

# International Rescue Committee Liberia: Strategy Action Plan



T Trenchard / Panos / IRC



Issued June 2016

## IRC2020 GLOBAL STRATEGY OVERVIEW

The International Rescue Committee's (IRC) mission is to help the world's most vulnerable people survive, recover, and gain control of their future. The aim of the global strategy, IRC2020 (see right), is to make measurable improvements in health, safety, education, economic wellbeing, and decision-making power. Therefore, the IRC has made investments to design more effective programs, use resources more efficiently, reach more people more quickly and better respond to beneficiaries' needs.



## LIBERIA OVERVIEW

In 2003, Liberia emerged from 14 years of civil war. The prolonged conflict deeply affected Liberian families and society: it forced one million people from their homes, took the lives of 250,000 Liberians, and destroyed most state systems and infrastructure.

Though Liberia has enjoyed more than 10 years of peace, the pace of reconstruction has not met the need. Today 1 in 11 Liberian children dies before their fifth birthday, 1 in 5 teenage girls becomes pregnant, and more than 1 in 3 Liberians are survivors of sexual violence.

The 2014 Ebola outbreak, the largest in history, highlighted how fragile Liberia remains. The outbreak closed health facilities, schools, and businesses for a year. It also undermined the trust the public had in the government, resulting in outbreaks of violence in response to quarantines.

The IRC began working in Liberia in 1996 to respond to the needs of refugees and people displaced by civil wars in Liberia and Sierra Leone. Since then, the IRC has continuously revised its portfolio based on the context and needs of Liberian people. Today the IRC

remains one of the main humanitarian actors in the country. Following an analysis of the IRC's history in Liberia, the economic, political, and social context, and the needs across the country, the IRC in Liberia set a vision for 2020.

The IRC's new strategy for Liberia illustrates its commitment to creating measurable, meaningful improvements in the health, safety, and decision-making power of Liberians. The IRC aims to facilitate Liberia's transition from response and early recovery to sustainable redevelopment.

## THE IRC'S STRATEGIC PROGRAMMING

The IRC's new strategy in Liberia will focus on delivering programs across a variety of sectors that improve health and safety outcomes for Liberian women, men, and children and increase their ability to influence decisions that affect their families and their communities. The IRC will reach 1.7 million people in Liberia by the end of 2020, specifically targeting women and girls in order to narrow the gender gap.

To achieve these outcomes, the IRC Liberia will pursue more integrated programming to achieve greater impact in the lives of beneficiaries—whether through direct implementation, coordination, or partnership.

The IRC aims to empower the government and strengthen civil society in order to rebuild trust between Liberian citizens and service providers, effectively manage health and social welfare services, and provide for the basic needs of the Liberian people. Based on the context and need, the IRC in Liberia will also continue to deliver services directly when appropriate.

In the health sector, the IRC will continue working with the Ministry of Health and civil society organizations

to increase access to and improve the quality of the essential package of health services. This includes services that reduce unintended pregnancy, and treat or prevent the consequences of gender-based violence, complications of pregnancy or childbirth, and sexually transmitted infections.

The IRC in Liberia will also work with the Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Welfare and civil society organizations to develop and scale effective, innovative services targeting the safety of women and children and focusing on reducing family and gender-based violence. Creating families and communities free from violence that disproportionately affects women and children is key to assuring that all Liberians, regardless of gender or age, have genuine decision-making power over the issues that affect their lives, their families, and their communities.

Empowering ministries will include training and capacity building of community health and social workers, equipping facilities, enhancing commodities or drug supply chains, improving information systems management, and strengthening management capacity at county and district levels. The IRC will also support civil society by providing financial and technical assistance to operations and programs.

Figure 1: Priority Outcomes and Future Programs

Priority Outcomes in Liberia	Future Areas of Work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Women and girls are protected from and treated for the consequences of gender-based violence</li> <li>&gt; Women and adolescent girls prevent unintended pregnancy</li> <li>&gt; Children are protected from and treated for communicable disease</li> <li>&gt; Adults are protected from and treated for communicable disease</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Pair the IRC's expertise in service delivery with its expertise in women's empowerment to assure women and girls have the power and opportunity to control their health and safety</li> <li>&gt; Support the government and partners to provide the Essential Package of Health Services at the facility level</li> <li>&gt; Develop the capacity of government and civil society to effectively deliver community-based health and social welfare services</li> <li>&gt; Strengthen Ebola Virus Disease surveillance, response, and recovery mechanisms</li> </ul>



---

## COMMITMENTS FOR IMPACT

The IRC in Liberia aims to improve the effectiveness of the IRC's programs, make better use of resources, benefit more people in more ways, be more responsive to beneficiaries and partners, and react more quickly when crisis strikes. In order to maximize impact, the IRC in Liberia is making new investments in staff, systems, and programs.

Figure 2: Commitments to Ensure Impact



### Effectiveness

- > Establish a dedicated monitoring and evaluation unit to implement new measurement systems, shape data-driven decision-making, and measure change over time
- > Create a unified team of technical experts that focus on improving outcomes for women and children across sectors



### Best Use of Resources

- > Audit internal gender equity to assure female staff have equal opportunity to contribute to and shape the IRC's work
- > Create a country-wide staff development plan, including audits, capacity building plans, and management training to help teams work more efficiently



### Scale & Reach

- > Develop institutional rather than project-based partnerships to reach more people
- > Strengthen the operational capacity of government and civil society partners to take over project management and service delivery



### Responsiveness

- > Regularly collect client and partner feedback in every project
- > Use data from clients and partners to improve the quality of services



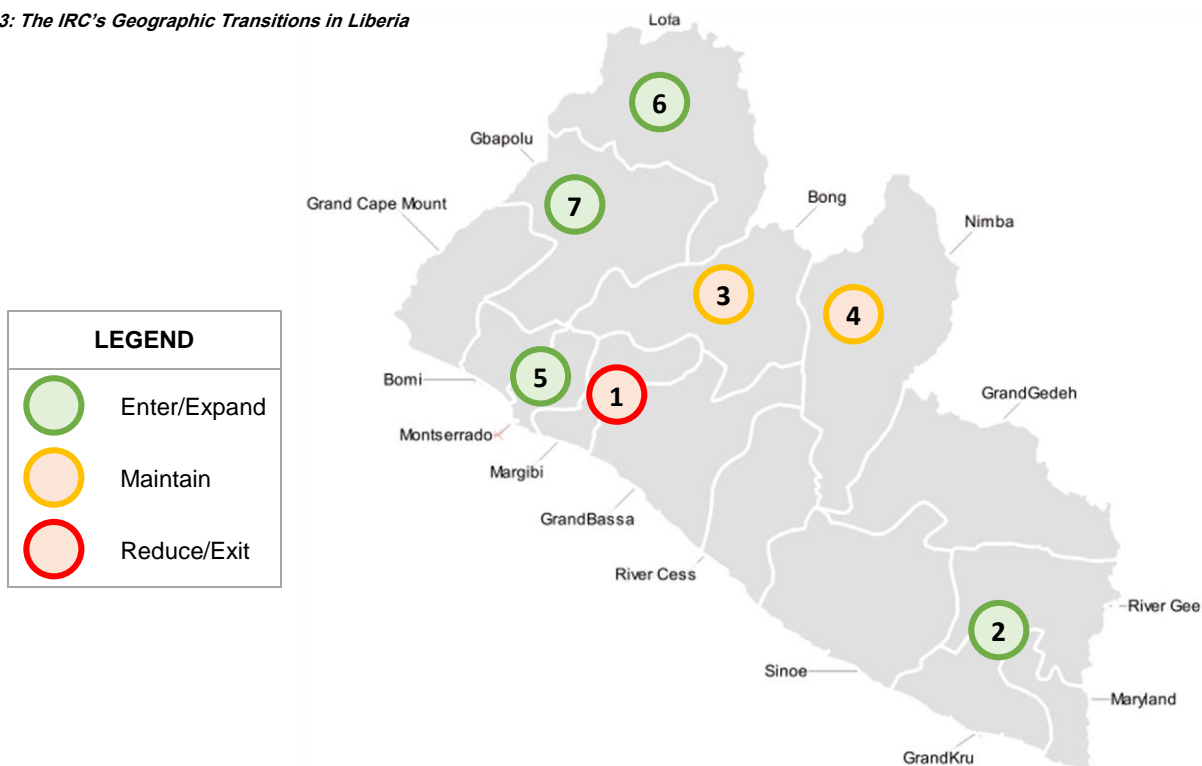
### Speed and Timeliness

- > Create an emergency preparedness plan that maintains the IRC's capacity to respond quickly and at scale to future disease outbreaks or political instability
- > Develop an exit strategy for the IRC in Liberia

## IRC'S STRATEGIC PRESENCE

From now until the end of 2020, the IRC will maintain, expand, and reduce its presence in sites across Liberia based on a contextual analysis of the greatest need and where the IRC can create the biggest impact.

Figure 3: The IRC's Geographic Transitions in Liberia



Location	Transition Plan
1 Grand Bassa & Margibi*	Build the capacity of local civil society organizations to support health services and disease outbreak preparedness and response as part of the IRC's exit strategy.
2 Maryland & River Gee	Expand services that improve outcomes for women and children by building on existing health projects or partnering with other actors.
3 Bong*	Maintain support to community-based health and social services, coordinating with other actors focused on women and children.
4 Nimba*	Integrate existing community-based health and social service programming to boost the safety and power of women and children.
5 Montserrado*	Expand the reach of community-based programs that improve the health, safety, and power of all people, especially women and children. Focus on heavily-populated, urban areas.
6 Lofa*	Expand programs that improve the safety and decision-making power of women and children and complement existing community-based health service provision.
7 Gbarpolu	Launch health and social services to increase access and improve outcomes for underserved Liberians.

\*In these counties the IRC will focus on transitioning service delivery to local partners by 2020.



T Trenchard / Panos / IRC

## The IRC in Liberia



Aitor Sanchez Lacomba, Country Director  
[Aitor.SanchezLacomba@rescue.org](mailto:Aitor.SanchezLacomba@rescue.org)



[Rescue.org/where/Liberia](https://www.rescue.org/where/Liberia)



INTERNATIONAL  
**RESCUE**  
COMMITTEE