



# ANNUAL REPORT BTFS 2023

*HELP FOR SELF-HELP IN LIBERIA, WEST AFRICA*



Dear Reader,  
Regional Swiss companies, institutions, private friends, and even my dentist in Lucerne play a crucial role in bringing the projects in Liberia, outlined in the following pages, to fruition. Rotary, particularly the Rotary Club Oberer Zürichsee with its bookshop in Rapperswil, has been a consistent source of significant financial support over the years. It is solely due to the generosity of all these sponsors that the BTFS Foundation has been able to turn its projects into reality.

Witnessing the joy and gratitude of people gaining access to clean and safe drinking water, electricity, and, particularly, education is both my motivation and driving force. These positive and heartwarming experiences appear in stark contrast to the current global instabilities in the world. Unfortunately, the media rarely focuses on such positive success stories, as they don't grab attention and are less likely to sell.

This report highlights some of our key achievements in education, health, and drinking water supply during the past year 2023. It is meant to underscore our gratitude to all our sympathizers and sponsors.

**Education - Monitoring - Support - Follow-up training.** These are the pivotal elements for sustainable and effective development cooperation.

Yours sincerely,

**Felix F. Walz**  
Bowier Trust Foundation Switzerland

**EDUCATION 1**

CAPACITY BUILDING  
EXCHANGE

**EDUCATION-PARTNERSHIP**

EASTERN SWITZERLAND UNIVERSITY OST AND UNITED METHODIST UNIVERSITY LIBERIA

Under the overall management of the OST Institute UMTEC and financed by Swiss universities, the inaugural "Study-Tour2023" with 21 students from West Africa occurred from September 9 to 17, 2023. This event marked the first time with students from four Universities of Liberia participated, coordinated and supported by BTFS.



*Newspaper Reports in Switzerland*



On June 6, 2023, a partner meeting took place at the OST Campus in Rapperswil. As part of the University of Applied Sciences' strategic decision to deepen its involvement in development cooperation in the global south, seven partnering companies and institutions signed a three-year support agreement with BTFS

- Rotary Club Oberer Zürichsee
- JMS Holding, Schmerikon SG
- GEOINFRA Engineering, Pfäffikon SZ
- Frei & Krauer, Engineering, Rapperswil SG
- Kuster & Hager, Engineering, Uznach SG
- Gossweiler, Engineering, Dübendorf ZH
- Water & Sewer WVRJ, Jona SG



## EDUCATION 2

Partnership OST – UMU  
Progress-Steps

<https://www.swissuniversities.ch/en/>



Since the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding on May 2, 2022, in Rapperswil SG by the heads of the OST University of Applied Sciences (Prof. Dr. Daniel Seelhofer) and the United Methodist University of Liberia (Dr. Yar Donlah Gonway Gono), interest in development cooperation in the Global South has increased at all levels. Several institutes of the University of Applied Sciences OST have embraced a multi-year project in close cooperation with the BTFS Foundation and the United Methodist University. From September 2023, a coordinator for projects in West Africa has been appointed, also overseeing the NEWAL projects in Liberia funded by Swissuniversities, among others. The collaboration aims to provide students and lecturers from both cultures with opportunities that create added value in the areas of water, environment, and health through streamlined and unbureaucratic processes. This partnership has resulted in projects that have already been implemented, are underway, or are being planned, such as:

- The highly successful "Study Tour 2023" with 21 students from West Africa in Rapperswil in September 2023.
- NEWAL-SHIL team school project, focusing on improving sanitary infrastructure (WASH).
- A group of students from OST and ETHZ involved in BTFS project work in Liberia.
- The MAS studies of BTFS member Laryee A. Sannor (Bob) at ETH Zurich.
- The Msc program of ETH Zurich student, Julian Rieder, specializing in Environmental Systems and Policies with projects in Liberia.
- The MAS studies of HMNI-NGO member Bernice M. Kromah at University Basel (TPH).
- Expressions of interest for Bachelor theses from several students from both countries.
- Consolidation of cooperation between OST and UMU based on a thorough needs analysis.
- Successful project support by geotechnical expert Prof. Dr. Hans-Rudolf Schneider (emeritus) as a longstanding BTFS partner (honorary).

### EDUCATION 3



#### Our „Bob“made it to be admitted at ETH Zurich:

BTFS takes immense pride in its "Chief Operations" - Bob. After dedicated efforts in challenging conditions, he successfully earned admission to the Master's program (MAS Sustainable Water Resources) at the globally renowned ETH Zurich, securing a scholarship from the Justinus Foundation. This noteworthy achievement is the outcome of years of systematic preparation. Concurrently, Bob's involvement in the BTFS water kiosk and solar projects equipped him with valuable practical technical skills. His adept interactions with experts, lecturers, and students from Switzerland further enhanced his capabilities.

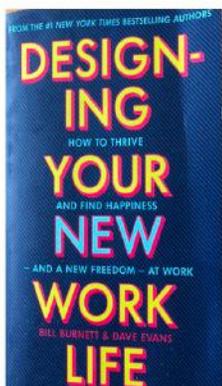
Noteworthy individuals who contributed to Bob's journey include Professors Dr. Burkhardt, Head of UMTEC at OST, Prof. Dr. Schneider (former Head of Geotechnics at OST), Dr. Lüthi from EAWAG, Prof. Biba from the Institute for Solar Technology SPF at OST, and Dr. Darcy Molnar from ETH Zurich.

The objective of Bob's education is to leverage the knowledge gained in Switzerland in the fields of hydraulic engineering, solar, and construction technology. He aims to establish a company that will pioneer economic and ecological advancements in Liberia, contributing to poverty alleviation and improving the precarious health situation in the country.

**Workshops and Webinars**, such as "Responsible Business Conduct," serve as platforms to train young and interested participants in various aspects, including project management, planning, financing, reporting, and organizational psychology. It is recognized that developing technical skills should be complemented with comprehensive management skills across various facets.



### WORKSHOP AGENDA



10:00	Welcome / Introduction / 🇨🇭 Intrinsic Motivation	F. Walz
10:20	Dysfunctional Beliefs / Examples 20' / First Groupwork 20' / Presentations 3 x 10'	F. Walz 3 Groups
11:30	Co-Facilitators Presentation 2 x 15' (30') ▪ Self-Intro: «Why I am there, where I am?» ▪ Self-Intro: «Embracing Set-Backs?»	Gertrude Lela
12:00	Lunchbreak	all
12:45	Wrap up from Morning Session / Recap	volunteers
13:15- 14:15	“Thinking like a Designer” – Be CURIOUS – try stuff and reframe problems by setting the bar low. Three principles of observe & record to re-design or reframe your life (work&private). 1. What did I learn? 2. What did or do I initiate? 3. Who did or do I help?	F. Walz with class, supported by Facilitators
14:15- 14:45	Final Group Presentations 10' each. Award for two best presentations	F. Walz & Facilitators
15:00	End of Workshop and Farewell	



**EDUCATION 4**

MAS Study Basel  
2023/24

**Department Education and Training**

**Karin Gross, PhD**  
Head of Unit, Professional Postgraduate  
Training and Course Coordinator  
karin.gross@swisstph.ch  
+41 61 284 82 25 direct

Basel, 08 January 2024

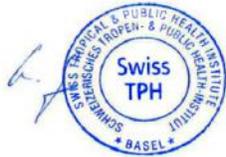
**Confirmation of Enrolment in the Master of Advanced Studies International Health**

Dear Sir or Madam

We herewith confirm that **Ms. Bernice Kromah** is a registered student of the Master of Advanced Studies in International Health (MAS IH) program at the Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute (Swiss TPH) and University of Basel.

Ms. Bernice Kromah is doing her MAS IH part-time. She started the MAS IH on 21 March 2022 and is currently doing advanced module courses.

Sincerely yours,  
Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute



Karin Gross, PhD  
Head of Unit and Course Coordinator  
Professional Postgraduate Training



**Bernice M. Kromah** was already in Switzerland (LINTH Hospital Uznach SG) for 10 weeks in 2021 together with the HMNI project manager, Lela P. Dolo, and she qualified to study at the Tropical Institute Basel (MAS International Public Health). Bernice was co-project coordinator of the 1-year HMNL project to combat the high maternal and infant mortality rate in Liberia and a member of the BTFS Health Team. Through the Rotary network (youth exchange), a wonderful host family from the Rotary Club Angenstein in Basel was found, where Bernice is not only allowed to stay, but is also supported. Medical Doctors who are friends of BTFS are helping Bernice to finance her studies. She wants to do any reasonable jobs (with a work permit) to help finance her stay in Switzerland.

Bernice's goal after her studies in Basel (fall 2024) is to continue her development in the field of epidemiology and, together with her HMNI partner, to improve the healthcare system in Liberia in collaboration with the relevant authorities.

## Engineering 1

Water-Kiosk  
Solar-Project  
Rockhill Community



March 2023: BTFS Member of the Board, Mr. Linus Hofmann is visiting our Project-Site at the Rockhill-Community



### GDM-2 Rockhill Community:

The facility is currently in its third year of operation. The responsibility for water sales lies with the community and the landlord family managing the kiosk. Oversight of the operational concept is conducted by a steering committee within the community, working in consultation with BTFS. It is still too early to assert that the interaction between the kiosk operator and the municipality is seamless. This is an ongoing process that requires time and patience. The collaborative effort involves people learning together to comprehend the advantages of clean drinking water and being willing to contribute for the betterment of the community and the promotion of health. Minor repairs (e.g., lights) and maintenance work could be funded from the proceeds of water sales, aligning with the agreement with BTFS.

Meeting with the steering committee of the Rockhill community and the family of the kiosk care-taker family, with guests from Switzerland (seated: Prof. Dr. HR Schneider, former head of the Institute for Geotechnics at the OST University of Applied Sciences in



## Engineering 2

### DOLOTOWN HEALTH-CLINIC Water/Solar



The staff and patients express deep gratitude for having access to clean drinking water in this facility.



Medical Director, Dr. Sovich Sankoh-Karmorh, presents the thank-you letter to BTFS in Switzerland to our Chief Community Engagement Team, Hamnson B. Gaye.

Dolo's Town Comprehensive Health Center  
Lower Margibi, Firestone District  
Margibi County Health Team/ MoH  
Liberia, West Africa

December 12, 2023

Bowier Trust Foundation Switzerland (BTFS)

**Subject: Gratitude for Valued Partnership and Installation of Safe and Available Drinking Water System for the Dolo Town Comprehensive Health Center**

Dear Esteemed Partner,

We present warm compliments and heartfelt gratitude for your continued support to the Dolo's Town Comprehensive Health Center, in her quest to build a resilient and strengthened health force within the county.

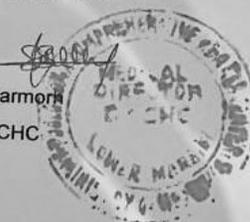
Our facility has relied solely on a previously installed hand-pump for a source of drinking water for staff, patients and community as well; which over time, became a challenge to manage due to the influx of consumers. This posed a serious challenge as the site was gradually becoming a potential source of epidemic for diarrhea and other water -borne diseases.

Today, we can proudly say that, through yours' and your donor's thoughtful instrumentality, the center can now boast of her own clean, filtered and safe drinking water system that is readily available for all staff and patient as needed.

This great service to the facility and the nation that you have provided through our partnership will continue to promote and foster programs that will uplift the health system of our nation and people.

Respectfully yours,

Dr. Sovich Sankoh Karmorh  
Medical Director, DTCHC



### **DRINKING WATER AT DOLOTOWN MATERNAL HOSPITAL:**

In 2022, students from the Eastern Swiss University of Applied Sciences (OST) and ETH Zurich, in collaboration with the BTFS team, successfully implemented a solar system to provide electricity to the "Bush Clinic." In a subsequent phase, efforts were directed towards developing a safe drinking water source, hence, a groundwater pump, powered by solar energy, was installed to pump water through risers into a primary tank situated approximately 6 meters above the ground. Within this tank, the water passes through installed GDM filters, effectively removing coliform bacteria. Benefiting from gravity, the purified water then flows into a smaller, easily accessible second tank. This tank serves as a point from which clinic staff, patients, and nearby residents can obtain clean drinking water. Presently, the clinic provides drinking water free of charge.

In the upcoming phase, BTFS plans to construct a roof over the drinking water tank to minimize heating during the hot and humid dry season. Caretaker Joshua Foeday, who received specialized training from our technical team, ensures the reliable maintenance and daily operation of the facility.

**HEALTH 1**  
Maternal Mortality  
HMNI-PROJEKT



Our very committed and reliable HMNL Project leader Lela Precious Dolo (medical student) skillfully and successfully leads educational projects to reduce maternal and Baby mortality in Liberia

Image below:  
Lela at a fundraiser Event in Liberia, together with the BTFS team



The project "Help a Mother and a Newborn in Liberia" is now a registered institution (NGO) in Liberia under the name "**HELP A MOTHER AND NEWBORN INITIATIVE**" (HMNI). Visit our website at <https://helpamotherandnewborn.org>.

The successful BTFS-funded project aimed at combating high maternal and baby mortality rates has transitioned into a self-sustaining institution. Our medical student, Lela P. Dolo, and her exceptional team played a crucial role in achieving this milestone. In recognition of her efforts, she was invited to Capetown, South Africa, in October 2023, where she was honored as the "Liberia Change Maker of the Year 2023" during the African Youth Summit. We are proud to share this achievement and continue our commitment to making a positive impact on maternal and newborn health in Liberia."



**Special Highlight of  
the Year 2023**

**INTRODUCTION TO THE MULTI-YEAR PROJECT**  
The Rotary Clubs in Liberia and Upper Lake Zurich have reached an agreement on a global grant project, responding to the request of the Dolo Town Community Administration



Ceremonial exchange between Rotarian Felix F. Walz and the annual president of the Rotary Club Monrovia, William R. Dennis. During this exchange, a Rotarian pennant from the Swiss Clubs Upper Lake Zurich was handed over as a symbol of friendship across borders. This gesture marked the beginning of a multi-year project focused on "Water through education and promoting the community."




**OFFICE OF THE ADMINISTRATOR**  
Dolo Town ward, Unification City  
Mboo Statutory District, Margibi County  
Republic of Liberia

Email: [Hondavidmulbah20@gmail.com](mailto:Hondavidmulbah20@gmail.com)  
Cell #: 0775-170-845 / 0881-694-029

September 4, 2023

**Rotary Club Monrovia**  
Rotary District 9101 Westafrika

Dear **President Williams R. Dennis**  
Unbehalf of the citizens of Dolo Town Administrative ward #2, Unification City, Mboo Statutory District, comprises of seventeen (17) communities, host the population of forty eight thousand three hundred twenty seven (48,327) inhabitants.

In view of the above we the citizens of Dolo Town and its environs do here by appeal to the **Rotary Club Monrovia** and its partners for an assistance for a sustainable access to safe drinking water in the community of Dolo Town. In conclusion, we appreciate **Rotary Club Monrovia** and we anticipate our request will meet your kind approval and consideration.

*May God richly guide our partnership.*

Very Respectfully Yours,

Signed: *Mr. Philip T. Washington*  
Mr. Philip T. Washington  
Acting / Chairman 0777971994  
Powell Town Community

Approved:   
Hon. *David T. Mulbah*  
Administrator  
Unification City  
Mboo Statutory District  
Lower Margibi County

1. Past. Samuel. B. Kombe *S. Kombe*  
Community Chairman 0777142569  
Kokoville Community
2. Mrs. Amelia B. Kangar *Amelia Kangar*  
Chairlady, Dolo Town 0777278972
3. Mr. Borbor Korkor *B. Korkor*  
Chairman,  
Central Dolo Town Community

Together with the Rotary Club of Upper Lake Zurich and the partner club in Monrovia, the idea for a multi-year project was conceived. The selected area, situated far outside the capital of Monrovia, was assessed for providing clean drinking water to a community of over 9,000 people. The catalyst for this initiative was the only maternity and health clinic, where BTFS had already implemented a solar project and realized the water kiosk initiative. The geological conditions in this area are largely unknown, and there are no reliable sources of groundwater during the dry season from November to May of the following year. Children are forced to carry bacteria-contaminated river water in plastic buckets daily, sometimes covering long distances to their homes. This not only keeps them away from schools but also contributes to a challenging health situation marked by prevalent "water-borne diseases."

The goals of the Rotary multi-year project, set to commence in 2024, include thorough geological investigations in the target area, providing training to young students in the fields of hydraulic engineering, solar technology, and environmental sciences. The project aims to plan, construct, and commission one or more drinking water kiosks in the community of Dolo Town, with active involvement and support from its residents and local schools.

The partnership, along with individual responsibilities among the Rotary clubs, universities, and companies, is outlined in agreements that are valid for a three-year period until the end of 2026."

**BTFS NGO**  
Staff/Training/Administration

## **BTFS NGO – ORGANISATION 2023/24**



### **TECHNICAL TEAM:**

#### **BTFS-NGO CHIEF OPERATIONS**

**FESTUS T. BOHLEN** BSc Civil Engineering,  
MAC GAYE, BSc Civil Engineering  
VOLUNTEERS from Engineering Sector



### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TEAM (CET):**

**HAMSON B. GAYE**, HEAD CET-TEAM  
ESTELLA KANGAR (House Keeping, Cooking)  
VOLUNTEERS



### **LIAISON OFFICER / PROJECT COORDINATOR:**

**GERTRUDE HARMON**, BSc IT  
Technology/Administration  
Link between Swiss & LIB-Institutions  
Project Management / Planning / Administration



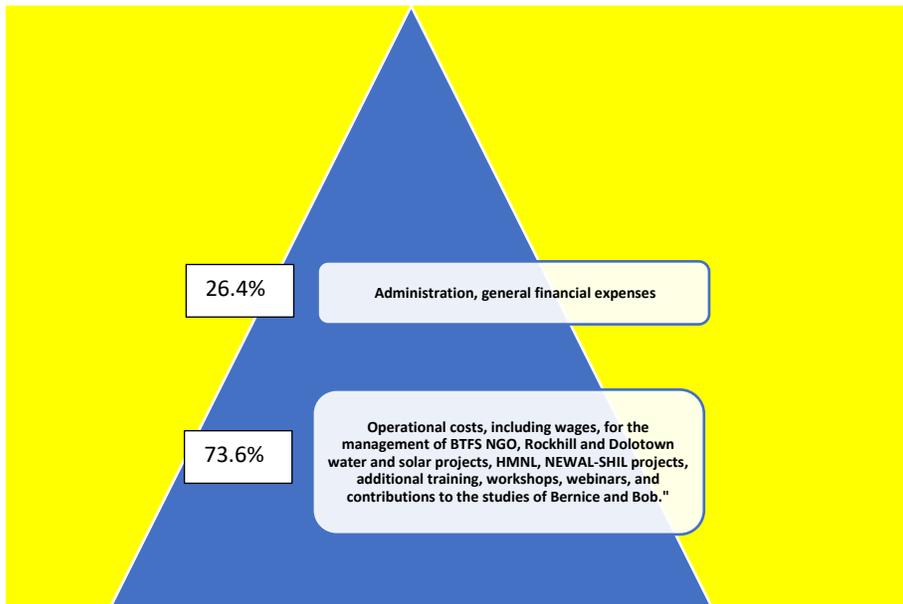
### **HEALTH TEAM:**

**LELA P. DOLO** BTFS Health Team / Project Initiator and  
Director HMNI NGO in Liberia  
Bernice M. Kromah BTFS Health Team / Co-Director  
HMNI NGO in Liberia  
Volunteers: Julian, Agnes, Chris and many more....  
Help a Mother and Newborn Initiative HMNI  
<https://helpamotherandnewborn.org>

**“Impact – Trust – Sustainability”**

# Use of donated funds 2023

(The auditor's report can be made available upon request)



School children are being trained in topics such as the environment, energy, and health, shaping them to be the 'change makers' of the future

## BTFS Partner and Sponsors 2023

