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FOOD AND ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM FOR LIBERIA (FED)

MONTHLY REPORT: JULY 2012



JULY 2012

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FOOD AND ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT (FED) PROGRAM FOR LIBERIA

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COVER PHOTO: Cross section of interns along with the Minister of Agriculture, Florence Chenoweth and Chief of Party of FED.

DISCLAIMER

The authors' views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.

ACRONYMS

AEDE	Agricultural, Environmental and Development Economics
BRAC	Bangladesh Rehabilitation Assistance Committee
BWI	Booker T. Washington Institute
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
DAI	Development Alternatives, Inc.
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ED	Enterprise Development
EDP	Enterprise Development Plan
GPS	Global Positioning System
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IFDC	International, International Fertilizer Developmental Center
IQC	Indefinite Quantity Contract
IRP	International Resource Person
LTTMs	Learning, Teaching & Training Materials
MDF	Market Development Fund
MOA	Ministry of Agriculture
NGO	Non Government Organization
PPR	Peste Des Petits Ruminants
RFP	Request for Proposal
SME	Small Medium Enterprise
STTA	Short Term Technical Assistant
TAMIS	Technical and Administrative Management Information System
TVET	Technical Education and Vocational Training
UDP	Urea Deep Placement
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VTNFES	Vocational Technical Non Formal Education Specialist
YMCA	Young Men Christian Association

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Geographic Reach of FED



Background

The Food and Enterprise Development (FED) Program for Liberia is a USAID-funded initiative that began in September 2011. Through implementing a Liberian strategy which incorporates women and youth, FED will help the government of Liberia and the country achieve food security — in terms of food availability, utilization, and accessibility — by building an indigenous incentive structure that assists a range of agricultural stakeholders to adopt commercial approaches.

This incentive structure will be built upon:

- Improved technology for productivity and profitability;
- Expanded and modernized input supply and extension systems;
- Commercial production, marketing, and processing;
- Enterprise Services; and
- Workforce Development.

FED's activities will work with the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) and the private sector to link communities to agricultural inputs (including improved seeds), extension services, nutritious food products, processing services, market information, transportation, credit, and appropriate education, training, and enterprise services.

Over the life of the five-year FED program, expanded market linkages will lead to substantial income and job growth and major increases in the production, processing, marketing, and nutritional utilization of rice, cassava, vegetables, and goats in Bong, Lofa, Nimba, Grand Bassa, Montserrado, and Margibi counties. These counties are being targeted in the context of regional development corridors that foster intra- and inter-county commerce, simultaneously improving food availability and access for all Liberians.

FED's methodology is market-led, value chain-driven, continuously dedicated to indigenous capacity building, and specifically focused on benefiting Liberia's women and youth. FED's approach aims to be collaborative, catalytic, and driven by the goals and objectives of our partner clients. It will lead to increases in incomes for rural households, new employment opportunities for Liberians, increased access to food and improved household dietary diversity scores for food-insecure Liberians, and the adoption of improved inputs, farming practices, and technologies which boost agricultural productivity.

FED is implemented by seven partners including: Development Alternatives, Inc. (DAI), Winrock International, International Fertilizer Developmental Center (IFDC), Samaritan's Purse, Louisiana University, The Cadmus Group, and the Center for Development and Population Activities.

Monthly Summary

Activities are underway in Bong, Nimba, Margibi, Grand Bassa, Montserrado and Lofa counties. Activities in the counties mentioned above for this month began with the planning of activities for UDP, ISFM and voucher programs took place with input supply chain actors in Monrovia, Lofa, Bong, and Nimba Counties with 4 IFDC STTAs. Additionally, weekly vegetable demonstration training continues for the 13 sites in Montserrado and Margibi counties, wherein seedling replacement is being carried out due to the damages caused by excessive rain after transplanting. Training was conducted by FED STTA, Matthew Curtis, for the Peri-urban team on the collection of soil samples. GPS training was also conducted by the GPS unit for the extension agents to enable them to accurately measure plot sizes and way points.

Rice demonstrations are currently ongoing in Nimba, Grand Bassa, Bong and Lofa Counties. In Nimba County, the power tiller has completed plowing 5 of the 7 lowland sites while the other 2 sites will be done manually. Transplanting is ongoing at the same time; the farmer groups have completed planting of local rice variety

provided by them along with NERICA 2, and are waiting for the last variety to be planted. In Grand Bassa, transplanting has begun at one of the five lowland sites while others are clearing and plowing at the same time.

The farmers groups in Bong are plowing manually awaiting the seedlings from nursery to get ready for transplanting at all of the 5 lowland sites. In Lofa transplanting has begun at one of the 6 lowland sites while the hired power tiller is plowing. The 2 upland sites have been planted with NERICA 2 and a local variety. The second variety is to be provided by FED before planting.

A day participatory training on improved cassava varieties and planting methods was held in Bong Mine, Bong County on July 2 2012. Twenty five (25) participants from Bong, Lofa, Nimba, Grand, Bassa and Montserrado Counties participated in the training. Cassava demonstration is ongoing in a total of 22 communities (5 communities in Bong, 5 in Grand Bassa-5, 5 in Lofa and 7 in Nimba). The demonstration is carried out on a 2.0 hectare plot at each community. The project is working with 22 farming groups of 25 members each. The cassava varieties demonstrated at the sites include CARICA 1, 2, & 3, II-25, Bassa Girl and O-57.

Initial consultations have been completed for the development of a National Livestock Policy. FED Livestock Policy Specialist, David Land, arrived and spent ten days with initial discussion regarding planning for future in-depth consultancy and development of a National Livestock Policy draft for review. Ministry of Agriculture and MOA Livestock counterparts were identified and programmed for the work to begin in September and negotiations completed for finalization of purchase order to engage BRAC/NGO to begin execution of the National PPR Sheep and Goat vaccination campaign in early August 2012.

During this month, the following business management and skills trainings were conducted:

- Enterprise Development Plan Pilot training workshop for SMEs and Producer groups was held in Nimba with a total of 42 participants from 15 groups from July 5 – 6, 2012.
- Developing a Business Plan for a New Venture for SMEs in Bong County with a total of 20 participants from 17 groups from July 18-20, 2012.
- Market Research Methodology seminar was held Monrovia for SMEs on July 25, 2012 with a total of 10 participants from 10 groups.
- Trainings on improve cassava and planting methods were held in Bong, Nimba, Lofa and Grand Bassa Counties from July 2 – 23, 2012 with a total 290 participants from 30 groups.
- Training on rice was also held in Bong, Nimba, Lofa, and Grand Bassa Counties with a total of 433 participants from 19 groups.
- A Tube Well Training was conducted in Nimba with seven (7) participants from one (1) group.
- Doumpa Community Agriculture Project received a Computer Training with a total seven (7) participants from one (1) group.
- Vegetable Production training was held in Margibi County with eleven (11) participants from one (1) group.

Requests of interest of Lead Farmer Goat producers in each county were executed by radio in the counties in various dialects. Responses will serve to identify partner goat producers for the Community Goat Pass-on Scheme to begin.

On July 31, 2012, phase one of the Internship Program was launched and this activity will be carried out in phases for the duration of the FED program. For the first phase, 61 students were selected from four universities and technical schools (University of Liberia, United Methodist University, Nimba County Community College and Booker Washington Institute) from across the country. The purpose of the internship program is to create the space for senior students and recent graduates interested in agriculture to put their classroom learning into

practice. Students will gain practical knowledge and experience, as well as required technical skills for marketable fields. In addition, the program will hope to provide employment and self-employment opportunities through mentorship and training at various enterprises and public institutions.

During the month of July, activities at the Doumpa Agriculture Project reached its highest peak, with the completion of transplanting of lowland rice from nurseries to the 56 plots on 2.232 ha of lowland. Currently, rice has started tailoring and the first harvest of vegetables is expected to start the first week in August 2012 and continues for the next six month.

COMPONENT ONE: INCREASED AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY

Project Planning

An increase in agriculture productivity chart for Year One was developed during the reporting period. The increase in the agriculture productivity chart outlines all activities that will be undertaken to contribute to the Year One annual work plan.

Task 1.3 Input Supply System Interventions

During the month of July 2012, planning activities for UDP, ISFM and voucher programs took place with input supply chain actors in Monrovia, Lofa, Bong and Nimba Counties with 4 IFDC STTAs.

Activity 1.3a: Improving Access to quality agro-inputs

The International Fertilizer Development Center was subcontracted to provide technical support for the implementation Task 1.3: “**Input supply system interventions**” under the USAID-FED project. The specific tasks to be accomplished are:

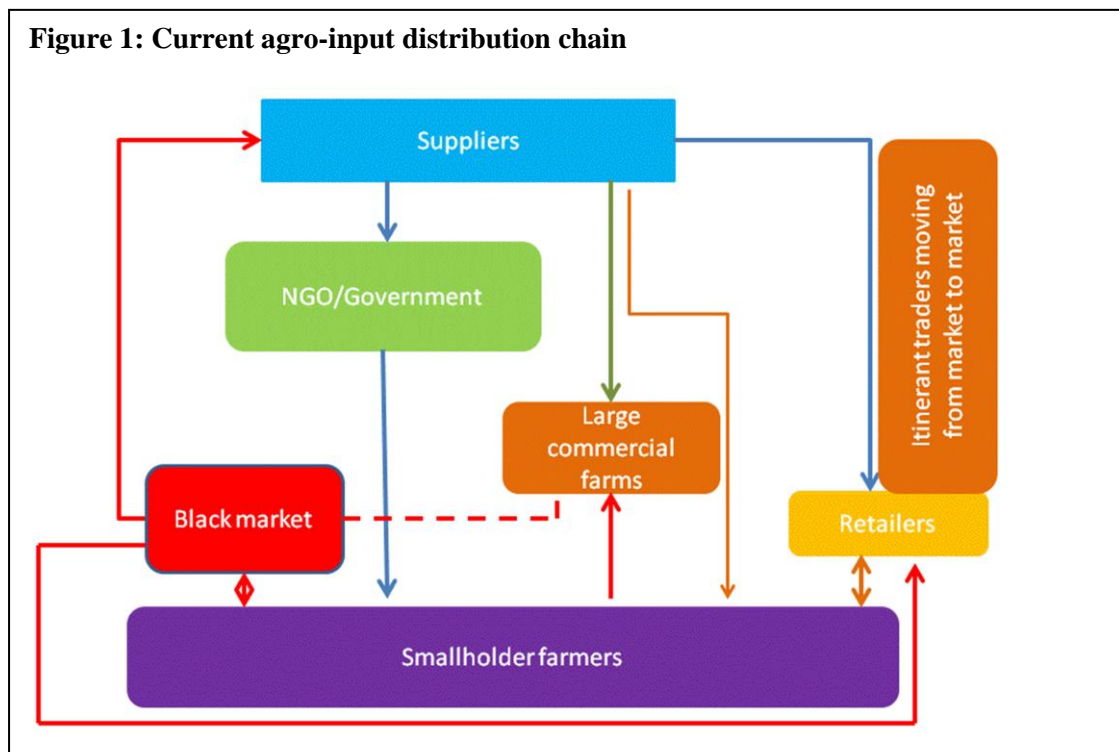
- Improving access to quality inputs;
- Testing and introduction of new technologies through an improved extension training system in the target areas.

In order to achieve the above tasks, a consultant was engaged by the project to assist in the process of developing the agro-input dealer sector. The aim was to identify areas of capacity building for effective grassroots involvement in the input supply system, which will form the basis for the voucher/smart subsidy program. In order to understand the background context of input supply system in Liberia, the consultant conducted a rapid assessment of agro-input supply together with IFDC’s focal person in Liberia. The field visits and discussions with the different input supply actors provided information for planning concrete activities until September 2012. This report covers the initial 12-day consultancy approved by the project. The consultant had discussions with officials at the Ministry of Agriculture at the County level, importers/suppliers of agro-inputs, and retailers of agro-inputs at the village level, farmer-based cooperatives, and staff of the USAID-FED project.

Input supply chain in Liberia

Agro-input dealers play a key role in agriculture and thus their absence affects farmers’ access to quality seeds, fertilizers and crop protection products, which invariably affects productivity. The agro-input dealer supply chain in Liberia is in developmental stage. The input supply chain is characterized by few suppliers/importers that are mainly located in Monrovia. Although, more than 20 agro-input dealers are located in Monrovia, about 50% are not functional and only present themselves as agro-input supplier if there is a contract to supply agro-inputs to donor agency or an NGO as indicated in the figure below. The remaining 50% rely heavily on government and donor agencies to purchase their products for distribution to farmers. Thus, few suppliers have made an attempt to

establish distribution points in the rural counties of Lofa, Bong and Nimba. Agro-inputs are mainly distributed by donors freely to farmers. The main inputs supplied are fertilizers, equipment and tools, agro-chemicals and certified seeds to farmers.



It must also be pointed out that free distribution of the inputs by donor agencies does not go with educating the farmers (recipient) on the importance of using such products. There is lack of extension services support to these farmers. Suppliers/importers of agro-inputs, Ministry of Agricultural officials testified that the distributions of the fertilizers are not targeted to real farmers and that most of the fertilizers are found in the black market at very cheap price which sometimes some suppliers even purchase from. This makes it difficult for some of the fertilizer importing companies to compete with their own products; creating a market distortion.

There are also few stockists and itinerant traders moving from market to market. Fertilizers and agro-chemicals are repackaged into smaller units. Repackaging into smaller units allow farmers to afford them due to the high cost of agro-inputs. Although repackaging of agro-inputs (fertilizers, seeds and agro-chemicals) by stockists makes it affordable to farmers, it poses great risk to the health of stockists and the farmers. It also makes it easier for unscrupulous persons to engage in adulteration and faking. Farmers complained about the lack of local-made hoes and cutlasses, which they find comfortable using rather than the foreign imported ones.

Regulations governing the importation and sale of agro-inputs are not developed and the current guidelines are not being followed by the actors as a result of lack of manpower to monitor and ensure compliance. There is also no laboratory to test the nutrient quality and efficacy of fertilizers and agro-chemicals.

Activity 1.3b: Testing and Introduction of new technologies

Low use of inputs by smallholder farmers' challenges and opportunities

Lack of knowledge on the use of improved seeds, fertilizers and agro-chemical

Most farmers have little or no knowledge on the importance of using improved inputs such as improved seeds, fertilizers and crop protection products. There is high cost of fertilizers and agro-chemicals, which most farmers cannot afford. Fertilizers sell as high as USD 90.00 per bag of NPK 15:15:15. Smallholder farmers find it easier to bring additional virgin land into cultivation clearing the forest. Shifting cultivation is the main practice of farmers clearing forest every year. At the high cost, only donor and NGOs are able to purchase and distribute freely to farmers. However, most of the fertilizers are found in the market due to lack of targeting of smallholder farmers who need them. Those who need them find it difficult to access these inputs as all the suppliers are located in Monrovia. There is lack of agriculture extension services and thus farmers do not receive advisory services on correct use of inputs especially on the use of agro-chemicals. Access to credit by farmers is lacking making it difficult for farmers to make the needed investments.

Other factors

One of the challenges facing the input supply chain is the interventions of free input supply being implemented by NGOs and donor agencies. This distorts the market and makes it difficult for the suppliers to compete with their own products. Smallholder farmers do not value the use of fertilizer as a result of lack of knowledge on the importance of fertilizers. Suppliers also complain of high import duty on agro inputs. Lack of good roads to transport inputs serves as a hindrance for effective distribution of agro inputs. There exist no regulations on the sale of agro-inputs.

There is a high cost of renting warehouse to serve as distribution points for suppliers. There is high incidence of faking and adulteration of fertilizers and agro-chemicals. This acts as disincentive for farmers to use fertilizers and agro-chemicals because these inputs would not produce the desired results leading to total rejection by farmers.

Opportunities

There are opportunities for agro-input dealer business to thrive in Liberia due to low yields, as a result of decline in soil fertility.

There is also insect pest attack on crops example termites (coffee, cocoa, rice). Farmers complained on weed control methods currently employed in weeding rice farmers as drudgery, and labor intensive.

Next Steps

The strategy to the development of the private input supply system hinges on three main complementary activities:

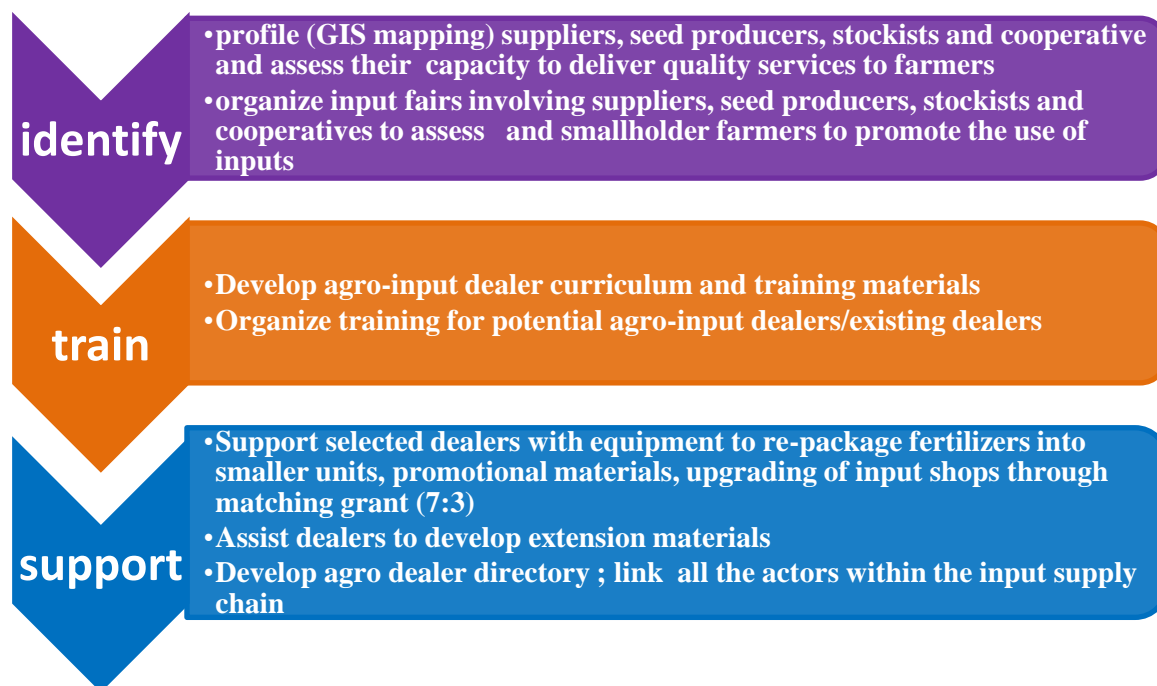


Picture 1: Fertilizers sold by stockists



Picture 2: Maize farm showing signs of nutrient deficiency

Figure 2: Next steps strategy to the development of the private input supply system



Task 1.5 Increased Productions and Profitability of Quality Rice

The rice demonstration is ongoing; currently in Nimba the power tiller has completed plowing 5 of the 7 lowland sites while the other 2 will be done manually. Transplanting is ongoing at the same time; the farmer groups have completed planting out of local rice variety provided by them along with NERICA 2 awaiting the last variety to be planted.

In Grand Bassa, transplanting has begun at one of the five lowland sites while others are clearing and plowing at the same time. In Bong, the farmer groups are plowing manually awaiting the seedlings on nursery to get ready for transplanting at all of the 5 lowland sites. Lofa transplanting has begun at one of the 6 lowland sites while the hired power tiller is plowing. The 2 upland sites have been planted with NERICA 2 and a local variety awaiting the second variety to be provided by FED before planting.

Task 1.6 Increased Productions and Profitability of Quality Cassava

Cassava plays a huge role for average Liberian farmers, especially women who carry the burden of providing alternative food supplement for household food consumption. The availability of improved varieties (Bassa Girl, Butter and Carricass 1, 2, and 3) is some of the main challenges in cassava production activities. Additionally, farmers across Liberia have had little or no training in cassava production.

Cassava demonstration is ongoing in a total of 22 communities (5 communities in Bong, 5 in Grand Bassa-5, 5 in Lofa and 7 in Nimba. The demonstration is carried out on a 2.0 hectare plot at each community. The project is working with 22 farming groups of 25 members each. The cassava varieties demonstrated at the sites include CARICA 1, 2, & 3, II-25, Bassa Girl and O-57. The planting methods demonstrated include mounds, ridges, flat and the traditional planting method widely practiced by local farmers. The 2.0 hectares plot at each site is divided into four equal parts (0.5 ha. each) and planted using either mounds, ridges, flat or traditional methods. As an expected result at the end of the cassava demonstration training, the Lead farmer will go to the neighboring communities to teach other cassava farmers the improved cassava production practices gained from the demonstration sites.

Task 1.7 Peri-urban Vegetable Production

Capacity Building

Vegetable weekly demonstration training continues for the 13 sites in Montserrado and Margibi counties, wherein seedling replacement is being carried out due to the damages caused by excessive rains after transplanting. Seedlings are being managed to enhance recovery. Training was conducted by Matthew Curtis for the Peri urban team on the collection of soil samples. GSP training was also conducted by the GPS unit for the extension agents to enable them to measure plot sizes and way points. As a result of vegetable production trainings, farmer groups are learning the difference techniques of planting and water control.

Tube Well Installation Training

A total of nine (9) wells were drilled during the period in Nimba and Bong counties (see table below). Smart Garage and Standard Garage (manufacturers) were trained to drill wells and in turn worked with the FED team to drill 9 wells.

Table 1: Number of tube wells drilled and installed

No	Location /County	Community	Driller	Depth of well drilled
1	Nimba	Gbartu Quater	Standard Garage	5m 50cm
2	Nimba	Neegban Town	Standard Garage	9m
3	Nimba	Kpetou Town	Standard Garage	6m
4	Nimba	Zuoplay Town	Standard Garage	8m
5	Nimba	Gono Town	Standard Garage	10m
6	Bong	Barloquater	Smart Garage	10m
7	Bong	People's street	Smart Garage	6m
8	Bong	Peoples street	Smart Garage	8m
9	Bong	lelekpaye	Smart Garage	8m 50cm

Doumpa Community Project

During the month of July, activities at Doumpa Agriculture Project reached its highest peak, with the completion of transplanting of lowland rice from nurseries to the 56 plots on 2.232 ha of lowland. Currently, rice has started tailoring and the first harvest of vegetables is expected to start the first week in August 2012 and continues for the next six months.

Seven leaders of the Doumpa Community Agriculture Project received a Computer Training on July 20, 2012. The purpose for the training is to empower the leadership on sales management and reporting of sales by using MS-Excel and proposal writing by also using MS-Word. Computer training will continue in a regular basis.

Task: 1.8 Goat Interventions

During the month of July, the following activities were carried out:

Initial consultations have been completed for the development of a National Livestock Policy. FED Livestock Policy Specialist, David Land, arrived and spent ten days with initial discussion regarding planning for future in-depth consultancy and development of a National Livestock Policy draft for review. Ministry of Agriculture and MOA Livestock counterparts were identified and programmed for the work to begin in September.

Negotiations were completed for the finalization of a purchase order to engage BRAC/NGO to begin execution of the National PPR Sheep and Goat vaccination campaign in early August.

Requests of interest of Lead Farmer Goat producers in each county were executed by radio in the counties in various dialects. Responses will serve to identify partner goat producers for the Community Goat Pass-on Scheme to begin.

SUCEESS STORY – FIRST PERSON

Orphanage Founder Recipient of FED Support

Providing shelter for over 40 orphans that were victims of the 14-year Liberian civil war, National Director and Founder of My Brother's Keeper orphanage, Ralph Gelego speaks highly of the technical assistance provided by the USAID-funded Food and Enterprise Development (FED) project, part of the Feed the Future Initiative.

“FED support to the orphanage has been welcome and will bring about a huge change in the nutritional diet for the children currently residing at the orphanage,” he said. “With an acre and half of land provided by the orphanage, vegetables of a large variety can now be grown for both consumption and for income generation that will serve the general purpose of the orphanage.”

A FED-led groundbreaking ceremony was conducted on July 7, 2012, with several FED staff, including FED Chief of Party Jonathan Greenham, on a demonstration vegetable plot at the orphanage, located in Careysburg, Montserrado County. The orphans also participated in digging of the vegetable beds, which included bitterball, peppers, cabbage, eggplant, potato, collards, and sweet potato greens.

“It is very important for the orphanage to now be able to grow their own crops,” said Gelego. “It gives an added advantage to having the proper kind of diet and affords the kids a basic understanding of agriculture. FED field coordinators’ regular presence will also provide supervision and help build interest by everyone at the orphanage.”

FED signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the orphanage on July 1, 2012, with the goal of increasing access to nutrition for children of the orphanage, improving education on how to grow vegetables, and strengthening knowledge on goat herd maintenance and health. Future training will include field preparation activities, improved vegetables planting practices, multiplication of planting materials, and harvesting practices.



FED staff in attendance at the groundbreaking ceremony in July 2012.

“Thanks to FED and USAID for the wonderful support in vegetable production that is currently on-going at the orphanage,” said National Director and My Brother's Keeper Founder, Ralph Gelego.

COMPONENT TWO: STIMULATE PRIVATE ENTERPRISE

During the Month of July, the Enterprise Development Team accomplished the following activities:

Activity 2.3.A.ii.e – Targeted Technical Support

In collaboration with STTA Agatha Johnson, the Enterprise team conducted a three days Business Plan workshop in Bong County and a one day follow-up session in Monrovia at the YMCA with Small Medium Enterprises. The Business Plan workshop includes a 6 weeks follow-up and mentorship plan to be carried out by Agatha with the participants throughout July and August. At the end of the 6 weeks, the participants should have completed business plans for presentation to FED.



Picture 3: Market Research Methodology Training



Picture 4: Business Management Skills Training

The ED and MDF team met with AEDE and Chevron concerning a women's group called New Generational Women located in Cooper Town, Upper Clay Ash-land, Montserrado County. These women are engaged in pepper and cassava farming. FED will be working with both Chevron and AEDE to provide technical and business training over a one year period.

An IQC RFP was released to find local service providers for various training modules required by FED: Basic Agri-Business Skills Training for Rural Groups, Village Savings and Loan Trainings, and Basic Literacy Training. A bidder's conference was held on July 19 and the bidding was closed on July 25. Bids are currently being reviewed and it is expected that IQC holders will be identified by the first week of August. FED will then be in a position to hire IQC holders for specific training sessions needed for FED beneficiaries through a task order and fixed price purchase order on needed basis.

Activity 2.3.A.i Profile Commercial Buyers and Activity 2.3.A.ii.a – Profile and Select Lead Producers, FBOs, and Enterprises

A TAMIS module for the Stakeholder Profile database was created by STTA Ms. Sudarshini and tested by the Enterprise Development team. The team also gathered information from ED current training participants and agro-input suppliers to enter into the database. An RFP to gather the remaining profiles from approximately 900 – 1,000 stakeholders across the country will be released on July 30.

Activity 2.3.B.ii – Adapt and Pilot Enterprise Development Curricula

The Enterprise Development Plan (EDP) was designed by Sue Savage earlier in the year. The EDP is not a Business Plan, but rather a tool to guide a thought process that will prepare producer groups to qualify them as a registered business entity, begin planning as a business to meet goals, and to eventually meet minimum standards for accessing finance. The Enterprise team designed a pilot training program that will be conducted in Ganta, Nimba with associations who had previously received business management training from FED. The EDP pilot program will continue over a four month period with various training interventions. The first phase was conducted in a three day pilot workshop in Ganta, Nimba County.

Activity 2.3.A.ii.b – Linking Value Chain Participants

STTA Duke Burrus along with the Enterprise Development Specialist, Melanie Bittle, and the organizer of the National Cassava Sector Coordinating Committee, Ame Atsu, visited the owners of AGRO and the county representatives of MOA in Grand Bassa to discuss the potential to use the Technical Training Center built by MOA in Compound #3 as a pilot site for cassava processing and warehousing. As a result of the field meeting and site visit, Duke, along with AGRO will provide a cost benefit analysis. In addition, FED will prepare an RFP to find a local service provider who can provide more in depth market research on the cassava sector, such as supply, demand, prices and seasonality to better inform future projects.

A meeting was held with Building Markets, a local NGO partially funded by USAID that intends to link all Liberian business through an online portal and also provides capacity building in procurement and business management. They only work with registered businesses with an aim of increasing exports for those companies. It was decided that FED could collaborate in the future on policy and market linkages projects. Building Markets may also be a candidate for the Stakeholder Profile RFP.

Activity 2.2.b – Survey for Loan Products and Financial Service Partners

The Enterprise Development team met with Hamadou O. Bayo, the CEO of Afriland Band and Francis T. Morgan, Portfolio Manager at their Band Office. The purpose of the meeting was to introduce Melanie as the new Enterprise Development Specialist at FED and to follow up on the March conversation held with Mary Miller; to let Afriland know what FED is currently doing to engage with farming groups and other stakeholders along the value chain. They are currently trying to pilot their MC2 model in Liberia but have been unsuccessful thus far. The ED team recommended a cooperative who has worked with FED and who might fit their pilot model. They also agreed that a roundtable meeting would be a good idea to bring the USAID projects and banks together to exchange ideas and information.

Melanie, Enterprise Development Specialist met via skype with Root Capital. Root Capital is a nonprofit social investment fund that grows rural prosperity in poor, environmentally vulnerable places in Africa and Latin America by lending capital, delivering financial training, and strengthening market connections for small and growing agricultural businesses. Root Capital is interested in expanding their reach into Liberia and has recently started a loan program to work with local supply chains for domestic consumption of staple food products. FED has the contact information for the West Africa loan officer

Activity 2.3.B.iii – Develop Cadre of Business Development Service Providers

ED team met with The Marketplace, a fee for service adult continuing education and professional studies / business incubator. The Marketplace works with some agri-businesses and could be a resource for FED beneficiaries.

Upcoming activities:

- Enterprise Development Assistant interviews in the counties
- Enterprise Development Pilot Plan Working/training Session for Grand Bassa County
- Gender Training (Counties level)
- Selection of IQC holders for training
- RFP for Stakeholder profiles
- RFP for market research on cassava sector

COMPONENT THREE: BUILD LOCAL HUMAN CAPACITY

Task 3.1 Creating Centers of Excellence

During the month of July, VTNFES met with three important stakeholders: the ECOWAS-TVET host from Nigeria, Mrs. Rachel Ogbe, the Ministry of Education, Department of Vocational Education Director YontonKesselly, and the Principal of BWI, Mr. Mulbah Jackollie. In each of the three meetings there were fruitful discussions. One item discussed was developing a National Vocational Agriculture Curriculum presented by UNESCO – UNEVOC for the ECOWAS regional TVET initiative.

Key Achievement:

The ECOWAS TVET Workshop took nine days with heavy involvement from the participants. They wrote the new curricula for each of the vocational departments. The VTNFES participated with the agriculture group assisting as necessary otherwise allowing them to write on their own according to their view of needs and abilities to implement the final product.

From July 16 to 25, 2012 the Vocational Education Specialist and Curriculum Development Specialist attended a TVET training seminar which was held at BWI, Kakata, Margibi County, Liberia. The seminar was designed to Train Teachers for Effective Delivery of Technical and Vocational Education.

The African Union (AU), recognizing the importance of skills to poverty reduction and socio-economic development, adopted a policy framework for promoting The Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) in Africa, the objective of which are:

- To revitalize, modernize and harmonize TVET in Africa in order to transform it into a mainstream activity for African youth development, youth employment and human capacity building in Africa;
- To position TVET programmes and TVET institutions in Africa as vehicle for regional cooperation and integration as well as social-economic development as it relates to improvements in infrastructure, technological progress, energy, trade, tourism, agriculture and good governance;
- To mobilize all stakeholders in a concerted effort to create synergies and share responsibilities for the renewal and harmonization of TVET policies, programmes and strategies in Africa.

Although the policy environment for TVET delivery differs from country to country, with a few exceptions, the major challenges relate to a socio-economic environment that is characterized by slow economic growth, high population growth, and growing number of poorly-educated and unskilled job-seeking school leavers. Over the past couple of years, some countries have taken steps to streamline and harmonize their TVET delivery systems by enacting appropriate laws and regulations. However, progress is slow and only a few countries in the ECOWAS sub-region have established national bodies with clear mandates for promoting and coordinating their skills development efforts. Furthermore, TVET in most ECOWAS countries still suffers from inadequate financing, poor management and weak organizational structures. Investment in TVET is very slow in most countries.

The main objective of the workshop was to train the trainers on the formulation, development and adaptation of curricula and teaching materials for TVET programmes using the UNESCO Nigerian Curriculum Structure as an example. This was with a view to develop the capacity of TVET teachers to enhance their own curricula and produce Learning, Teaching & Training Materials (LTTMs) and also same with their colleagues. Participants also upgraded their professional and pedagogical skills. The TVET curriculum developers were enabled to achieve

better congruence between training and labor market demands and adequately responded to the changing skills needed for the employment sector in Liberia.

The specific objectives of the workshop were to:

1. Build the capacity of participants to implement competency based teaching and learning methodologies;
2. Promote the integration of ICT into TVET provision;
3. Introduce participants to the principles and techniques involved in curriculum & instructional materials development, innovation and adaptation; and
4. Review and share experiences of TVET reforms and best practices in ECOWAS member countries.

The UNESCO-Nigeria Curricula and its format currently being adopted in Nigeria, Pakistan, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Libya and Bahrain was adopted and used for the workshop. The training was organized for ten days for a cross-section of Technical Teachers, curriculum experts, policy makers in charge of TVET, TVET Ministry officials and Inspectors/Advisers. The content of the training in Liberia comprised of plenary sessions with presentations by the International Resource Person (IRP), Dr. Hashim M.S. Abdul-Wahab, the ECOWAS Commission representatives, Mrs. Rachel Ogbe and Miss Vivienne Bombo and the National Resource Persons of Liberia: Hon. Y. B. Kesselley and Mr. Saku Dukuly.

The contents for the training included:

1. Competency-based learning methodology;
2. Integration of ICT and reinforcing computer skills;
3. Curriculum development and adaptation;
4. Instructional Materials development and adaptation;
5. Development of e-learning methods;
6. Teaching methodology.

On July 31, 2012, phase one of the Internship Program was launched and this activity will be carried out in phases for the duration of the FED program. For the first phase, 61 students were selected from four universities and technical schools (University of Liberia, United Methodist University, Nimba County Community College and Booker Washington Institute) from around Liberia. The purpose of the internship program is to create the space for senior students and recent graduates interested in agriculture to put their classroom learning into practice. Students will gain practical knowledge and experience as well as required technical skills for marketable fields. In addition, the program will hope to sustain employment and self-employment opportunities through mentorship and training at various enterprises and public institutions.

The program was formally launched by the Minister of Agriculture, Florence Chenoweth. In her opening remarks, the Minister encouraged and thanked the interns for the path they have chosen and recognized that agricultural presents many challenges and opportunities. The Minister underscored the importance for the interns to be role-models in their communities, institutions, and homes so others can join the agriculture sector knowing that agriculture is one of the major pillars of the Liberian economy.

In the next nine years, the Liberian government needs to train up to 71, 000 people to enter the workforce and the agriculture sector are no exception. The interns have to take the opportunity to prepare themselves for the future. The Minister thanked the USAID-funded FED program for the opportunity the internship program will provide to the interns which is a step forward in strengthening the country's agriculture sector. Lastly the Minister said, "let us make agriculture a business and feel privileged to be a part of this program because there are other students out there that need this opportunity." Over the life of the program, FED plans to have 600 agriculture interns enrolled in their internship program.



Picture 5: Minister of Agriculture, Dr. Florence Chenoweth



Picture 6: Cross section of interns

Monitoring and Evaluation

During the month of July, the last M&E Coordinator position for Lofa County was filled on July 16. Vegetable seedling study was completed and the Component One Technical Advisor is reviewing the final report. Data is still being transferred to the new M&E module in TAMIS and will continue during this month. Activities occurred this month by component area is illustrated in the table below. In addition, a performance indicator table for July, which illustrates the progress of FED activity by each indicator, is included in this report. *See appendix for performance indicator table.*

Table 1: FED Training Activities for July 2012

Activities for Component One: Agricultural Productivity				
Date	Activity	County	# of farmers trained	# of groups
July 2, 9-13	Cassava Training	Bong	46	20
July 10 & 13	Cassava Training	Grand Bassa	50	2
July 2-3, 2012	Rice Training	Grand Bassa	32	1
July 18-23	Cassava Training	Lofa	100	5
July 16-21	Rice Training	Lofa	200	10
July 5, 2012	Vegetable Production	Margibi	11	1
July 9-10, 13-14, 16-17, & 21	Cassava Training	Nimba	94	4
July 20, 2012	Computer Training	Nimba	7	1
July 2-3, 4, 5-6, 9-10, 12-13, 19, 20, & 24	Rice Training	Nimba	201	8
July 13-14, 2012	Tube Well Training	Nimba	7	1
Activities for Component Two: Enterprise Development				
Date	Activity	County	# of entrepreneurs trained	# of groups
July 5 – 6, 2012	Enterprise Development Plan Pilot Training	Nimba	42	15
July 18-20, 2012	Developing a Business Plan for a New Venture	Bong	20	17
July 25, 2012	Market Research Methodology	Montserrado	10	10
Activities for Component Three: Capacity Building				
July 31, 2012	Agri-Business Internship Program	Montserrado	61	7 Universities

Market Development Fund

FED Activity Table – APPROVED and LIVE ACTIVITIES

Activity Name	Number	Description	Start Date	End Date	Approx . Value (USD)	Location (county, district)
COMPONENT 1						
Rice Production and Processing Demonstration	C1-MDF-01	26 sites/partnerships with farmer associations in training by module (site selection, rice variety selection, land preparation, fertilizer application, seedling production, transplanting, irrigation, weeding, harvesting, post-harvest). In addition, labor-saving production technologies (rotary weeders, power tillers) will be demonstrated.	5/21/12	10/31/12	■■■■■	Lofa, Nimba, Grand Bassa, Bong
Arjay Farms Outgrower Expansion	C1-MDF-11	Work with Arjay Farms in expanding and training additional outgrower staff. In addition, provide Arjay with the necessary tools and training in order to process the significant increase in rice seed.	6/18/12	9/30/13	■■■■■	Montserrado
Cassava Demo Site Training and Cultivation	C1-MDF-21	22 sites/partnerships with farmer associations to increase farmers capacity to increase the production of cassava, expand network of out grower farmers in cassava, and build sustainable and profitable cassava farming operations for cassava farmers in the target counties.	6/18/12	10/31/12	■■■■■	Lofa, Nimba, Grand Bassa, Bong
Vetiver Expansion Program	C1-MDF-20	Develop plant materials that are effective at stopping soil erosion. Establish small nurseries of Vetiver to then be planted out at demo sites.	6/29/12	10/31/12	■■■■■	Lofa, Nimba, Grand Bassa, Bong
Phase I, Youth Nutrition Program	C1-MDF-22	Build Demonstration site to build and increase overall nutrition at orphanage. Train Orphanage leaders and kids in vegetable farming and input supplies and provide technical assistance on goat health.	6/29/12	12/31/12	■■■■■	Montserrado

Capacity building for the safe use of authorized agro-chemicals in Bong and Lofa	C1-MDF-08	Collaborate with input dealers in organizing sensitization, awareness creation and demonstrations for the safe use of authorized agro-chemical and equipment. Conduct two demonstrations of innovative tools, inputs (fertilizer, chemicals, etc.) in Lofa and Bong.	7/24/12	8/15/12		Lofa, Bong
Soy Flour Compost Distribution and Soil Enhancement	C1-MDF-15	Collaborate with OICI on the transfer of 485 MT of spoiled soy flour that was imported by OICI but is unfit for neither human nor animal consumption. FED will work with local partners on using the soy flour for compost on FED and partner sites.	7/9/12	9/30/12		Bong, Nimba, Margibi
COMPONENT 2						
Formation of National Cassava Sector Coordinating Committee	C2-MDF-02	To facilitate the establishment of a sustainable system for coordination, advocacy and information dissemination within the Cassava sector as agreed in the National Cassava Sector Strategy document.	6/1/12	9/30/12		Lofa, Nimba, Grand Bassa, Bong
Computer literacy training for From God to Man Farmers Association	C2-TRN-04	Provide basic computer training to ten community members in the village of Doumpa. The computer training will enhance the capacity of the farmers' association to efficiently manage the association	7/12/12	9/12/12		Nimba
Business Skills Training in Bong	C2-TRN-06	To stimulate the Agriculture sector FED will work with approximately 25 participants representing 12 SMEs on the following: key considerations when writing a business plan; applying a simple process to write a business plan effectively; coordination of various company departments and resources in the process of writing the business plan; and drafting of business plan document.	7/18/12	9/7/12		Bong
Mentorship program for Business Plan Development for SMEs	CLIN02-TRN-0007	Market Research training, Telephone follow ups with various group, Market Analysis & Development of Marketing Plan training, Development of Production/Operational Plan training, Development of Financial Plan training, Finalize each partner's business plan	7/25/12	10/31/12		Bong, Montserrado
COMPONENT 3						
University Internship Program – Phase 1	CLIN03-MDF-0001	Partner with universities and vocation schools in establishing a 3 month internship program for selected students and place them in Agro-business organizations.	6/1/12	11/30/12		Montserrado, Nimba
Booker T. Washington	CLIN03-MDF-	BWI lacks the resources and training's to be a	6/15/12	9/30/12		Margibi

Institute (BWI): Building a Center of Excellence	0004	<p>Center of Excellence for Liberia. Curriculum has not been reviewed nor improved for several decades, staff needs to be re-trained, and infrastructure for the Library and Department of Agriculture is poor, with inadequate facilities and equipment for teachers and students. FED will work with BWI on the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Upgrade BWI to become a Center of Excellence 2) Upgrade curricula and equipment for BWI's agriculture department. 3) Create an environment conducive to learning and to the pursuit of excellence in agriculture. 				
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Project Management and Administration

Administration and Logistics

Achievements

During the month of July, FED continued to provide effective administration and logistical support to program and administrative staff, while assuring contract compliance. Highlight of this month, from July 1- 31, 2012 includes hiring of nine drivers.

Staff Recruitment, LTТА:

- Joseph Kerkula..... Driver
- Tony Dvalue Driver
- Sam Thompson Driver
- Henry Foko Driver
- Emmanuel Yarpkawolo Driver
- Chris Alaarín Driver
- Ciphers Nah Driver
- Garrison Nebo Driver
- Jerry Fahnbullah Driver

The below Short Term Technical Assistants (STТА) that completed their assignment and contributed to the accomplishments activities for the month of July:

- Dr. Rebecca Sewall, Gender Specialist completed a nine days consultancy on Gender integration training for county staff and stakeholders.
- Dr. Edward Rhodes, Soil and Fertility Specialist completed 21 days consultancy on developing a revised soil management Curriculum at BWI, for adoption and use in the other vocational agriculture colleges.
- Duke Burruss, Value Chain Specialist Cassava completed 13 days consultancy to help strengthen the cassava sector's productivity and profitability.
- Manuela Rayner, GIS Specialist completed 21 days consultancy on helping to set up FED GIS system and trained the GIS Officer on the basic skills and methods in GIS.
- Jessica Benton-Coolley, Communications Specialist worked the Communications Manager for 14 days to set up the communications system by creating templates for tools (Newsletter, Success Stories, One Pagers and Press Releases).
- Sudharshini Dharmawardane, TAMIS Specialist worked five days to train program staff on the usages of TAMIS system and also work with M&E team to set up data base system in TAMIS.

FED STTA/LTTA July 2012

Name	Position	Partner	Dates	Summary	COR Approval	CO Approval
Technical STTA						
Dennis Eaton (LTTA)	Vocational Training and Non-Formal Education Specialist	LSU	July 1, 2012	Oversee all C3 activities and management of the C3 team	Pending	Pending
Dr. Edward Rhodes (STTA)	Soil and Fertility Specialist	LSU	June 15-July 10, 2012	Develop a revised soil and soil management Curriculum at BWI, for adoption and use in the other vocational agriculture colleges.	Pending	Pending
David Land	Livestock Policy Specialist	DAI	July 5-July 25, 2012 (multiple STTAs)	Development of national livestock policy for the MoA.	Pending	Pending
Duke Burruss	Value Chain Specialist--Cassava	DAI	July 7-24, 2012	Help strengthen the cassava sector's productivity and profitability.	Pending	N/A
Matt Curtis (STTA)	Soil Fertility and Agronomic Specialist	DAI	June 15-June 28, 2012	Work with the public and private sectors to develop capacity for soil testing.	Approved	Approved
Agatha Johnson (STTA)	SME Training Specialist	DAI	May-December 2012	Implement a series of business services trainings for the small business association participants working in	Approved	Approved

				all of the FED value chains.		
Fofana Bidjokazo (STTA)	ISFM and UDP Specialist	IFDC	May – September 2012	Provide technical support for the implementation of ISFM and UDP best practices.	Approved	Approved
Constant Dangbegnon (STTA)	NRM Extension AdvisorSTTA	IFDC	May-September 2012	Work on integrating extension training activities into all of FED's input supply system improvement interventions.	Approved	Approved
Name	Position	Partner	Dates	Summary	COR Approval	CO Approval
Brian Kiger (STTA)	Voucher Specialist	IFDC	May-August 2012	Focus on agro-dealers capacity building; ISFM activities and will pilot UDP phase. A final trip will monitor the success of the voucher program and pilot activities.	Approved	N/A
Issac Asare (STTA)	Capacity Building Specialist	IFDC	May-September 2012	Provide capacity building for agro-inputs dealers.	Approved	Approved
Jacelyn Carleson (MTTA)	ICT Specialist	DAI	June 11-November 30, 2012	Develop and support FED's ICT initiatives.	Approved	N/A
Rebecca Sewall (STTA)	Gender Specialist	CEDPA	July 7-July 15, 2012	Gender integration training for county staff and stakeholders	Approved	N/A
Program Management						
Manuela Rayner	GIS Specialist Field STTA	DAI	July 8-27, 2012	Field training for FED GIS Specialist	Pending	No
Jessica Benton-Cooley	Communications Specialist	DAI	July 7-	Strategic	Not yet	Yes

			August 30, 2012	communications and training support.	submitted	
Sudharshini Dharmawardane	TAMIS Specialist	DAI	June 25-July 5, 2012	TAMIS final configuration and programming.	Approved	No

APPENDIX A: Performance Indicator Table for July 2012

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	LOP Target	Added this period	Actual to Date	Target (FY 12)	Actual (FY 12)	By County					
						Bong	Grand Bassa	Margibi	Montserrado	Nimba	Lofa
1A. Gross margin per unit of land or animal of selected product	50%	0	0	TBD	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1B. Percentage increase in crop yields	20%	0	0	5%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1C. Number of enterprises participating in USG assisted value chains	580	0	0	49	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1D. Number of microenterprises linked to larger-scale firms as a result of USG assistance	150	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1E. Number of rural households benefitting directly from USG interventions	54,000	0	0	2,2000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1.1.1. Number of farmers and others who have applied new technologies or management practices as a result of USG assistance	54,000	0	0	2,2000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1.1.2. Number of hectares under improved technologies or management practices as a result of USG assistance	20,000	0	0	500	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1.2.1. Number of private enterprises, producers organizations, women's groups, trade and business associations and community-based organizations (CBOs) receiving USG assistance	54,000	61	61	2,200	61	0	0	0	61	0	0
1.2.2. Number of private enterprises, producer organizations, women's groups, trade and business associations and community-based (CBOs) that applied new technologies or management practices as a result of USG assistance	880	0	0	115	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	LOP Target	Added this period	Actual to Date	Target (FY 12)	Actual (FY 12)	By County					
						Bong	Grand Bassa	Margibi	Montserrado	Nimba	Lofa
1.3.1. Number of households using improved food storage methods	10,000	0	0	50	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1.3.2. Number of household using improved food processing technologies	10,000	0	0	50	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1.3.3. Number of individuals trained on nutrition messages within agricultural programs	2,500	0	0	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2A. Value of incremental sales (collected at farm level) attributed to FtF		0	0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2B. Value of new private sector involvement in the ag sector or food chain leveraged by FtF implementation	\$1 mil	0	0	\$10,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2C. Number of jobs attributed to FtF implementation	200	0	0	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2D. Number of public-private partnerships formed as a result of FtF assistance	15	2	71	71	0	13	13	8	5	16	16
2.1.1. Number of new laws and policies implemented to support private enterprise growth	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2.1.2. Number of amendments to laws/regulations/policies implemented	5	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2.1.3. Number of policy/regulation dialogue platforms created and effectively utilized	10	0	1	TBD	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
2.2.1. Number of targeted enterprises accessing business development services through USG assistance	300	0	0	120	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	LOP Target	Added this period	Actual to Date	Target (FY 12)	Actual (FY 12)	By County					
						Bong	Grand Bassa	Margibi	Montserrado	Nimba	Lofa
2.2.2. Value of agricultural and rural loans	TBD	0	0	TBD	TBD	0	0	0	0	0	0
3A. Number of local organizations certified/qualified to receive direct USAID funding	25	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
3B. Number of students benefitting from improved academic facilities and programs	12,000	0	0	250	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
3.1.1. Number of individuals who have received USG supported short-term agricultural sector productivity or food security training	6,000	734	1819	300	1819	266	188	111	200	541	513
3.1.2. Number of individuals, organizations and institutions that have received training of a technical nature	15,000	24	74	700	74	0	0	8	10	56	0
3.2.1. Number of individuals that have received training on management or leadership	1,000	62	173	200	173	20	32	0	48	73	0