APRIES

AFRICAN PROGRAMMING & RESEARCH INITIATIVE TO
END SLAVERY

Newsletter

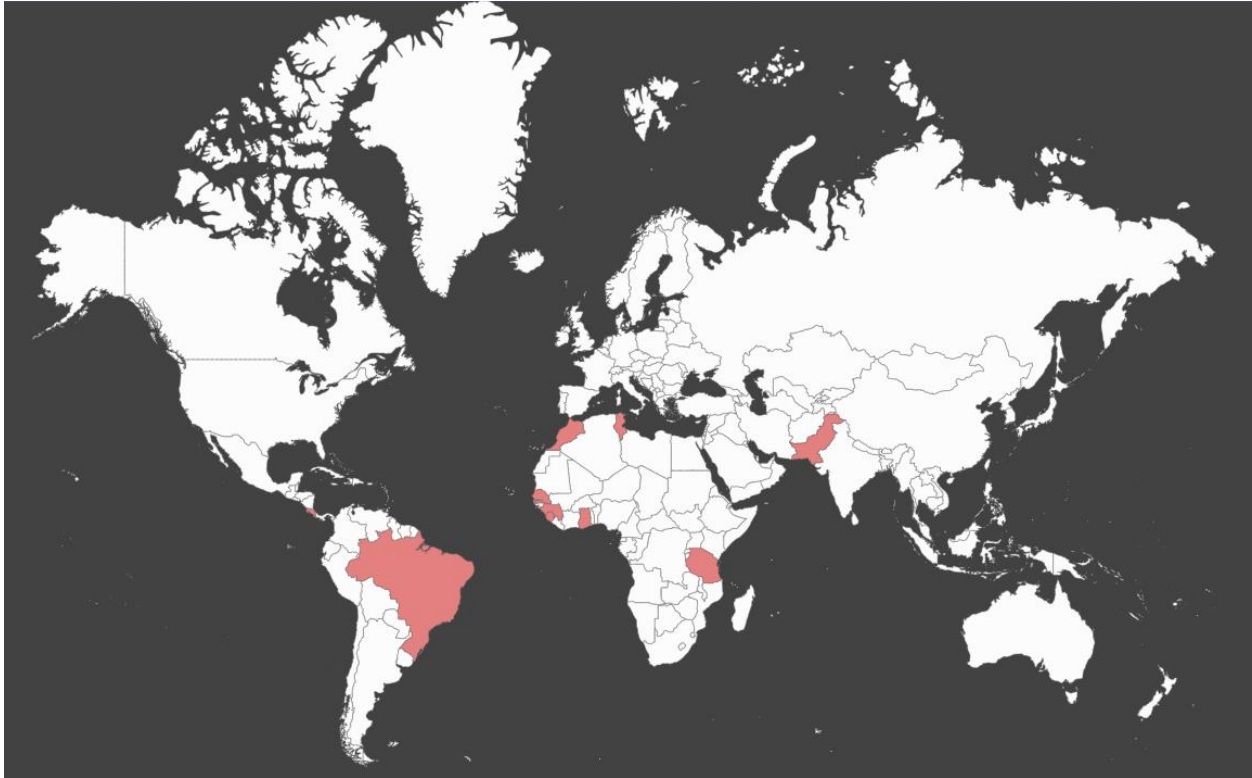## Poised for
Collective IMPACT

About APRIES

The African Programming and Research Initiative to End Slavery (APRIES) is an international consortium of anti-slavery researchers and policy advocates from the University of Georgia (UGA) and the University of Liverpool. Our goal is to reduce the prevalence of modern slavery by transforming the capacity of community-engaged agencies to implement prevention, prosecution, and protection strategies worldwide.

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APRIES's Countries of Activity

Highlighted in pink, APRIES's and partners' countries of program activity to date are: Brazil, Costa Rica, Ghana, Guinea, Morocco, Pakistan, Sierra Leone, Senegal, Tanzania and Tunisia

*Our mission is to better understand
the complexity of modern slavery and act for policy
and best practices to prevent and end it*

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Program Highlights in 2020

APRIES consolidated community partnerships, hosted a virtual conference, launched new projects and published a statistical definitions document

In 2020, APRIES built stronger partnerships in Guinea (GN) and Sierra Leone (SL), and started new work in Senegal (SN). Despite delays due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we expanded our partnerships in many meaningful ways. Our research partners in SL and GN began data collection. APRIES also held a global competition to select implementing partners for our anti-child trafficking work in GN and SL. World Hope International is our partner in SL while Sabou Guinea and International Organization for Migration are our partners in GN.

We are proud of our Country Coordinators, Umaru Fofanah (SL) and Ansoumane Bangoura (GN), who joined the APRIES team in July. They have made great strides in developing relationships with stakeholders in government, communities, and NGOs. In September, Aminata Diagne Barre joined APRIES as Country Coordinator for SN. Aminata engaged with a wide spectrum of key stakeholders, and with them laid down strong foundations for collaboration on APRIES's anti-trafficking work. We are proud of Aminata!

APRIES launched the Prevalence Reduction Innovation Forum (PRIF), a project to test, compare, and document the robustness of various methodological approaches in human trafficking prevalence research, and to build the capacity of research teams around the world. We selected seven research teams to implement at least two prevalence estimation methodologies on the same target population in a restricted geographic sector in Brazil, Costa Rica, Morocco, Pakistan, Tanzania, and Tunisia.

In May, we hosted the first PRIF conference with the U.S. Department of State's Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons. Close to 1,000 participants attended the virtual event, including leaders and policy experts dedicated to the fight against human trafficking. We also created a document on statistical definitions of human trafficking to guide researchers seeking to measure the prevalence of human trafficking. Finally, in collaboration with Columbia University/WZB in Berlin, we are working on a meta-analysis—the first of its kind—that will allow us to combine knowledge from the seven studies to understand the relative effectiveness of the different prevalence measurement strategies.

Country Brief – Guinea (GN)

Many children are exploited and trafficked within Guinea and across the border. Guinea's anti-trafficking efforts are through the Ministry of Social Action and Vulnerable People, the national anti-trafficking committee (CNLTPPA), and various NGOs. Partnering with local NGOs, APRIES is implementing anti-trafficking projects in two hotspot regions of the country: Boké and Mamou.

APRIES and *ResilientAfrica Network* from the University of Makerere, Uganda conducted a 12-day virtual training for five trainers, who trained 30 data enumerators to conduct over 3,000 household surveys on child trafficking in the two hotspots in December 2020. We are also co-designing activities with a local NGO that has been implementing anti-trafficking activities since 2006 to reduce child trafficking by 5 to 10%. In-depth interviews to identify service and policy gaps were completed in early 2020. These data have been shared with local government and community-based partners.

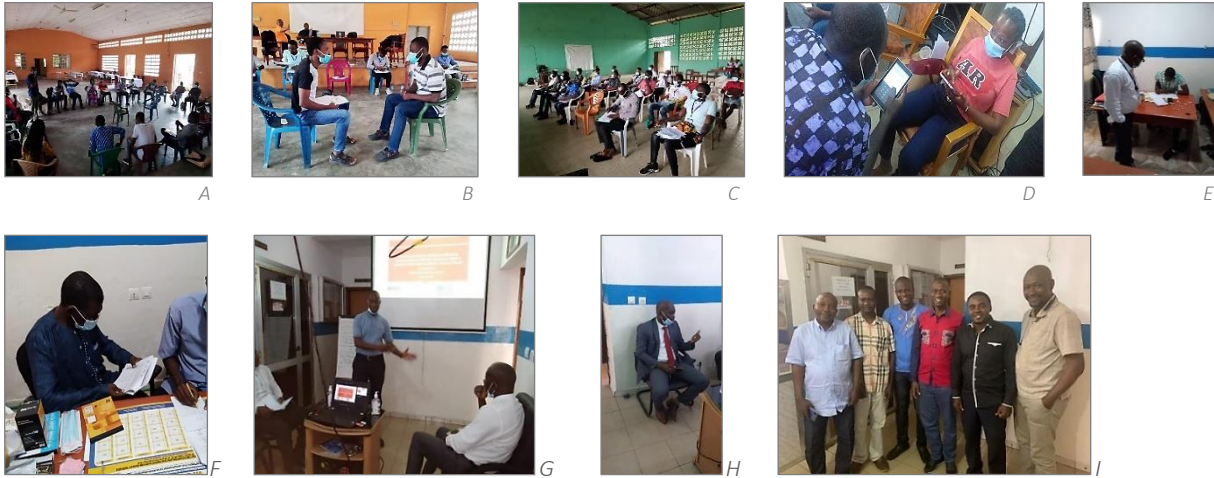## Country Brief – Sierra Leone (SL)

Sierra Leone is primarily a source country for internal trafficking as well as trafficking abroad. Through its Ministry of Social Welfare and partners, the country has recently reviewed the National Action Plan against Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children (2021-2023); and established district-level anti-trafficking task forces. As the Government of Sierra Leone demonstrated overall increased anti-trafficking efforts, the country was upgraded to Tier 2 in 2020.

Training of Trainers & Data Collectors — APRIES in collaboration with *ResilientAfrica Network* and the Conflict Management and Development Associates (CMDA) held twelve days' virtual training for trainers on child trafficking research, for the conduct of a quantitative baseline survey. This was followed by training and quantitative data collection in the three project hotspot districts of Kailahun, Kono And Kenema.

Stakeholder Engagement and Outreach — Meeting with the Director of the National Task Force firmed up our collaboration, and a radio show by APRIES's Country Coordinator elevated project awareness.

Community Partners at Work

Training Activities in Guinea and Sierra Leone

A-C: APRIES partners Conflict Management and Development Associates (CMDA) in Sierra Leone training enumerators and supervisors to collect quantitative data
D-F: Training of enumerators and supervisors by APRIES partners STAT View International (SVI) in Conakry, Guinea
G: Dr. Aliou Barry of SVI leading the enumerator training in Conakry, Guinea
H: Mr. Aboubacar Sidiki Camara, head of the national anti-trafficking committee (CNLTPPA) at an enumerator training session in Conakry by SVI
I: APRIES and Guinea partners from SVI at a Training of Trainers. Left to right: Mr. Bah Ousmane (SVI in-house translator/interpreter and researcher), Mr. Yumba Inabanza (IT officer at SVI and researcher), Mr. Sankhon Fodé Naby (logistics officer at SVI and researcher), Dr. Barry Aliou (Director General of SVI and APRIES Guinea research project's co-principal investigator), Bangoura Ansoumane (APRIES's Guinea coordinator), and Mr. Thierno Malick Diallo (SVI quality control supervisor)

Data Collection in Sierra Leone

J-M: Project enumerators journeying day and night to gather research data in Kono District, Sierra Leone
N-Q: Data collection in Kenema District, Sierra Leone

Country Brief – Senegal (SN)

Senegal is signatory to all major international and regional treaties relating to the protection of the human person, and its Government is committed to rescuing and caring for victims through a National Action Plan. APRIES plans to play a major role in the fight against human trafficking in Senegal and has begun to establish key partnerships for this purpose.

Human trafficking is prohibited through the 2005 Law against Human Trafficking and Related Practices. However, sex-trafficking cases have been noted in the southeastern gold mining region of Kédougou. Hundreds of women from neighboring countries are duped into leaving their countries with the promise of work in Europe, but are trapped against their wishes and become victims of human trafficking.

Partnering with the government and local actors, APRIES is implementing a 2020-2024 project with two main components:

- Research to establish baseline prevalence estimates of sex trafficking of adolescents and women 14-24 years old in identified hotspots.
- Implementation of rigorous anti-trafficking program and policies to reduce prevalence.

Academic Unit Support
**A Message from Anna Scheyett, PhD
Dean and Professor**

It is a real honor to write a few words for the APRIES inaugural newsletter. As the Dean, I have been pleased to watch the transformative impact APRIES is having on the School of Social Work, the University of Georgia, and the anti-trafficking world in general. APRIES is tackling one of today's most complex problems. The APRIES team is using rigorous interdisciplinary science to understand the prevalence of trafficking, which has been a challenging and elusive goal, and is exploring and evaluating interventions to provide us with evidence-informed tools to combat trafficking. APRIES serves as a resource for others interested in combating human trafficking on campus, in agencies, in state and Federal governments, and in other countries. From a Dean's perspective, an additional exciting aspect of APRIES is the opportunity it provides for excellent student training in research, policy, and practice. The faculty and staff of APRIES are to be commended for their impact in research, service, and teaching, and I look forward to seeing their ongoing innovative work in the future.

Future Directions, 2021-23
New Center on
Human Trafficking Research & Outreach

The Center on Human Trafficking Research and Outreach (CenHTRO) will be established by May 2021 as the new research home of APRIES.

The specific aims of the Center are to:
(1) enhance the science of human trafficking prevalence measurement across the globe;
(2) implement effective anti-trafficking policies and innovative programs that protect victims, prevent trafficking, strengthen prosecution, and enhance partnership; and (3) equip the next generation of human trafficking researchers with competencies that can enhance social justice for trafficking survivors and victims.

We will continue to bring in faculty from a broad range of disciplines and seek funding for implementation research in the US and abroad. At the same time, we will strengthen the science of prevalence estimation by publishing Prevalence Reduction Innovation Forum (PRIF) findings from Brazil, Costa Rica, Morocco, Pakistan, Tanzania, and Tunisia. This initiative will graduate a future generation of researchers in the field of human trafficking research, programming, and policy work.

Capacity Development of Local Partners
Building the capacity of our in-country coordinators to better manage our programs in Guinea, Sierra Leone, and Senegal is a key feature of APRIES's program strategy. We are also working towards establishing research hubs in Guinea, Sierra Leone and Senegal that support our research and programs in those countries. The research hubs will consist of three people with expertise in research, policy, and programming in the field of human trafficking.

APRIES will continue to co-design policies and programs with local implementation partners that can show intervention impact. These include programs that are survivor- and trauma-informed. We plan to co-present and co-publish findings of research and programming implemented with our local collaborators around the world.

Leadership Spotlight
Dr. David Okech
APRIES Founder/Director
University of Georgia

Dr. David Okech is the founding Director of APRIES. He is Associate Professor at the School of Social work at UGA. Dr. Okech previously served as Director of Global Engagement (2014-2017) and Director of the Master of Social Work Program (2013-2019) at UGA's School of Social Work. He has been involved in research and programming in West Africa since 2010.

Dr. Okech's work focuses on designing evidence-based interventions and policies to inform programs and policies that will improve the overall well-being of trafficking survivors, putting them on a path to recovery, stability, and community integration. He serves on the boards and panels of various global anti-trafficking agencies. Dr. Okech was inducted as a Fellow of the Society for Social Work & Research in 2017.

Leadership Spotlight
Dr. Alex Balch
APRIES Associate Director
University of Liverpool

Dr. Alex Balch is the Associate Director of APRIES based in the UK. He is Professor of Politics at the University of Liverpool and is a specialist on the politics and policy of modern slavery and immigration.

Dr. Balch has written extensively on state and non-state responses to international mobility and exploitation and his work has influenced government, business and NGO policy through impact-oriented research. Dr. Balch is Director of Research at the UK's Modern Slavery and Human Rights Policy and Evidence Centre, which was created in 2019 to enhance understanding of modern slavery and transform the effectiveness of laws and policies designed to overcome it.

MEET TEAM APRIES

Clockwise from top left: Fahmida Afroz, Lydia Aletraris, Alex Balch, Ansoumane Bangoura, Claire Bolton, Justine Bruder, Tamora Callands, Jody Clay-Warner, Aminata Diagne Barre, Umaru Fofanah, Antonio Garcia, Nathan Hansen, Nisha Kavalam, Tenshi Kawashima, Jiacheng Li, David Okech, Nnenne Onyioha-Clayton, Rebecca Poon, Elyssa Schroeder, Elke Yath, and Hui Yi.