia (GVL) and their consultants on the RSPO rules on new palm oil development. (2) To explain to the NGO/CSO, GVL and their consultants on the requirements of the FPIC under the RSPO rules. (3) To explain to the NGO/CSO/

Communities on the progress of the complaints on GVL thus far. (4) To hear, firsthand, accounts of the complaints against GVL from the communities.



## Sea Turtle Stakeholder Mapping

On March 20th 2014 the Liberia Sea turtle project hosted a one day stakeholder workshop in Monrovia. The workshop was the first of its kind in the history of marine turtle's conservation in Liberia; it brought together 35 participants from five key fishing communities in Monrovia and Grand Bassa County. The objectives of the workshop were to highlight the numerous threats sea turtle encounter while in the ocean and on coastal beaches of Liberia and also discuss

how coastal communities in Monrovia can get involve with the protection of sea turtles. The workshop created a forum through which representative of the five fishing communities have the opportunity to interact with the head of the conservation unit of the Environmental Protection Agency of Liberia and two nongovernmental organization working to conserve marine turtle in the country. SAMFU

the organizer of the workshop presented the threats marine turtle encounter through video documentary view by participants at the workshop. These documentary afforded participants at the workshop to understand the true nature of the life

stages of marine turtle and the difficulties they experience from the beach as hatching and to the ocean where



Community members read the position statement to a Sime Darby representative

# Oil Palm Video in Bomi and Grand Cape Mount Counties



SAMFU has started to educate citizens of Grand Cape Mount and Bomi counties about the advantages and disadvantages of palm production within their counties. Also educating them of agreement made be-

tween the Liberian government and Sime Darby. These awareness are done through some video screening and conducting of regular community meetings. Samfu has targeted nine communities and has done video screening in six of these communities namely: GOHN, MALAMAH, MEDINA, GOLODEE LASSANA, MEEKOR, Farley.

These communities received SAMFU with open hands and promise to use precautionary

methods when dealing with



Palm Plantation (Sime Darby).

## More support needed to complete SAMFU's office

Three years ago, during a 5 year strategic planning process, SAMFU identified a permanent office space as one of four strategic issues which needed to be addressed urgently to cope with ever-increasing rentals being charged in Monrovia and its environs.

Estimated cost of this project is 58, 167.78 USD. To date total amount raised and fully applied to the project is 20, 752.7 USD with the

following activities completed: 1. One (1) acre of land purchased, surveyed, and deed probated, 2) Foundation of building erected, and 3) Walls constructed up to windows level.

Total amount needed to complete this project is 38, 167.78 USD.

Hats off to American Jewish World Service (AJWS) and Trocaire for contributions of 10, 000 and 2000 USD respectively made to this project.

Your contributions in cash and

kind will be greatly appreciated. It will help create a better working at-



# Capacity Building for Staffs

Mr. Samuel K.D. Kwannah, program manager of SAMFU Extractive industry and human rights program, was one of 6 Liberians who benefited from a 6 week long Improving Forest Governance (IFG 2014) Course offered by the Center for International Development and Training (CIDT) of the University of Wolverhampton, Telford, United Kingdom. The

IFG Course aims to improve forest governance by analyzing the causes of poor forest governance and employing multi-stakeholder processes and enterprise development as tools to improve the situation. Participants are introduced to and drilled through various tools and skills so that they are equipped to meaningfully contribute to the implementation of

the Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT) and the Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA), and to design and carry out forest management delivery mechanisms, including REDD+ and Climate Change mitigation and adaptation in conjunction with other stakeholders in their countries. Participants from Africa come from Democratic



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**Vision:** SAMFU plays a major role in the sustainable management of Liberia's natural resources. SAMFU works in a strong network to ensure that the management processes are participatory, transparent, accountable, and peaceful.

All our involvements are unique and committed driven.

**Mission:** SAMFU promotes partnerships with environmental organizations, the Liberian government and communities to ensure a sustainable management of Liberia's natural resources.

**For more information, please visit our website or contact us directly via phone or in our office.**

**Working for Nature Conservation**



## EBOLA IN LIBERIA

With the rapid spread of the deadly Ebola virus and the declaration of State of Emergency and even the rein-enforcement by curfew in Liberia, SAMFU is modifying its programs to suit the situation.

SAMFU is currently soliciting funding to empower its county offices in carrying out ebola awareness and possible distribution of Chlorine and Buckets. Counties that SAMFU is currently working in are major focus of this process. These Counties are Grand Gedeh, River Gee, Grand Bassa, Bomi, Grand Cape Mount, Sinoe and Monsterrado. This process is hoped to provide knowledge and protection to communities of work.

Annette Reimer, an AGEH staff that joined SAMFU some four (4) months ago, hard being working on project in Grand Cape Mount and

Bomi counties and Grand Bassa, was sadly recalled to Germany. This has affected the work force of the organization in the face of ebola threat.

With the present support to the government of Liberia, we suggest that the government purchase few used mini-buses that are locally available and cheap. About four of these used mini buses cost will equal one Toyota Land cruiser Jeep. Presently we need rapid response teams that will move to communities immediately upon call. In the absence of this, many dead bodies and suspected cases will remain unattended for days.