



# Political Parties Youth Dialogue on Post Elections Peacebuilding

Naymote Partners for Democratic Development with support from the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) has conducted two in series of Regional Youth Dialogues on the Role of Young People to Support a Peaceful Post-Electoral Environment in Montserrado and Bomi Counties.



The first event was held at the Carina Hotel Conference Hall on November 4 and second at the Bomi County Community College campus in Tubmanburg, Bomi County on November 18, 2017.

Both events brought together 150 young people from Montserrado, Gbarpolu, Grand Cape Mount and Bomi counties, representing six political parties, including the Coalition for Democratic Change, Unity Party, Liberty Party, Movement for Democracy and Reconstruction, Alternative National Congress



and the All Liberian Party. Representatives from the Federation of Liberian Youth, Liberia National Student Union and the Mano River Union Youth Parliament also participated in the dialogue.

These dialogues are being held around the country to advance peace and reconciliation efforts, build mutual relationships among young people from

different political parties, increase the participation of young people in the country's post-election governance process, ensure young people remain actively engaged with the political and democratic process after the elections; and understand best practices and lessons learnt through the various legal and democratic exchanges.

At these events participants discussed issues and concerns to young people as the nation prepares for the runoff election, lessons learnt from political transitions in other African countries, understanding the difference between electoral irregularities and electoral fraud, understanding the reconciliation, counting and tallying of results, understanding the election law Section 10.2 A (Election Offences), Returns of Election Results (Article 83 C), Hearing based on complaint regulation and due process, factors that could increase the risk of election related violence in Liberia and mitigating the risks of electoral related violence.



Other issues discussed during the various working sessions included: The role of young people during the first round, the role of young people before, during and after the runoff election and an action plan and next steps to promote peaceful elections especially among young people was developed.

Atty. Oscar Bloh facilitated the dialogue; he was appreciated highly by the participants for his participatory facilitation skills and knowledge of the issues.

*"These kinds of dialogues are important, it brings people with different political opinions together and it makes us feel that we are one people, jointly finding solutions to our country's problem"* **Mr. Alphonso Madeh, Liberty Party.**

*"Let's continuously share the message of peace and love our dear country above everything else. This is the only way we can hold together as young people. I want to challenge everyone of us here to always serve as ambassadors of peace".* **Yassah David, Alternative National Congress**

*"The NEC must try as much as possible to be impartial so that people can see it as a credible democratic institution".* **Kadiatu Aparthia Diallo, Unity Party.**

*"Publication of the voters roll is serious issues that need to be handled by the NEC in case there's a re-run or run-off. A credible election is dependent on a credible voters roll".* **James Crayton, Coalition for Democratic Change**



At the event in Montserrado County, Dr. Francis Kai-Kai, the Chief of Peace Consolidation Services at the United Nations Mission in Liberia admonished young people to see elections not as a zero-sum game where one wins and all loses but as a competition of ideas in the interest of your country. Dr. Kai-Kai appreciated NAYMOTE for organizing the event and its role in engaging young people to ensure that they are active participants in the political process.

The project is creating the platform and providing opportunities for young people from different political divides to mend relationships fractured as a result of political divisions and to forge a common front in engaging the post-election governance process that promotes the interest of all young people.



The attitude of young people will be critical in ensuring the runoff election results are widely accepted, and from this perspective young people will play an instrumental role in shaping the outcome



of the election and what happens afterwards. The numerical supremacy of young voters means young Liberians will be the guarantors of peace and stability during the political transition, and the custodians of a peaceful post-electoral period, this why NAYMOTE is excited about this project and really appreciating the United Nations Mission in Liberia for the support.

Young people ages 18 to 32 years constituted 52 percent of the total number of registered voters for 2017 elections. This means that young people quest of democracy is growing and the dividend of their participation is key.



*Established in 2001, the institution has been one of the leading grassroots organizations promoting democracy, peace building, human rights and civic engagement in Liberia. The institution runs the Young Political Leadership School and the Liberia Bus Project.*

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