



FOOD AND ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY (FED)

Activity Highlights: August 1 to 15, 2016

- FED's M&E Director, Andrea Chartock, worked in-country during this entire reporting period to prepare for the Enterprise Survey, which covers indicators such as investments, change in profitability, and access to finance. Thirty enumerators were trained to administer the survey. In addition, Andrea led the FED team in an exercise to adjust FY2016 indicator targets in order to prepare the modified PMP to be submitted to Mission in early-September. This modified PMP will provide essential information about how data will be collected and analyzed on the fifteen FY2016 indicators which FED has been assigned for annual and final reporting. While in Liberia, Andrea also collaborated with our HQ statistical experts to analyze data from the previously conducted Smallholder Survey. Preparations were also made to complete this Smallholder Survey with interviews to be conducted with cassava value chain actors in September. The cassava value chain is being addressed later than the other value chains given the timing of the agricultural cycle for that crop.
- FED extension officers were also brought together during this reporting period to review and update the project beneficiary listings district-by-district. The beneficiary listings had been plagued with questions about possible duplications, rendering it difficult to determine precisely how many beneficiaries the project has served. After extensive review, it now appears that the number of duplicates was minimal, approximately 4,000 from the more than 80,000 on the list. Given the expected 10,000-12,000 new beneficiaries served during FY2016, we expect the final listings to indicate that the total number of beneficiaries served since project inception will approach 90,000.
- On August 10, the FED M&E team attended a workshop on USAID/Liberia's Performance Indicator Database System (PIDS) at the USAID Liberia Strategic Analysis (LSA) project offices in Monrovia. Following the workshop, the team met with LSA staff to discuss next steps in modifying PIDS to best accommodate FED's M&E indicators.
- FED consultants conducted a series of training programs for Centers of Excellence (COEs) staff members at BWI and Grand Bassa County Community College (GBCCC). Thomas Kanneh facilitated sessions on grant proposal writing for administrative and faculty staff of BWI and GBCCC; while IFDC consultant Emmanuel Lincoln conducted refresher sessions on soil testing for laboratory technicians. These workshops were conducted for Nimba and Lofa County Community Colleges in July.
- FED began the handover process for the most recently-procured textbooks and reference materials to the four CoEs. To date, handover has occurred at BWI and GBCC. The exercise will continue at the Lofa and Nimba County community colleges during the last two weeks of August. FED is providing textbooks and other reference materials to support faculty and students of the National Diploma in Agriculture (NDA) program. In total, 144 books will be distributed to the CoEs' newly renovated libraries. The collection includes 12 textbook titles and eight reference guides.
- Planning for the upcoming Agribusiness Expo is progressing well. To date, FED is finalizing procurement of the venue, catering services, construction of presentation booths, and printing. The Opening Program, plenary panel sessions, workshop presentations and booth exhibitions are being designed, and booth exhibitors have been

identified. Invitations are already being distributed to prospective Expo participants, which are expected to number approximately 150.

- Top Consultants, Inc. (TCI) delivered its final report and conducted the exit presentation of its efforts to build capacity of the five business service providers and graduate them to full-fledged Enterprise Service Centers at the FED office on August 5. The presentation concluded a multi-year effort to build capacity of these organizations to provide essential agribusiness support services at the County level. TCI confirmed that all five of the BSPs have qualified to graduate as Enterprise Service Centers (ESC). The criteria for achieving this status included building a client base, development of business plans for a fee-for-service business model, and demonstrated capacity to generate revenue and add value to agriculture chains across their respective counties. FED plans to formally recognize the ESC achievements at the Agribusiness Expo in September.
- FED prioritized the final stages of its VSLA activity in early August and will complete implementation of the activity before September 15. Three additional groups - Lorkoe, Zordomon and Kwakerseh in Nimba County - successfully completed their first cycles, executed an action audit, and graduated to VSLA status. The groups reported near maximum membership of 30 each. In total, the three groups invested a total of US\$11,638 in shares and saved US\$ 723 in a social fund. The latter fund is used to support activities for lending to avoid using the investment shares for this purpose.
- A two-person videographic team concluded a weeklong trip to Liberia during this reporting period to prepare a video highlighting FED activities to be presented at the Agribusiness Expo. The team filmed activities in both rice and vegetable value chains and interviewed project beneficiaries, tracing activities along the value chain. Youth power tiller and tuk-tuk operators are also highlighted in the video.
- The goat quarantine facility which is being rehabilitated to host the Goat Nucleus Herd Breeding Center at the Central Agriculture Research Institute (CARI) is expected to be completed and handed over to CARI in early September.
- The management of Golden Beach has agreed to pre-finance the purchase of herb seeds for planting at the Careysburg vegetable site.
- During the first two weeks of August, FED completed the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for FALAMA Inc.'s proposed industrial cassava flour mill to be constructed at Fendell in Montserrado County. The Longman Engineering Firm conducted the assessment. Report from the assessment will be submitted to the Environmental Protection Agency for review and approval by the end of August. FALAMA is expected to establish a 10MT output capacity cassava flour mill in 2016. Discussions have been ongoing with LADA for co-financing of the processing equipment.