

## County Coordinators and County Focal Persons Get Training in Program Management, Mainstreaming HIV and Monitoring and Evaluation



### **M&E Coordinator Sandei Cooper makes presentation on non-clinical data reporting tools**

In line with the Government's Decentralization and Deconcentration Policy, the National AIDS Commission in 2012 established offices in 5 counties, namely; Grand Bassa, Bong, Bomi, Lofa and Nimba in an effort to coordinate the national HIV response at the county level. Since the establishment of the Decentralization Mandate and county offices of the Commission, the Commission has done much to keep its offices in the counties up and running; but still has a lot to do. However, the Commission on the other hand has done very little to coordinate the national HIV response in totality at the county level due to limited funding.

In order to adequately mainstream HIV activities at the county level, the National AIDS Commission works in close collaboration with Superintendents' offices in the above mentioned counties as part of its county level structures. Even with these established structures, the Commission is still faced with many challenges at county level including coordination of the response with HIV partners in these Counties. The lack of communication cards, transportation in the counties for monitoring and supervision visits by County Coordinators to the Districts, inadequate supervision visits to counties by NAC's Head Office, the lack of office equipments (Laptop, stationeries and other supplies) at county level; and more especially, the lack of funds to conduct HIV partnership coordination meetings and capacity building trainings for County Coordinators, as a way of decentralizing the multi sector HIV and AIDS response at county level, continues to be a challenge.

In order to help reduce the impact of these challenges the Commission is faced with, the Government of Liberia together with other partners such as UN Agencies, Global Fund, among others, continue to render financial and technical assistance to the national response in the fight against HIV and AIDS in Liberia.

Against the above background, five County Coordinators and one County Focal Person of the National AIDS Commission were trained in various aspects of program management, community mobilization and the management and coordination of the national HIV response. The five County Coordinators include the coordinators of Nimba, Bong, Bomi, Grand Bassa and Lofa, while the County Focal Person was from Margibi). The total numbers of persons trained was six. (two females and four males).



**Partnership Coordinator Zubah Mulbah explains the essence of strengthening Partnership at the County level**

The objectives of the training were as follows:

- ✓ To ensure that County Coordinators be trained in mainstreaming HIV&ADS activities through partnership interventions at the county level
- ✓ To ensure that the County Coordinators be trained in the usage of the non-clinical data collection tools developed by the NAC
- ✓ To ensure that they be trained in the usage of financial request and reporting templates developed by the NAC

- ✓ To also give to the County Coordinators basic office supplies such as: (Laptop Computers, Stationeries, Operation Funds, etc. for the conduct of quarterly Partnership Coordination Meetings at the county level.

Facilitators for the training were from the National AIDS Commission (NAC) Headquarters in Monrovia. They include Sandei A. Cooper, Jr., Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator; Zubah T. Mulbah, Sr., Partnership Coordinator; Muttie L.G. Jallah, Decentralization Coordinator, among others.

Some topics covered during the training were as follows: Update on County Level HIV Coordination Activities; Partnership & Mainstreaming HIV Activities; Program/Narrative Reporting Templates and Financial Request & Reporting Templates.

Speaking to the County Coordinators during the training, Commissioner Jessie Duncan, Commissioner for Decentralization, stressed that the County Coordinators' role in the Counties is very key; as such they should take their jobs very seriously because the Commission depends on all of them to make its presence felt and relevant at the level of the counties. She also encouraged them to apply diligence to their daily work.

At the end of the training, all the participants agreed to work diligently to achieve the goals of the Commission in their assigned counties. They promised to work with the new reporting templates introduced to them as standard reporting tools at county level. Coordinators from Nimba, Lofa and Bomi counties received and signed for Laptop Computers. All of the five county coordinators later signed for scratch cards and operational cash to conduct quarterly partnership coordination meetings at the county level.