

BUILDING GLOBAL CAPACITY FOR HUMAN TRAFFICKING RESEARCH

ABOUT CenHTRO:

The Center on Human Trafficking Research & Outreach (CenHTRO) was established in May 2021 as the new research home of the African Programming and Research Initiative to End Slavery (APRIES).

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

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Sierra Leone Program National Launch

APRIES held a virtual launch event for its anti-trafficking program in Sierra Leone on March 2, 2021 in partnership with the U.S. Department of State Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, the U.S. Embassy in Sierra Leone, and implementing partner World Hope International (WHI). APRIES Director, Dr. David Okech, presented preliminary findings of APRIES' innovative household survey to estimate the prevalence of child trafficking in Kenema, Kono, and Kailahun regions of Sierra Leone program. Mr. Saidu Kanu, Country Director of WHI, presented plans for WHI's anti-trafficking program. Over 2,500 attendees attended the launch on Zoom and Facebook Live.



Members of the enumerator team from Conflict Management and Development Associates (CMDA) Sierra Leone

The launch highlighted the Government of Sierra Leone's commitment to the fight against child trafficking. The Honorable Dr. Mohamed Juldeh Jalloh, Vice President of the Republic of Sierra Leone, was the keynote speaker. He spoke highly of the APRIES project and announced national (Sierra Leone) and regional (ECOWAS and Mauritania) conferences dedicated to anti-TIP efforts. Other government speakers at the virtual event were the Honorable Ministers of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs, and Local Government.

"APRIES' launch has already enhanced inter-ministerial collaboration among key government ministries and resource mobilization efforts in the fight against child trafficking in Sierra Leone," said Umaru Fofanah, APRIES Country Coordinator. Following the launch, APRIES was also invited to join the planning committee for the Vice President's national anti-trafficking stakeholder conference. APRIES' Sierra Leone team greatly looks forward to continuing our work implementing effective anti-trafficking programs and working closely with government stakeholders.



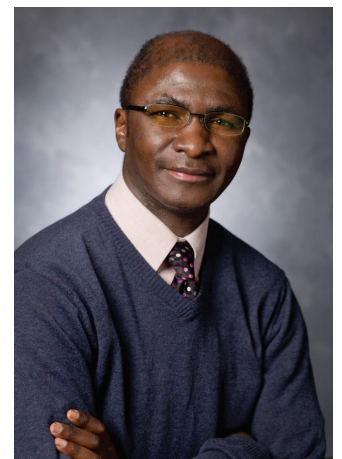
Address from the Honorable Dr. Mohamed Juldeh Jalloh, Vice President of Sierra Leone

The Government of Sierra Leone is committed to the well-being of its children by enabling them to prepare for a brighter future. One threat to the future of children across the globe and in Sierra Leone is child trafficking. Children can be trafficked for forced labour and sexual exploitation. Over the last three years, the government has taken significant steps to combat the threat through elaborating a National Action Plan against Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children (2021-2023) and the establishment of the district level task force, institutional reforms, and capacity building, and solid engagement with foreign missions abroad. The progressive efforts have enabled Sierra Leone to move from the Tier 2 watch list on trafficking in persons to tier 2 on the US State department rating.

The African Programming and Research Initiative to End Slavery's (APRIES) work commendably focused on using evidence-based data to inform policy and programs through various interventions that emphasize community-based engagement, local expertise, and partnership with the relevant government institutions and local authorities. I was honored to give the keynote address during the official launch of the Sierra Leone Program Against Child Trafficking in March 2021. I am also excited that new projects that target Kambia District are about to commence. On behalf of the Government of Sierra Leone, we commit to seeing the success of the projects and continued support from the relevant government agencies and ministries. Building on this, the Government will organize a national conference on trafficking that will lead to a regional conference to help bolster regional-wide dynamics in the fight against trafficking in persons.

Letter from Dr. David Okech, CenHTRO Director

In the last half year, we have experienced tremendous transformations and made great progress in our projects. APRIES is now an initiative within the interdisciplinary Center on Human Trafficking Research & Outreach (CenHTRO). The goal of CenHTRO is to be a global leader in human trafficking research, policy, and programming innovation. Some of our accomplishments include the completion of the Sierra Leone baseline report, identification of implementation partners in Senegal, and overcoming COVID 19 and other logistical obstacles to complete data collection in Guinea. The Prevalence Research Innovation Forum Research (PRIF) teams in Brazil, Costa Rica, Morocco, Pakistan, Tanzania, and Tunisia are also in the process of beginning formative research that will compare two or more prevalence estimation methods within a hotspot. PRIF is part of our contribution in extending the science of prevalence estimation worldwide. I am very proud of our faculty, staff, graduate assistants as well as all our partners across the globe who continue to work diligently to measurably reduce human trafficking. Our funder, The US Department of State Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons has continued to provide support that is so needed to accomplish these projects. It is hard work but it is worth every effort. In the next months, we will be disseminating reports from our countries of operation in West Africa and hope to build on existing work to expand to other countries in the region.



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Message from Dr. Marsha Davis, Dean of College of Public Health at University of Georgia

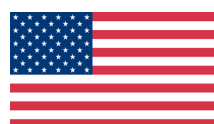
As Dean of the College of Public Health, I am grateful that public health is part of the important work of APRIES. Why public health? Human trafficking and modern-day slavery are immensely complex problems that require expertise and input from multiple disciplines to address. What was once considered primarily a criminal justice concern is now recognized as a complex public health issue with wide-reaching consequences. While a criminal justice–focused approach intervenes at the perpetrator level, a public health approach focuses on identifying risk and protective factors, developing interventions for prevention, and caring for the survivors’ mental and physical well-being post-trafficking. APRIES has brought together faculty across campus, from law, political science, psychology, social work, and, public health to enhance the knowledge we need to enable officials and local agencies to reduce this problem. We celebrate and value this collaboration because of this power to find meaningful and actionable solutions to difficult issues. I look forward to not only seeing the impact of our collective work on human trafficking, but also on enhancing interdisciplinary research, training, and service for our faculty and students.

CENHTRO VISION STATEMENT

“To become the leading hub for human trafficking research, policy, and programming development across the globe.”



Guinea enumerators collecting data in the field



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COUNTRY UPDATES



From February to end of March this year 2021, APRIES, through its local research partner Stat View International, organized a refresher training for 30 data collectors. They were deployed to 145 enumeration areas for a quantitative survey, with a total sample of 3045 households in both urban and rural areas, and with the full support of the local authorities and the communities themselves. A challenging mission but fun, as one of the teams had to travel 6 hours over the ocean to interview households in one of the hotspots.

APRIES has also been able to co-design its programming activities with two different NGOs in protection services

and prosecution, respectively. The implementing partner for protection services is a consortium of two local NGOs, the first one, Sabou Guinée, has a long-standing experience in child protection; they have managed eight transit centers throughout the country. The second one, called FMK, has implemented many projects in child health, child education and women's empowerment. The protection services consist of identifying, providing direct care and family/community reintegration to 100 trafficked children. The prosecution is co-designed with MDT (Les Mêmes Droits pour Tous), a non-profit human rights organization known in Guinea for being very active in human rights advocacy, including fighting against female genital mutilation, gender-based violence, and the arbitrary detention of prisoners. Prosecution focuses on capacity building of magistrates, law enforcement and local NGOs including local child protection structures to detect, investigate, prosecute and judge perpetrators. APRIES has the support of the Guinea national anti-trafficking committee, the CNLTPA.



APRIES Country Coordinator, Mr. Bangoura Ansoumane, with the Governor of Boké

APRIES recruits World Hope International (WHI) to implement an anti-trafficking program using the Prevention, Protection and Prosecution strategies in Kailahun, Kema and Kono districts. APRIES worked closely with WHI to ensure a successful start to their anti- trafficking project by coordinating site visits and developing a rigorous monitoring and evaluation process. The Prevention and Response to Child Trafficking in Persons (PARC-TIP) funding has two sub-projects, both of which aim to decrease the prevalence of child trafficking in Kenema, Kono, and Kailahun respectively. With APRIES funding and technical support, WHI has served survivors, hired and oriented new staff, and deployed project field staff in the three hotspots.



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APRIES Country Coordinator, Umaru Fofanah, has closely collaborated with WHI to have engagements with the Ministry of Social Welfare, Ministry of Gender and Children’s Affairs, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Local Government, Ministry of Labour, Sierra Leone Police and the Freetown City Council. Mr. Fofanah has been actively involved with the National TIP Task Force Secretariat and he is a member of the Standing Committee on Stakeholder and Policy Strengthening. APRIES is also part of a committee to plan the National Anti-Trafficking Stakeholder Conference to be hosted by The Honorable Dr. Mohamed Juldeh Jalloh, Vice President of the Republic of Sierra Leone. Mr. Fofanah participated in a Facebook live event in commemoration of National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention month organized by the US Mission in Sierra Leone. He was also a speaker at a Social Work Symposium held by the Social Science department at the Milton Margai College of Education and Technology, Goderich Campus in Freetown. In addition to Freetown engagements, Mr. Fofanah conducted extensive stakeholder engagement and research in Kambia.



APRIES Country Coordinator, Mr. Umaru Fofanah, along with WHI staff meeting with Her Worship Yvonne Aki-Sawyer, Mayor of Freetown (2nd from left)

APRIES’ research partner, CMDA-SL, conducted qualitative research in Kambia, which has been identified as a child trafficking hotspot. CMDA-SL research assistants successfully completed 20 interviews in total. Research assistants interviewed survivors of child trafficking, parents of survivors, and key NGO staff. In addition, research assistants conducted focus group discussions about child trafficking with a cross-section of community members.



APRIES’ Senegal office is committed to building a multipartite partnership to reduce the prevalence of girls’ sexual exploitation in Kédougou, a region located in the southeastern part of Senegal. Since launching these activities in September 2020, APRIES has been working to build a partnership with national institutions, civil society organizations and various local actors to characterize and quantify the dimensions of human trafficking in this country, particularly sexual exploitation,



APRIES Country Coordinator, Mrs. Aminata Diane Barr meeting with Mrs. Mariama Diallo, Kédougou Régional Président of Bajenu Gokh

and to propose concerted response strategies.

In addition to meetings with key ministries, our Country Coordinator Mrs. Aminata Diagne Barre carried out a field mission to Kédougou in March 2021. This mission allowed the team to better understand the local context, gather views and insights from heads of local technical services, actors and authorities, and identify an appropriate approach for contextualizing research and programming activities. Indeed, working to reduce the sexual exploitation of girls in Kédougou means overcoming numerous obstacles that are geographical, environmental, social, economic and cultural.

Among the solutions to be considered, local actors recommended the implementation of an awareness and communication strategy to change attitudes and perceptions, a restructuring and reorganization of the



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Woman sieving gold at the gold mines in Kharakhena in Kédougou in March 2021

mining sub-sector, a reinforcement of the fight against land grabbing, and an adequate involvement of mining companies. They also mentioned facilitating access to basic social services and economic opportunities for at risk girls and victims, strengthening prevention, protection, law enforcement, internal and border security while creating special units dedicated to the fight against human trafficking.

APRIES' approach is to work hand in hand with government structures, considering each of them as strategic partners with key roles in supporting and accompanying initiatives aimed at Prevention, Protection and Law Enforcement. Furthermore, the upcoming creation of the CenHTRO think tank will be a symbol of inclusiveness in tackling one of the greatest scourges of modern times.

PREVALENCE REDUCTION INNOVATION FORUM UPDATE

During the past several months, we made substantial progress on the Prevalence Reduction Innovation Forum (PRIF) project that was launched in May of 2020 to compare and document the robustness of various methodological approaches in human trafficking prevalence research throughout the world. One PRIF-related product we are very excited about is the development of standardized trafficking questions to be used in surveys. With collaboration from the U.S. Department of State Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons and the research teams, we developed survey questions for each human trafficking indicator that makes up the following seven categories: 1) recruitment, 2) employment practices and penalties, 3) personal life and properties, 4) degrading conditions, 5) freedom of movement, 6) debt or dependency, and 7) violence or threats of violence. These seven categories are included in the PRIF Statistical Definitions Document. We plan on making the final survey questions public during the next quarter.

In collaboration with the WZB Berlin Social Science Center in Germany, we have also been working on finalizing a simulation meta-analysis study, including the implementation of procedures for measurement of uncertainty for respondent-driven sampling (RDS) samples and for probability proportional to size (PPS) and time-location sampling (TLS) samples. The meta-analysis will also assess the cost-benefit analyses of each trafficking prevalence estimation method.

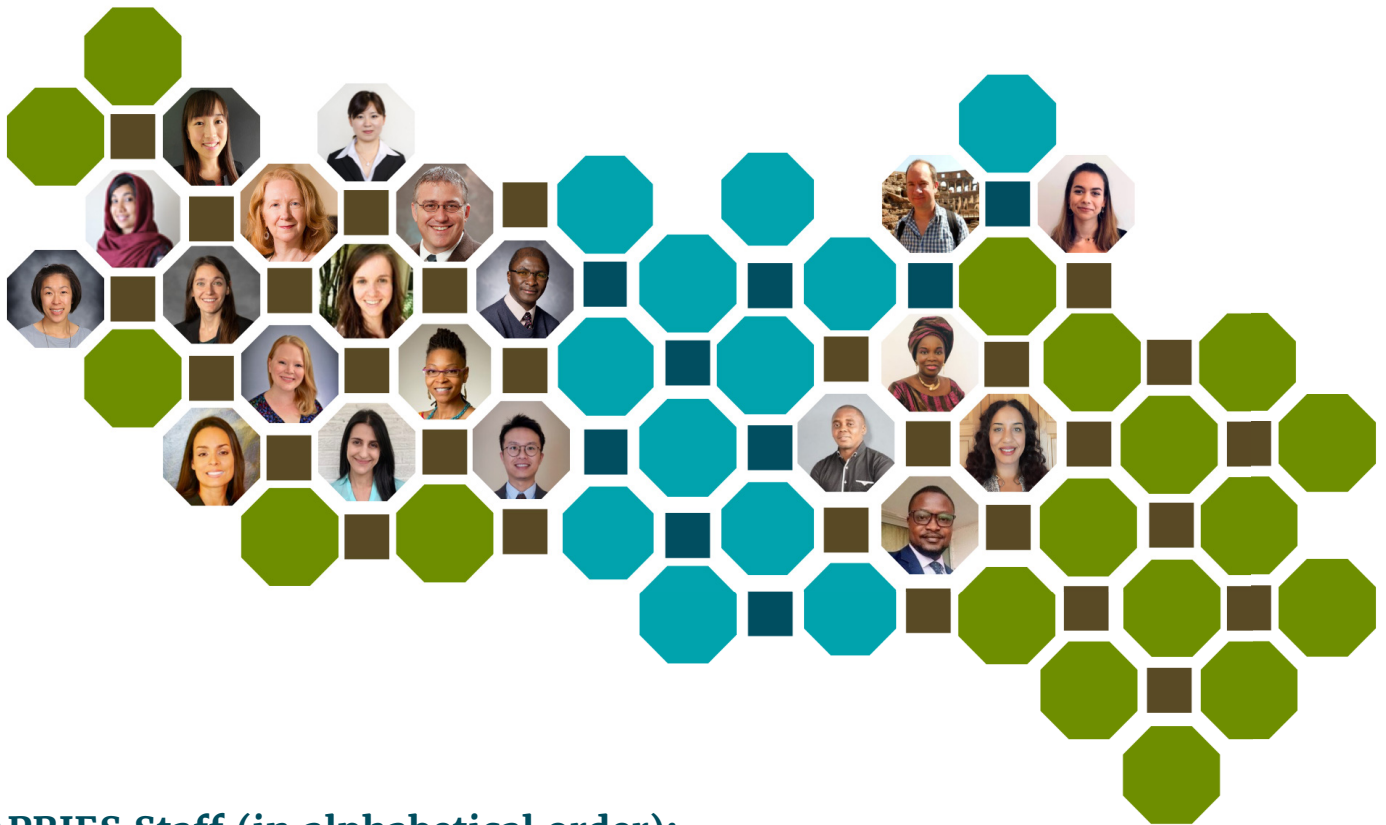
Despite the challenges brought by COVID-19, the PRIF research teams have been working with their local in-country collaborators to monitor the situations in our research sites within Brazil, Costa Rica, Morocco, Pakistan, Tanzania, and Tunisia. Teams have developed COVID-19 protocols for the protection of the field staff and study participants. The seven research teams have also made progress on their formative assessment protocols that will inform their surveys, and on their Internal Review Board documents and training manuals. They have also identified local NGOs that could serve as potential stakeholders for key informant interviews. Despite the challenges associated with the pandemic, researchers will be able to begin their formative research during the summer.



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APRIES TEAM AROUND THE WORLD



APRIES Staff (in alphabetical order):

Fahmida Afroz, *Pre-doctoral Fellow*
Dr. Lydia Aletraris, *Project Coordinator*
Dr. Alex Balch, *Associate Director*
Ansoumane Bangoura, *Guinea Country Coordinator*
Dr. Claire Bolton, *Assistant Director*
Justine Bruder, *Pre-doctoral Fellow*
Dr. Tamora Callands, *Training and Evaluation Coordinator*
Dr. Jody Clay-Warner, *Associate Director*
Dr. Anna Cody, *Assistant Research Scientist*
Aminata Diagne Barre, *Senegal Country Coordinator*

Hope Dockweiler, *Graduate Research Assistant*
Umaru Fofanah, *Sierra Leone Country Coordinator*
Dr. Nathan Hansen, *Intervention Coordinator*
Tenshi Kawashima, *Pre-doctoral Fellow*
Jiacheng Li, *Pre-doctoral Fellow*
Dr. David Okech, *Founder and Director*
Nnenna Onyioha-Clayton, *Senegal Program Manager*
Dr. Rebecca Poon, *Monitoring, Evaluation, Research and Learning Coordinator*
Elyssa Schroeder, *Pre-doctoral Fellow*
Travis Williams, *Graduate Research Assistant*
Elke Yath, *Business Manager*
Dr. Hui Yi, *Assistant Research Scientist*

Contact Us



APRIES

Sanford Hall
312 Herty Drive
Athens, GA 30602

✉ Email: apries-web@uga.edu

🌐 Website: apries.uga.edu

📖 Publications: apries.uga.edu/apries-publications

🐦 Twitter: twitter.com/APRIES_team

📘 Facebook: facebook.com/apriesteam



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