

**ONE DAY JOINT VISIT BY THE COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT TO UPPEPER
BUCHANAN PRISON COMPOUND ORGANIZED BY GRASSEOTS AGENCY FOR
SOCIAL SERVICES ON APRIL 1, 2025**

After the official launch of the prison outreach, the Grassroots Agency for Social Services (GRASS) conducted a joint visit to the prison facility, led by the new Superintendent of Grand Bassa County, Hon. Kayou Johnson. The team also included Dr. Jude Wisseh, the County Health Team Officer; the County Attorney Cllr. Paul Jarvan; and Cllr. Joe S. Barkon, Judge of the 2nd Judicial Circuit Court. Additionally, two community leaders—Madam Gemama Peters of Beesaymah Zone and Mr. Francis I. E. Davis of Moore Town Zone—participated, along with reporters from various local radio stations.

Captain Charity Mingle welcomed the team with heartfelt gratitude, expressing that it was her first time seeing a county superintendent visit the facility. She thanked GRASS for making this visit possible.

In a separate remark, GRASS National Program Coordinator Barley Togba noted that the visit followed the official launch of the organization's activities at the prison compound on March 20, 2025. Mr. Togba emphasized that the organization's mission was to amplify the voices of inmates and those working on their behalf at both the local and national levels. Drawing strength from the Bible, particularly Matthew 25:36 and Proverbs 31:8-9, he highlighted the organization's commitment to improving conditions for pretrial detainees, the well-being of both inmates and staff, and advocating for land allocation or relocation for facility expansion.

The focus of the visit was on the urgent need for the speedy trial of pretrial detainees who have been incarcerated for extended periods without trial, as well as addressing the overall well-being of all prisoners, including those who have been sentenced and those awaiting sentencing.

During the tour, led by the Deputy Superintendent for Prison, many were visibly distressed by the appalling conditions in the holding cells. The County Superintendent expressed that the situation was unacceptable and called for immediate action to alleviate the suffering of the inmates. He urged GRASS to involve county lawmakers in a joint effort to address the situation and also tasked the County Attorney with collaborating with relevant sectors to address the issue of pretrial detainees.

The County Health Team Officer observed that the conditions posed a significant health risk, and an outbreak in the prison could result in the loss of inmates' lives. While medical activities had begun, he stressed the urgent need for more attention to be directed toward improving conditions at the prison.

In separate remark, the County Attorney and the Judge of the 2nd Judiciary Circuit Court reiterated their commitment to selfless service and pledged to work towards decongesting the prison, specifically addressing the issue of pretrial detainees. They also called for the expansion or relocation of the facility, which he believed would provide a long-term solution. The team praised GRASS for their ongoing efforts and encouraged the organization to continue its work.

