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Liberian Government Launches National Anti-Trafficking Hotline

First National Anti-Human Trafficking Hotline Receives Support from World Hope International

Monrovia, Liberia – September 28, 2016

The government of Liberia now has a National Anti-Trafficking Hotline, the first of its kind in the country. The hotline was launched at the Ministry of Labor on July 22, 2016 by Deputy Minister of Labor for Planning and Manpower Development, Hon. Patrick Mbayo. The achievement is sponsored by World Hope International (WHI), a Christian relief and development organization that works with vulnerable and exploited communities to alleviate poverty, suffering, and worldwide injustices, with funding from the U.S. government via the Department of State's Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons.

Now, Liberians can dial 2883 from any mobile phone in the country to report suspected trafficking cases and learn about human trafficking. The hotline is open from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday and is expected to expand its coverage to 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. All calls to the hotline are confidential and callers will not be charged by their cellphone providers.

The National Anti-Trafficking Hotline is part of a broader initiative that aims to enhance victim protection and support the institutionalization of a National Referral Pathway (NRP) in Liberia. Once the Ministry of Justice provides approval and the NRP is finalized, it will help communities, civil society, law enforcement, prosecutors, and government officials to better assist victims of trafficking by laying out the steps that need to be taken to identify and protect victims, as well as the roles and responsibilities of the assistance actors. It will also institute consistent support for victims of trafficking throughout the country. The NRP was developed in partnership with the Liberian government and civil society organizations coordinated by WHI. To protect victims, WHI is providing short-term emergency shelter, holistic case management, and reintegration assistance to labor and sex trafficking victims in partnership with a local shelter. WHI is also working with the media to raise awareness of trafficking through call-in radio shows and anti-trafficking messages.

Stressing the magnitude and danger of human trafficking during the launch of National Anti-Trafficking Hotline, Mbayo, said over 20 million persons are victimized annually by trafficking around the world. He said that Liberia, one of many countries of origin, transit, and destination

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for men, women, and children subjected to forced labor and sex trafficking, is contributing to “global gangsterism.” He called on all sectors of society to unite in their efforts and stop human trafficking. Describing lack of information as one of the factors promoting the crime, Mbayo said one way to stop this “evil monster” was to take advantage of the hotline to identify and report trafficking cases.

About World Hope International

World Hope International (WHI) is a Christian relief and development organization that works with vulnerable and exploited communities to alleviate poverty, suffering and worldwide injustices. “WHI has a longstanding history with Liberia having first started working in the country in 1997. Since then, we have taken on leadership in educating the public and training law enforcement officials, lawyers, and others to strengthen efforts to combat human trafficking in Liberia and we hope that hope the hotline will increase reporting of human trafficking cases in the country,” stated John Lyon, Chief Executive Officer of World Hope International.

WHI currently works with 15 of the poorest countries in the world focusing on eight key areas: anti-trafficking and gender-based violence, clean water wells and sanitation, rural and economic development, agriculture, education, emergency response, health and nutrition, and child sponsorship. To learn more, please visit <http://www.worldhope.org>, sign up for the WHI newsletter or follow WHI on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube or Instagram.

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