

Carpentry as a tool for female empowerment

Becoming self-reliant through skills development and motivating others to follow her lead.



The 40-year-old single mother of five, Mami Joah, is an exceptional character in her community. After many years working as the only woman in masonry and the construction business in her town, she was selected to participate in the UNIDO carpentry training. The training provided trainees, like Mami Joah, with technical woodworking skills, know-how on setting up and managing micro-businesses as well as how to deal with work-related conflict situations. In a still fragile post-conflict society like Liberia's, such 'soft skills' are vital to protect and strengthen social stability.



Photo above: Mami Joah and fellow carpenters

Upon completing the training, Mami Joah joined the workshop of an established carpenter in order to continue practicing her skills. "I cannot rush it, I have to learn it good", she says knowingly. While masonry remains her main source of income, she is striving to eventually

open her own carpentry workshop employing other female carpenters.

In the meantime, she and other UNIDO trainees have set up a community support group encouraging young women to partake in the UNIDO carpentry trainings, as well as helping those graduated find carpentry apprenticeships.

Despite many family hardships and frequent challenges of working in a male-dominated sector, Mami Joah has found her passion and turned it into her livelihood. She knows about her community's struggles with lack of education, family conflicts, unemployment and more. Therefore, she is working to empower younger women and help build a more stable and positive future for herself, her children and the community as a whole.

Japan and UNIDO promoting social stability in Liberia

Funded by the Government of Japan, UNIDO is promoting social stabilization by improving human security of vulnerable people and communities affected by concession projects through technical and vocational training in coordination with transnational corporations.

The project's main objectives are in line with Sustainable Development Goals 8 and 9 by promoting inclusive and sustainable economic growth, building resilient infrastructure, and promoting sustainable industrialization for all.

