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GLOBAL FUND steps up effort to reduce HIV/ AIDS impact on Liberia

The Global Fund, an international financing organization that aims to attract and disburse funds to low income countries including Liberia is leaving no stone untouched in its effort to reduce the impact of HIV and AIDS on the population of the West African Country lately affected by Ebola. The Liberian Ministry of Health is intensely making effort to build a Resilient Health System, capable of managing shocks

Currently, three counties in Liberia are hugely affected with the HIV/AIDS virus. Montserrado has Twenty Two Thousand people living with the virus, Grand Bassa County 4000 while 3000 Thousand people in Margibi County are affected.

Despite the increase, twelve thousand people living with the virus are in care while ten thousand are on Anti Retro-virus Drugs.

Additionally, there are one hundred and fifty five sites offering care to those living with the virus and four hundred HIV counseling and testing centers

According to the Program Manager of Liberia's Aids Control Program, Dr Julia Garbo, stigma and people's refusal to show up for testing account for Liberia lagging behind in the fight against the virus.

."There are people who refused to showed up to get tested on a daily basis because, they are being stigmatized and this is causing Liberia to be left behind on the issue of reduction", Dr. Garbo stated.

Dr. Garbo also wants pregnant women to ensure that they get tested at facilities because the sooner they do that, the better chance for the mother and the unborn child. “ The NACP is making significant strides, at first, there were only two facilities offering ART care and treatment, but now we have 155 sites”. She concluded.

At the same time, GLOBAL FUND Manager in Liberia, Mrs. Sophie Pawon said while challenges exist in the fight against HIV and AIDS, her organization in collaboration with the National Aids Control Program has begun to roll out three approaches, namely the Catch-up Plan, Data Collection and a huge focus on Montserrado County.

In the plan, the GLOBAL FUND Boss said her organization along with the NACP will support the three counties but with more emphasis on Montserrado, because of its huge burden. In terms of support, “we will try to provide more financial support to beef up the capacity of trained health workers working in facility with people living with the disease.” Said, Mrs. Parwon.

Manager Parwon said the catch-Up Plan will also take into consideration adequate data collection which if done will put Liberia on par with other Counties that have made significant gains in reducing the virus.

The Global Fund boss has also lauded the entire Global fund team that visited Liberia few months ago to assess the level of work being done and further strengthen its partnership with the Liberian Government. According to Mrs. Parwon, “during the team visit, it also met beneficiaries of the program, people living with HIV and TB and because of the satisfaction of the level of work done by the team here, we have started to receive green light for more funding for the next three years since the return of my boss” she narrated.

Mrs. Parwon then made this passionate plea on Liberians to visit health facilities and inquire to know their HIV status, adding’ the sooner you get to know your status, the better chance you stand because one who is positive can live happily and longer once you are taking your treatment regularly, abstaining and making use of condom’. She asserted.

