

International Partnership to Host Workshops to Prevent Human Trafficking in Liberia

U.S. Embassy in Monrovia funds academic, NGO, and private sector partnership to address human trafficking in Liberia

WELLESLEY, MA, UNITED STATES, September 8, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Together with academic, NGO, and private sector partners, the [Wellesley Centers for Women](#) (WCW) will hold two workshops to address the problem of human trafficking in Liberia.



Human trafficking in Liberia has long been a pernicious form of violence affecting women and children, especially those most economically vulnerable. It has been flagged as a critical issue by the United Nations, and has put a damper on business development and private sector

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*Layli Maparyan, Ph.D., WCW
Executive Director*

investment in Liberia. In the U.S. Department of State’s 2021 Trafficking in Persons Report, Liberia’s status declined from its ranking the previous year, raising concerns. The government of Liberia has taken recent strides to address trafficking by forming an interagency commission, and WCW will bolster those efforts with these workshops funded by the U.S. Embassy in Monrovia.

“It takes a village to end trafficking, and it all begins with educating diverse stakeholders about the scale of the problem and how they can make a difference,” said WCW Executive Director Layli Maparyan, Ph.D. “With everyone

working together—academia, the NGO sector, the private sector, government, and community-based organizations—we can turn the tide in Liberia.”

In concert with its partners in the United States and Liberia, WCW will provide a valuable educational resource to students, professionals, and those who work in the markets in Liberia who have the power to deepen their awareness and take concrete actions that address

trafficking. Both workshops will be designed, developed, and delivered by WCW and the [University Consortium for Liberia](#) (UCL)—a nonprofit organization based in Atlanta, Georgia, that is dedicated to coordinating diverse academic efforts between Liberia and the global community.

Partners on the project include the University of Liberia and its new Gender Studies Program; the Sustainable Market Women’s Fund, a nonprofit organization in Liberia that focuses on improving the livelihoods of women who work in markets; as well as Brussels Airlines, the Atlanta Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport (ATL), and the Liberia Airport Authority (LAA). All are committed to reducing gender-based violence in Liberia.

“On behalf of the UCL Board, we are excited to collaborate with WCW and the leadership of Dr. Layli Maparyan, who is also a founding partner of the UCL,” stated Hon. Cynthia Lynn Blandford, Founder and President of the UCL. “Through our Sister Airport Agreement between ATL and LAA, this initiative fits strategically into the objectives of the Agreement to strengthen our airport relationships. I could not think of a better opportunity to get this important work done for the betterment of the Liberian community.”

The first two-day workshop, held virtually in early November 2021, will focus on human trafficking in the travel and transportation sectors. The goal will be to make it possible for workers at all levels and everyday travelers to recognize the signs of trafficking, know how to respond and report, and understand how everyone can help end trafficking.

The second two-day workshop, slated for mid-spring 2022 in Liberia, will focus on human trafficking affecting women who work in the markets and their families. A component of this workshop will be the development of a community-based service-learning project on gender-based violence, which will link University of Liberia students and faculty with market women. Because trafficking occurs in a complex social and cultural context and cannot be sustainably redressed in isolation, this project will help identify key factors and potential sites of intervention on which future anti-trafficking efforts can be built in local communities, aided by UCL partnerships.

About WCW

The Wellesley Centers for Women (WCW) is the largest academic research and action institute in the United States that is focused on women and gender and driven by social change. WCW is located at [Wellesley College](#). Research scientists and project directors at WCW advance gender equality, social justice, and human wellbeing through high-quality research, theory, and action programs.

wcwonline.org

About UCL

The University Consortium for Liberia (UCL), a 501(c)3 organization based in Atlanta, Georgia, is dedicated to coordinating diverse academic efforts between Liberia and the global community.

UCL facilitates exchanges between Liberia and the U.S. that consist of faculty leading and engaging in service learning, partners participating in research and workshops, and academic institutions providing scholarships.

UCLiberia.com

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