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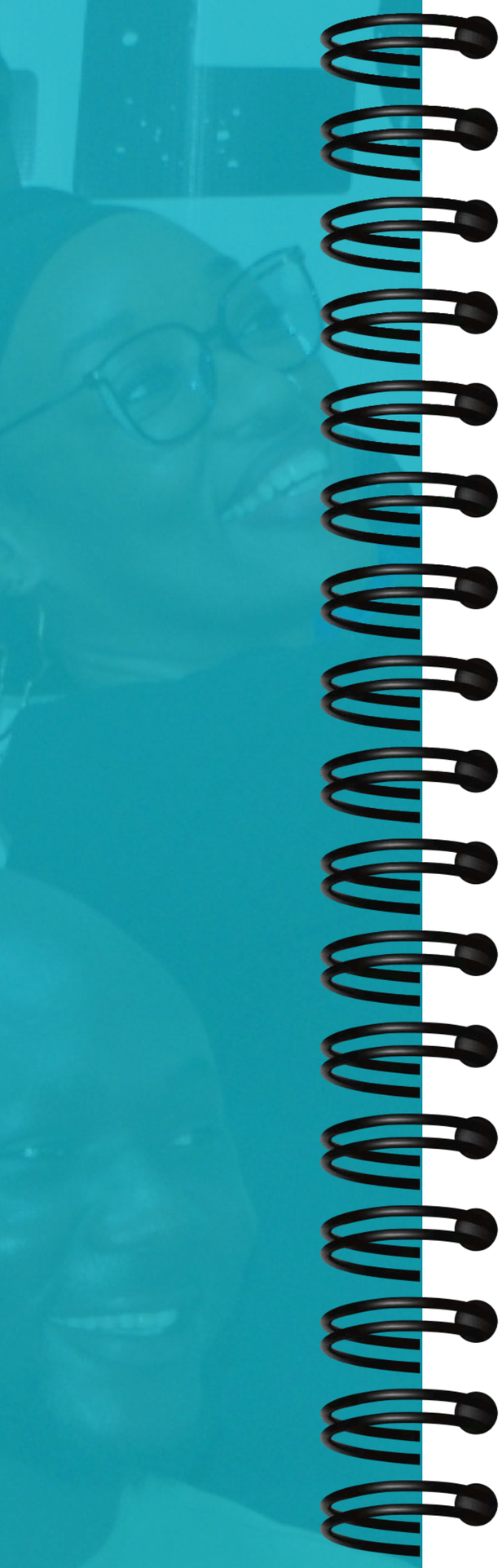

AUDIOVISUAL FOR DEVELOPMENT (AV4DEV)

NEXTGEN CONFERENCE REPORT

May 21, 2026

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Brief Summaries of the Report

On Tuesday, May 19, 2026, SATEC Liberia successfully convened the inaugural Audiovisual for Development (AV4Dev) NextGen Conference, a transformative youth-centered initiative aimed at empowering young Liberians through audiovisual storytelling, development communication, and digital media innovation.

The conference brought together more than 70 participants including students, educators, media practitioners, development professionals, government representatives, and youth advocates to explore the growing role of audiovisual communication in advancing national development, social awareness, and youth empowerment in Liberia.

The AV4Dev initiative represents the first phase of a broader youth empowerment and development communication program that seeks to equip high school students with practical audiovisual storytelling and digital media production skills. The initiative combines a national conference, intensive skills training, school-based audiovisual clubs, mentorship opportunities, and youth-led content production projects designed to address pressing development challenges across Liberia.

The event featured high-level keynote speeches, an engaging expert panel discussion, collaborative breakout sessions, and practical ideation workshops where students developed audiovisual solutions addressing issues such as gender equality, drug abuse, health awareness, civic engagement, and education.

A key highlight of the conference was the strong call for responsible and meaningful content creation. Speakers emphasized the importance of ensuring that audiovisual and digital platforms are used not for misinformation and harmful content, but rather as tools for education, national branding, positive storytelling, behavioral change, and economic opportunity.

The conference concluded with students presenting innovative audiovisual concepts and actionable next steps for launching youth-driven content initiatives within their schools and communities.

BACKGROUND

In an increasingly digital world, audiovisual storytelling has emerged as one of the most powerful tools for communication, advocacy, education, and social transformation. Across Africa and globally, young people are increasingly using media platforms to shape narratives, influence public discourse, and drive social change.
Recognizing this growing influence, SATEC Liberia developed the Audiovisual for Development (AV4Dev) initiative as a strategic intervention aimed at empowering Liberia's next generation with practical digital communication and storytelling skills.

The initiative was developed against the backdrop of Liberia's growing digital ecosystem and ongoing efforts by government and stakeholders to monetize local content and strengthen the country's digital and creative economy. In this context, the AV4Dev initiative seeks to ensure that audiovisual platforms are used to promote development-oriented content rather than misinformation, disinformation, and harmful online narratives.

Through audiovisual education and youth engagement, AV4Dev aims to position young Liberians as creators of impactful content capable of reshaping perceptions, strengthening civic awareness, and contributing to Liberia's national image and development agenda.



OBJECTIVES

The AV4Dev NextGen Conference was organized to achieve the following objectives:

To introduce students and young people to audiovisual storytelling and development communication .

To inspire youth participation in responsible and impactful content creation.

To equip students with foundational knowledge in digital media production and storytelling.

To encourage youth-led solutions to national development challenges through audiovisual communication

To establish mentorship connections between students and experienced media professionals.

To promote collaboration among schools, media institutions, government agencies, and development organizations.

To support efforts aimed at strengthening Liberia's creative economy and positive national branding.



PARTICIPATION AND ATTENDANCE

The conference successfully convened over 70 participants representing diverse sectors including:

- High school students
- Educators and school administrators
- Media practitioners
- Development stakeholders
- Youth advocates
- Creative industry professionals
- Government representatives
- Civil society actors

The strong participation reflected growing interest among young people and institutions in the role of audiovisual communication as a tool for empowerment, education, and national development.

OPENING AND CONFERENCE ATMOSPHERE

The conference commenced with welcoming remarks and detailed overview of SATEC LIBERIA and the Audiovisual for Development by the Founder and Team Lead of SATEC LIBERIA John McCauley Jr. who emphasized the organization's commitment to empowering youth through technology, media innovation, and strategic communication.

Participants were encouraged to view storytelling not merely as entertainment, but as a transformative instrument capable of influencing communities, changing behaviors, promoting accountability, and driving sustainable development.

The atmosphere throughout the conference was energetic, interactive, and solution-oriented, with students demonstrating high levels of enthusiasm, creativity, and engagement.

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PANEL DISCUSSION

One of the most impactful segments of the conference was the panel discussion focused on the theme:

"Audiovisual for Development: The Role of Schools, Media, and Government in Shaping Liberia's Future"

The discussion featured distinguished professionals and thought leaders from the media, education, development, and creative sectors.

Featured Panelists:



Shoana Cachelle, a renowned television host, entrepreneur, speaker, and empowerment advocate, shared her inspiring journey in the creative industry. Recognized among the Top 100 African Women in Leadership and one of Liberia's most influential personalities, she emphasized the importance of creativity, resilience, and youth empowerment.
She encouraged students to use storytelling as a platform for transformation and highlighted the role of arts and media in creating opportunities for young people across Liberia.



Abraham Varney Founder and Executive Director of Center for Public-Private Development (CEPPDEV), Abraham Varney discussed the intersection between governance, civic engagement, and media communication.
He stressed that audiovisual storytelling can strengthen transparency, accountability, and citizen participation while empowering youth voices in national conversations.



Mr. Simeon Enow Ojong highlighted the importance of integrating digital literacy, media production, and technology innovation into educational systems.
Drawing from his leadership experience in education and institutional branding, he underscored the need for schools to create environments that encourage creativity, innovation, and responsible digital participation among students.



Barcolleh Poronpyae Representing the creative economy sector, Mr. Poronpyae discussed the role of audiovisual storytelling in promoting Liberia's tourism potential, cultural identity, and national image.
He emphasized that youth-generated content can significantly contribute to economic growth, national branding, and international visibility.

KEYNOTE ADDRESSES

The conference also featured keynote addresses from senior government and institutional representatives.



Rufus Paul

Assistant Minister for Technical Services, Ministry of Information
Minister Rufus Paul applauded the initiative and encouraged students to actively engage in meaningful and responsible content creation. He emphasized that digital storytelling and audiovisual communication can serve as viable pathways for income generation, innovation, and youth employment.
He further noted the importance of promoting truthful, constructive, and educational content capable of contributing positively to national development.



Es-Samir Bropleh

Manager for Policy and Strategic Planning, Liberia National Tourism Authority
Es-Samir Bropleh highlighted the importance of leveraging audiovisual storytelling to reshape global perceptions about Liberia.
He emphasized that Liberia possesses untapped cultural, tourism, and developmental stories that young people can amplify through digital media platforms to attract investment, tourism, and international engagement.

BREAKOUT SESSIONS & STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Following the keynote presentations and panel discussions, participants transitioned into collaborative breakout ideation sessions designed to encourage practical problem-solving and innovation.
Students were divided into working groups where they identified major development challenges affecting their communities and explored how audiovisual storytelling could be used to address them.

The thematic focus areas included:



During the sessions, students worked closely with professional mentors and facilitators to conceptualize audiovisual campaigns, awareness videos, digital storytelling projects, and community engagement initiatives.
The collaborative approach allowed students to develop practical communication strategies while strengthening teamwork, creativity, and critical thinking skills.







STUDENT PRESENTATIONS









At the conclusion of the breakout sessions, participating students presented their audiovisual concepts and proposed implementation plans.

The presentations reflected strong creativity, innovation, and a growing understanding of how media and storytelling can influence attitudes, promote awareness, and inspire social action.

Students outlined practical next steps for launching content initiatives within their schools and communities, demon-strating the long-term potential of the AV4Dev initiative.

KEY OUTCOMES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

The AV4Dev NextGen Conference achieved several important outcomes, including:

01

Youth Empowerment Through Knowledge Sharing

Students gained practical exposure to audiovisual storytelling, digital communication, and development-focused media production.

02

Increased Awareness on Responsible Content Creation

Participants developed a stronger understanding of the importance of combating misinformation and promoting positive, educational, and development-oriented content.

03

Strengthened Multi-Sector Collaboration

The conference created meaningful engagement among schools, media professionals, government institutions, development stakeholders, and youth organizations.

04

Promotion of Liberia's Creative Economy

Discussions reinforced the role of audiovisual storytelling in supporting Liberia's creative industry, tourism sector, and national image-building efforts.

05

Development of Youth-Led Solutions

Students successfully conceptualized innovative audiovisual solutions addressing key social and developmental issues.

STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF THE AV4DEV INITIATIVE

The AV4Dev initiative represents a timely and strategic intervention within Liberia's evolving digital and creative landscape.
As Liberia continues efforts to monetize local content and strengthen digital innovation, there is an increasing need to ensure that online spaces are not dominated by harmful narratives, misinformation, and exploitative content.

The AV4Dev initiative seeks to contribute to this national effort by nurturing a new generation of ethical, skilled, and socially conscious content creators capable of using media as a force for development and national transformation.

By empowering youth with audiovisual communication skills, the initiative contributes directly to:

- Youth empowerment and employability
- Civic awareness and engagement
- Positive behavioral change
- Creative economy development
- National branding and storytelling
- Educational innovation
- Community awareness campaigns





APPRECIATION & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

SATEC Liberia extends sincere appreciation to all partners, speakers, mentors, participants, and supporters whose contributions made the AV4Dev NextGen Conference a success.

Special recognition goes to the following partners:

- Jewel Starfish Foundation
- Center for Public-Private Development (CEPPDEV)
- Pure Brilliance Advisors
- PAYOWI

The organization also acknowledges the invaluable contributions of the keynote speakers, panelists, educators, media professionals, and students whose participation enriched the conference experience.









CONCLUSION

The Audiovisual for Development (AV4Dev) NextGen Conference marked a significant milestone in advancing youth empowerment, digital literacy, and development communication in Liberia.
By creating a platform where students could engage directly with industry professionals, government representatives, and development stakeholders, the conference successfully demonstrated the transformative power of audiovisual storytelling in shaping positive social change.

The initiative reflects a growing movement toward empowering young Liberians not only as consumers of digital media, but as creators of impactful narratives capable of informing communities, influencing behaviors, strengthening national identity, and contributing to sustainable development.

As the AV4Dev initiative progresses into its next phases–including intensive training, mentorship, school audiovisual clubs, and youth-led content production–it holds tremendous potential to inspire a new generation of storytellers and development communicators committed to building a stronger, more informed, and more innovative Liberia





NEXT STEPS

Following the successful implementation of the Audiovisual for Development (AV4Dev) NextGen Conference, SATEC Liberia is committed to advancing the initiative into a sustained national youth empowerment and development communication program.

The organization intends to implement the following next steps:

1. Launch of the 6-Week Intensive AV4Dev Training Program
Selected students from participating schools will undergo a structured six-week practical training program focused on:

- Audiovisual storytelling
- Smartphone journalism
- Video production and editing
- Photography and visual communication
- Scriptwriting and content development
- Social media storytelling
- Development communication
- Ethical and responsible digital media use

The training program will equip students with hands-on skills required to create impactful development-oriented content.

2. Establishment of School-Based Audiovisual Clubs

AV4Dev audiovisual clubs will be established in participating schools to create sustainable platforms for continuous learning, peer mentorship, and youth-led media production.

The clubs will serve as innovation hubs where students can:

- Produce awareness content
- Organize media campaigns
- Develop storytelling projects
- Engage in civic education activities
- Promote positive behavioral change initiatives

The clubs will also encourage leadership development, creativity, collaboration, and responsible digital citizenship.

3. Youth-Led Content Production Campaigns

Students and audiovisual clubs will begin producing development-focused media content addressing critical national and community issues including:

- Drug abuse prevention
- Gender equality
- Health awareness
- Civic participation
- Education advocacy
- Environmental awareness
- Peacebuilding and social cohesion

The initiative seeks to amplify youth voices while promoting positive narratives about Liberia and its future.

NEXT STEPS CONT...

4. Mentorship and Industry Linkages

AV4Dev will continue connecting students with experienced professionals from the media, creative, technology, and development sectors.

Through mentorship engagements, students will receive guidance, technical support, career exposure, and opportunities for professional growth within Liberia's emerging creative economy.

5. Expansion to Additional Schools and Counties

Following the pilot phase, SATEC Liberia intends to expand the AV4Dev initiative to additional schools and counties across Liberia to ensure broader youth participation and national impact.
The long-term vision is to establish a nationwide network of youth audiovisual storytellers and development communicators.

6. Production and Showcase of Student Development Content

The initiative plans to organize future audiovisual showcases, screenings, and youth media exhibitions where students can publicly present their work, engage stakeholders, and inspire wider youth participation.
These showcases will celebrate innovation, creativity, and impactful storytelling while promoting Liberia's emerging youth creative sector.



CALL FOR PARTNERSHIP

SATEC Liberia recognizes that empowering the next generation of storytellers and development communicators requires strong collaboration among government institutions, development partners, educational institutions, private sector actors, media organizations, and civil society.

As such, the organization calls on partners and stakeholders to join efforts in supporting and scaling the AV4Dev initiative.

Partnership opportunities include:

- Technical collaboration
- Financial sponsorship
- Training and mentorship support
- Equipment and technology support
- School partnerships
- Media collaboration
- Youth development programming
- Creative industry partnerships
- Policy and advocacy engagement

The AV4Dev initiative presents a unique opportunity to invest in Liberia's youth, strengthen the country's digital and creative economy, and promote responsible content creation that advances education, civic engagement, tourism, innovation, and national development.

By supporting AV4Dev, partners will contribute to building a generation of young Liberians equipped not only with digital and creative skills, but also with the vision and capacity to use storytelling as a tool for positive transformation.
Interested organizations, institutions, and partners are encouraged to engage with SATEC Liberia to explore collaborative opportunities aimed at empowering youth and shaping a stronger future for Liberia through audiovisual storytelling and development communication.



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THANK YOU.

QUESTION & INFORMATION

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