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# FOOD AND ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM FOR LIBERIA (FED)

**MONTHLY REPORT: MAY 2012**



**MAY 2012**

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## **MONTHLY REPORT: MAY 1-31, 2012**

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**COVER PHOTO:** Women involved with clearing and de-stumping of a farming site for rainy season vegetable production in Todee District, Montserrado County.

### **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

|         |                                                                                        |
|---------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| BEI     | Boimah Engineering Inc.                                                                |
| BWI     | Booker T. Washington Institute                                                         |
| CARI    | Central Agricultural Research Institute                                                |
| CCN     | Cooperating Country National                                                           |
| CDA     | Capacity Development Advisor                                                           |
| COP     | Chief of Party                                                                         |
| FAO     | Food and Agriculture Organization                                                      |
| FB      | Farm Builders                                                                          |
| GPS     | Global Positioning System                                                              |
| ICT     | Information and Communication Technology                                               |
| IFC     | International Finance Corporation                                                      |
| IITA    | International Institute for Tropical Agriculture                                       |
| IRRI    | International Rice Research Institute                                                  |
| ISFM    | Integrated Soil Fertility Management                                                   |
| LTTA    | Long Term Technical Assistant                                                          |
| MDF     | Market Development Fund                                                                |
| MOA     | Ministry of Agriculture                                                                |
| MOU     | Memorandum of Understanding                                                            |
| NGO     | Non-Governmental Organization                                                          |
| ODAFARA | Organization for the Development of Agriculture and Farmers' Related Association, Inc. |
| PLAY    | Participating in the Livelihood of African Youth                                       |
| PUA     | Peri Urban Agriculture                                                                 |
| RFP     | Request for Proposal                                                                   |
| SMEs    | Small Medium Enterprises                                                               |
| STTA    | Short Term Technical Assistant                                                         |
| UL      | University of Liberia                                                                  |
| USAID   | United States Agency for International Development                                     |
| VES     | Vocational Education Specialist                                                        |
| WFP     | World Food Program                                                                     |

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## SUMMARY

May was a busy month for the FED team. Progress was made with training, implementation of activities in the project components, and continuing FED's operational set-up in the counties and Monrovia.

A variety of trainings occurred throughout the month. Two hundred and seventy peri-urban Farmers (146 male and 124 female) were trained in establishing nurseries and sowing seed in nurseries. A three days Business Management Skills training workshop for SMEs and Producer groups was held in Monrovia from May 24 – 26, 2012. A total of 26 participants (9 female and 17 male) was trained. Moreover, 342 farmers (165 males and 177) from the Doumpa Community Agriculture Project also received training in lowland rice and upland vegetable farming.

AFED consultant, Matthew Curtis, conducted a soil study and analysis in the counties FED works in and developed management plans that would maintain soil organic matter content. These include the use of alley cropping, cover crops, and biochar. Swamp rice sites were evaluated for clay type and depth. An assessment was completed by STTA, Dr. Steven Lawry, DAI Manager for Land Tenure and Property Rights, on how Liberia's land tenure arrangements might affect adoption by FED partner farmers of new agricultural practices and technologies. Of particular interest was whether or not farmers had sufficient security of tenure to merit investments that generate benefits over the longer-term.

The Market Development Fund and training activities continue to develop and expand. New partners continue to be identified across the value chains and many potential activities are currently being discussed across Components.

The FED IT Department successfully setup two field office in Nimba County. Also, at the Monrovia office, the grounding of a generator and server equipment was successfully completed.

USAID Liberia's Food and Enterprise Development (FED) Program is being implemented to achieve the following component objectives:

- Component-1: Increase agricultural productivity and profitability, and improve human nutrition;
- Component-2: Stimulate private enterprise growth and investment; and
- Component-3: Build local technical and managerial human resources to sustain and expand the accomplishments achieved under objectives one and two.

# COMPONENT ONE: INCREASED AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY

## Task 1.3 Input Supply System Interventions

During the month, the Component One team identified partners, seed suppliers/farmers' cooperatives, and visited associations in Bong and Lofa County.

The objectives of the visits were:

- i. To meet with CARI in Bong and agree on action points for training seed producers and upgrading farmers' training in lowland and upland rice production techniques;
- ii. To visit Mohamed Kamara seed production farm in Lofa/Quardi-Gbondi District/Jarmulor Town and determine potential areas of collaboration with the FED Program to train other farmers in the locality;
- iii. To visit ARJAY FARM and determine potential areas of collaboration with the FED Program in training out-growers in the locality; and
- iv. To determine where to focus support for upgrading input supply for lowland, upland rice and cassava production/processing activities in 2012.

Critical questions that the Component One team is focusing on are:

1. How to keep farmers' interest active in lowland production activities?
2. What benefits can farmers achieve through lowland production activities in financial terms and what support is needed for those benefits to be achieved?
3. What are the social, technical, and economic challenges between production activities in the lowlands and in the uplands, and how are our strategies helping to address those challenges?

### ***Activity 1.3a: Improving Access to Quality Agro-inputs***

#### **Meeting at CARI**

During the meeting, FED determined that there is a need to create awareness and interest among farmers in Liberia. From the breeder seed (from Africa Rice Center), CARI produces foundation seed that is distributed to out growers for multiplication and then distributed to farmers. There were 30 Mt of seed rice in the CARI warehouse. Unfortunately, only NGOs come to CARI for seed and regular farmers do not come to CARI to buy high quality and certified seeds. Mr. Eric Topkah, Head of the Rice Research Program at CARI attended the meeting.



**Photo I & II: CARI's Rice Seed**



**Photo III: Rice Cleaning Machine**

The varieties available at CARI include: I) Swakoko-8 (high resistance to iron toxicity); ii) Nerica L-19 (high yielding with 3 Mt/ha) and; FKR-19 (2.8-3 Mt/ha). Seed certification at the level of out growers is based on criteria such as: i) cleanliness, ii) no debris, iii) disease free, iv) moisture content (14% is the acceptable level), and v) germination rate (90-100%).

There are three out growers currently working with CARI: i) Mr. Samuel Z. Mulbah, in Bong County is producing seed rice on 3.6 hectares of lowlands, ii) Mr. Harry S. D. Lami, in Nimba County is producing seed rice on 10 hectares of land and iii) Mr. Mohammed Kamara, in Lofa County is producing seed rice on 30 hectares of land.

### **Action Point 1:**

CARI is ready to train seed rice growers and small holder farmers in: lowland improvement and management, seed production, handling and storage, and improved techniques for upland and lowland rice production.

#### **Visit to Mohammed Kamara seed production farm, Jarmulor Town, Quardi-Gbondi District, Lofa County**

Production is about 40 Mt of seed rice on 30 hectares of land, corresponding to a yield of 1.33 Mt/ha. Mr. Mohammed Kamara spends US \$4,500 per month for daily labor and one quarter of the harvested rice is exchanged for labor at harvest time.



**Photo IV: Meeting with Kamara Farm's Staffs**

Land preparation takes about 3 months before planting. Fallow land is totally invaded by a parasitic weed (*Eupatorium odoratum*) and no control measures are taken to reduce propagation in the area. Mr. Kamara is not available to guide visits on his farm. The rehabilitation of the lowland downhill is below standard. There is no warehouse for keeping the produce after harvesting, and farm employees are left by themselves.

### **Action points 2:**

FED will collaborate with CARI and agro-input dealers to lead demonstration on adapted measures for mitigating weed propagation at Kamara farm. ISFM will be promoted to control soil erosion (the farm is on hillside land) and improve lowland rehabilitation capacity.

### **Visit to ARJAY Farm**

Seed rice production activities at ARJAY Farm are ongoing in the lowland area and the lowland is well laid out. Cassava and maize are already planted for seeds and cassava cuttings. Rice planting is done directly by broadcasting; this saves time and the expected yield is 3 Mt/ha. There are 87 workers on the farm and 39 out growers are involved. Women are involved in the project activities and associations are trained in record keeping and improved farming techniques with respect to seed rice production.

Potential areas of collaboration with FED include: i) the procurement of equipment to train and scale-up the number of out growers (threshers, rice cleaning machines, bagging machines, and power tillers).



**Photo V: Rice Nursery**



**Photo VI: Land Preparation Activity**

### **Action points 3:**

A MOU is being developed for collaboration between FED and ARJAY Farm. The focus of the MOU is on capacity building and scaling-up the number of out growers to address seed rice market demand. The activities in the farms of the out growers will be assessed to organize demonstrations on ISFM in the lowland and the upland areas for seed rice production and crop rotation.

### ***Activity 1.3b: Testing and Introduction of New Technologies***

#### **Lowland rice and cassava production/processing activities**

***An overview of issues:*** The FED Team visited many lowland rice farm activities in Grand Bassa, Lofa and Nimba. The Table below summarizes observations on rice and cassava production and processing in the sites visited in April-May 2012.

| County      | Location                                                                                      | Size of the rehabilitated swamp/Type of activity                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Issues of concern                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|-------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Grand Bassa | Kotar Town/Compound #2<br><br>Kotar Swamp Development Project                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3.5 acres with 11 plots of 20 x 20 dimensions.</li> <li>• The swamp is abandoned.</li> <li>• A warehouse build by UNDP for seed storage, was never handed over to the community since completion in 2010</li> <li>• Concern WorldWide, came and hired members who had experience in swamp rehabilitation. They never came back to the swamp.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project started in 2007 with assistance from FAO for the lay-out, seed and tools with 25 members.</li> <li>• Rice was planted for the last time in 2009, because there was nobody to buy rice as FAO stopped buying. People did not want to produce just for eating.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|             | Tepeneh Town/Compound # 2<br><br>Tepeneh Cassava Processing Unit/Nahyee-Sor women association | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Created in 2001, with 35 women as members.</li> <li>• The cassava processing unit is not functioning.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members were involved in cassava production and processing and there is no savings scheme in the association.</li> <li>• There is no cassava to process because cassava farms are destroyed by the goats. There was a meeting in the community to get rid of the goats.</li> <li>• Cassava processing into gari stopped in December 2011. Production was 7-8/50 Kg bags of gari/month corresponding to 21-24/50 Kg bags of fresh cassava (1.05-1.20 Mt/month).</li> <li>• Operating costs:</li> <li>• 3/50 Kg bags of fresh cassava=1 bag of gari + 30 cups</li> <li>• Members were charged 25 cups of gari for fuel, and non members were charged 50 cups or 125 L\$ in</li> </ul> |

|              |                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|--------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|              |                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | cash.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|              | Kpelleh Town, Compound #2, Kwep-pa-geh association of women             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3.5 acres are cleared and cultivated. The lay-out of the swamp was done in 2000 with support from FAO. 17 women and 1 man are members of the association.</li> </ul>                                                                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The women can use the swamp for unlimited time. The land is given by the community to the association. A written document will be requested in case assistance from the project is provided.</li> <li>The women are growing rice for selling, and for household consumption.</li> <li>The labor is provided by the members themselves and their husbands.</li> <li>50 Kg of rice seed were purchased at the cost of 3000 L\$.</li> <li>The association is not getting support from anyone. Because of lack of extension supervision, rice is not adequately cultivated in the swamp.</li> <li>The drainage system is not rehabilitated.</li> <li>The women are intending to bring in someone to rehabilitate the swamp.</li> </ul> |
| Nimba County | Dokodan farmers' cooperative, Gbedin Camp #3, Ganta, Nimba County       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are 2 sites, 80 hectares of land each.</li> <li>There are 250 members (96 women and 154 men).</li> <li>The cooperative has many assets and equipment : land; 2 rice mills; a warehouse; a new 30 Mt capacity truck; farm machinery, etc.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Still expects aid from FAO and/or WFP</li> <li>The dam headers and the canals are poorly maintained;</li> <li>Capacity for warehouse management is very limited;</li> <li>Capacity for overall maintenance of the swamp is poor and production is reduced to one crop every year, instead of 2-3 under normal irrigation conditions.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|              | Kpaglay farmers' group/Kpaglay Town/Bahn District/Daylah farmers' group | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The size of the swamp is 2.6 hectares;</li> <li>There are 25 members (8 women and 17 men);</li> <li>The group run a savings scheme from the money after rice sale;</li> </ul>                                                                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The harvest in February 2012 was 18/50 Kg bags because of pests, diseases, birds, no fertilizer, high damage by stem borers, no measure to reduce iron toxicity and damage by ground hogs (0.35 Mt/ha);</li> <li>The group uses Zor, a local variety that withstands iron toxicity, but has a long cycle (5 months);</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |

|  |  |                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|--|--|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Those needing credit are given money with 25% interest rate for group members and 30% interest rate for non-group members.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The group pays rent to the swamp owner (3/50 Kg bags);</li> <li>They sold 10/15 bags remaining after paying 3 bags to the swamp owner;</li> <li>No NGO buys their rice to give to other farmers as seed;</li> <li>They do not receive extension support;</li> <li>Fertilizer was not used last season, but they know NPK and urea are used for lowland rice;</li> <li>They do not know what should be used against pests</li> </ul> |
|--|--|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

|  |                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|--|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | Zayglay Gbondeah<br>Farmers' association/Bahn<br>District/Nimba County | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Created in 2010</li> <li>There are 25 members (10 women and 15 men)</li> <li>The size of the cassava farm is 3 acres.</li> <li>The land owner is the group chairperson.</li> <li>50% of the harvest is sold and 50% consumed by the members.</li> <li>Each member has his own farm in addition (about 3 acres).</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transport is by head load to the local market in Bahn (30 m from the village)</li> <li>Cassava cuttings come from members farms.</li> <li>Paid labor is used once in a while (150 L\$/person/day).</li> <li>The group runs a savings scheme: registration=20 L\$/member; contribution=50 L\$/month and interest rate for loans=20%</li> </ul> |
|--|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|



**Photo VII: Iron Toxicity, Poor Crop Performance**



**Photo VIII: Poor maintenance of the header dams**

### **Major findings:**

- i. Lowland rice production is capital intensive. The capacity for lowland rehabilitation and maintenance is still limited among farmers in the communities. Whenever support from FAO, WFP and NGOs stops, lowland rice production activities may also stop;
- ii. In many cases, the returns from lowland activities are very limited for the individual members of the associations involved;
- iii. Food production is mostly determined by upland agricultural activities. Limited access to lowlands for most members of the communities (women essentially), difficulties associated with lowland production activities have not changed dependence on uplands and, abandonment of the lowlands until an NGO eventually provides support;
- iv. Rice seed production for both upland and lowland rice production is well organized with very few seed producers and should be scaled up as a basis for sustainable rice production. Training for production, storage, handling, and supervision of out-growers can easily be organized with CARI and ARJAY Farm;
- v. AIIC, the major seed rice producer in Lofa/Quardi-Gbondi District still has number operational weaknesses; only FAO has been its major seed rice buyer and the seed production has not gone beyond that arrangement. Farm management and soil fertility management are still weak and need immediate attention in terms of capacity building. The farm operator needs to be trained in business plan development based on the local market seed rice demand for sustainability; and
- vi. Apart from the unavailability of high yielding and adapted varieties, cassava production can be increased using appropriate techniques in the short-term. Processing should receive special attention to reduce the burden of product transportation to the market for the women who are the main actors in this value chain.

**Proposed action points:**

- i. Capacity building for seed rice out-growers with currently identified suppliers in 2012 and scaling-up with new ones in 2013;
- ii. Capacity building for currently identified cassava processors in 2012 and scaling-up in 2013; and
- iii. Capacity building for upland rice and lowland rice ISFM activities (on-site demonstrations, training of extension staff and ISFM demonstrations).

**Task 1.5 Increased Production and Profitability of Quality Rice**

The month of May has been largely devoted to preparing for farmer training in improved lowland and upland rice production. This has been divided into five tasks:

- Local Rice Officer, expatriate Rice Specialist, and Extension Agent recruitment
- Identification of and the signing of MOUs with lowland and upland rice producer groups
- Development and start-up of the improved rice production training program
- Preliminary identification of appropriate production and processing equipment
- Procurement of inputs, tools, and equipment required for the farmer training

**Staff Recruitment**

The FED Rice Officer, Gonyeyee Bartuah, was hired and started working in mid-May. He has been organizing the improved rice production training. In addition to designing the training program, he has taken the lead on input, tool, and equipment procurement. He also participated in the recruitment of the extension agents and facilitated the rice production training for the FED and MOA extension agents

The expatriate STTA Rice Specialist has been identified and has agreed to the proposed terms of employment. His anticipated start date is June 15. He brings more than 20 years of experience in rice breeding and the dissemination of improved rice production practices and technologies. His work in the Senegal River Valley has contributed to achieving an average of approximately 5 MT/hectare, one of the highest rice yields in Africa.

Eight Extension Agents – two per county were hired in May. They possess strong qualifications in rice production as well as considerable experience in cassava and vegetable production. Several of the Extension Agents also have experience with goat husbandry. Their initial task will be to train farmers in improved lowland and upland rice production. At the end of the rainy season, they will refocus their efforts on vegetable production, transferring the learning obtained by the Peri Urban Agriculture (PUA) program during the past dry season and the current rainy season to Bong, Grand Bassa, Lofa, and Nimba counties. Following the launching of the rice program, they will work with farmers to introduce improved cassava production and processing practices and technologies.

## **Rice Producer Group Identification**

Twenty-four lowland rice producer groups and eight upland rice producer groups have been identified, six of the former and two of the latter in each of the priority counties. The membership of these groups totals approximately 750 producers. Each of the lowland groups possesses a lowland site that is in need of rehabilitation and has expressed interest in rehabilitating the site and expanding production over time. A MOU will be signed by both parties.

## **Improved Rice Production Training**

Training of project and MOA Extension Agents and farmers in improved rice production practices was planned for May. Training of the Extension Agents was conducted on May 30-31 and will be held from June 1-2, 2012. The training program consists of the following components: field preparation; proper layout for water management; seed and other input selection; compost production; planting and transplanting; water management; fertilizer and other input application; pest and disease management; weeding; harvesting; and, post-harvest storage and processing.

The demonstration plots will also be used to convey messages regarding improved practices and technologies to other farmers, private sector actors, and MOA field staff through farmer field schools.

Participating groups will agree to conserve sufficient quantities of the varieties produced on the demonstration site (i.e., Nerica and FKR varieties) for the establishment of a seed bank for distribution to group members the next planting season. The seed produced by those individual group members will be used for their own future planting and for sale to other farmers in the market area surrounding the demonstration site. These farmers will also be informed of the source of the original planting seed and in the future will also have the option of accessing improved seed from those agro-dealers and seed companies

## **Preliminary Identification of Rice Production and Processing Equipment**

Power tillers and rice hullers to address current labor constraints have been preliminarily identified and will be demonstrated to farmers. In addition to power tillers manufactured by well-established makers such as Kubota and Yanmar, the IRRI hydrotiller – a motorized tiller that, in addition to performing under normal situations, is well adapted to deep water and mud conditions and exhibits higher than average fuel efficiency – is being considered. The hydrotiller is made in the Philippines, where two manufacturers have been identified. They will be contacted to determine if they can ship the technology overseas.

In addition to the Engelberg huller disseminated widely throughout Asia and a few African countries such as Senegal, an impact rice huller will be demonstrated. The impact rice huller is affordable, lightweight, fuel-efficient machine that hulls, but does not polish the grains. It will therefore be important to determine through taste testing whether this technology is capable of delivering a product acceptable to Liberian tastes.

## **Input, Tool and Equipment Procurement for Farmer Training**

Seed, fertilizer, hand tools, and power tillers have been procured locally for the farmer training to start in early June. Groups will return the rice seed supplied by FED, which will in turn use it next planting season to supply other groups. The hand tools are strictly for use by farmers at the demonstration site and are primarily for the heavier physical labor of rehabilitating the lowland swamps. The power tillers will be used for demonstrating the labor savings and yield-enhancing capacity of the technology.

## **Task 1.6 Increased Production and Profitability of Quality Cassava**

Preparation for the launching of the cassava program began at the end of May 2012, with preliminary planning supported by meetings with MOA officials and other specialists. Start-up of implementation is scheduled for late June.

## **Task 1.7 Peri-urban Vegetable Production**

### ***Activity 1.7b: Capacity building***

Vegetable production through demonstration started at the 14 rainy season vegetable sites, watermelon, collard greens, carrots, eggplant, mustard, okra, onions, and hot pepper seeds were provided to the groups and sown out in the nurseries at the various sites. Biochar maker and its importance in vegetable production were demonstrated in Mount Barclay.

Work continues with the demonstration plots now that the main rains have commenced. Pest pressures, in particular foliar diseases, are significant, but it is believed that in some cases, the agrochemicals requested under the PERSUAP application should address the crop protection problems identified to date. Pest and diseases present in Liberia continue to be identified by FED project staff and have necessitated some modifications to cropping plans. For instance, it is evident that some sweet corn (green maize) cultivars are very susceptible to blight so the procurement of known resistant cultivars is important. Since part of the training is the building in of flexibility to agricultural planning this has been a very useful exercise.

Formal training of the FED field staff in an 8 module course in horticultural production was completed. Concurrent participatory training of farmers associations has also continued with seasonal activities including training in land preparation and plant nursery preparation and sowing (Figures 2 & 3). The first two modules are focused on introductory planning and budgeting.

Discussions have begun with input suppliers based on inputs tailored to:

1. Liberian soils and crop requirements for fertilizers based on soil testing continues. In particular the assistance provided by a FED consultant soil scientist has enabled the project to focus on three classes of nutrient availability, i.e. nutrients not limiting and already present, limiting nutrients which farmers can obtain directly in the environment, or cropping system and nutrients that need to be supplied from outside sources. This has allowed some focused discussions with fertilizer input providers.
2. The identified pests and diseases present on the crops targeted by the peri-urban component continue to grow. Nevertheless, a first edition pest and disease identification hand book for internal use by FED staff was produced. The presence in Liberia of diamond back moth (DBM), a potentially severe

pest of brassicas, has now been confirmed. In many cropping systems in Liberia it seems to be well controlled by natural enemies and appears to be present where broad spectrum pesticides are in regular use (*NB, identification was in a non FED project field of collards and in the main produce market in Monrovia*).

3. Seed and plant material availability is a significant constraint. Problems identified such as inappropriate cultivars, poor storage, shortage of seed and vegetative planting material are now in the first stages of being addressed through a series of discussions with current and potential suppliers and producers.

Preliminary planning continues for the development of basic training materials in crop planning and budgeting. More advanced training modules are being planned for selected farmers and input providers in July and August.

Training of extension staff on the remaining modules will be completed within the next three weeks. Seed of cover crops and virus resistant/tolerant chili's are being sourced. A vigorous pest and disease survey of peri-urban crops is underway with the planned first edition of a handbook for all field staff in the MOA and other organizations working in this area within Liberia was finalized on May 16, 2012. The handbook will be updated on a regular basis as a FED led initiative of the Liberian Urban and Peri-Urban Agriculture Working Group.



Photo IX: Nursery construction



Photo X: Sowing seed at nursery

### ***Activity 1.7c: Commercial Linkages***

Fertilizers were provided to the 14 groups (14 bags of NPK and 10 bags of Urea, 50Kgs each). A market survey was carried out to determine market price for vegetables grown and to initiate the linkages between farmers and markets.

The MOA demonstration site MOA in Kakata commenced rainy season vegetable production; okra, maize, and cassava was planted in the field.

A tube well specialist arrived in country on May 24, 2012, to demonstrate the use of tube well for the extraction of water to farms for irrigation.

## **Soil Study and Analysis**

Matthew Curtis, Soil Specialist STTA, worked with the horticulturalist and rice specialist to identify soil fertility and management problems. In particular, the Soil Specialist developed management plans that would maintain soil organic matter content. These include the use of alley cropping, cover crops, and biochar. Swamp rice sites were evaluated for clay type and depth.

The Soil Specialist visited the University of Liberia and Booker Washington Institute (BWI) and evaluated the soil laboratory at the University of Liberia and the soil fertility curriculum at BWI. He identified a private lab that wants to begin testing soils.

The Soil Specialist traveled to field sites in five counties and dug soil pits to evaluate the soil and take samples. A matrix of soil management guidelines was developed to help maintain soil quality under annual cropping. A short text of soil related information was developed out of compiled research. A simple set of instructions for swamp soil criteria was given to Extension Agents so that they can choose sites that will have the greatest soil fertility potential. A meeting with the Vice President of institutional development, at the University of Liberia, Mr. Wiles, was held. He expressed interest in seeing a soil lab that would serve the students, faculty and research needs of agriculture professionals. Dr. Kiazolu is the lab manager and has been ill, but is getting better and has returned to work. A meeting with him is scheduled in order to identify what needs to be done to get the lab functional. An evaluation of the curriculum at BWI resulted in recommendations for texts and materials. They need to have more relevant soil fertility information such as the nutrient supply of composts, fresh manures and the nutrient demands of local crops. We are in the process of signing a MOU with Boimah Engineering Inc. (BEI) to train a soil technician in their soil lab (to start in late June).

The demonstration sites using the recommended soil management techniques have yet to be implemented. The Extension Agents still need to be trained on how to collect soil samples from fields that are to be tested. An action plan at the University of Liberia soil lab needs to be formed. Consultant Matt Curtis plans to train the soil technician at BEI to use the soil test kit in his next STTA on FED



**Photo XI: Swamp soil in Nimba County**



**Photo XII: Upland soil adjacent to the swamp in Nimba County**



A swamp that needs rehabilitation in Lofa. The soil profile photo XIII (left) shows evidence of periodic drying given the iron staining (topsoil). The clay layer below photo XIV (right) was thick and well suited to rice cultivation.

## **Doumpa Community Agriculture Project**

Nearly a decade after its 15 years civil war ended, an economic growth gap persists in Doumpa Town, Wee Clan, Wee-Gbehyi-Mahn District, Nimba County, Liberia. Better farming opportunities is plagued by a lack of access to finance, poor farming skills and management, and insufficient access to agro-inputs for farming. The township of Doumpa has suitable land for agriculture activities which could yield strong economic returns.

In February 2012, FED identified the need to assist the township of Doumpa by conducting an assessment of lowland rice and vegetable production by entering into an agreement with the Organization for the Development of Agriculture and Farmers' Related Association, Inc. (ODAFARA), a local NGO to provide technical agriculture assistance in the development of lowland rice and vegetable production. The area composed of 5.58 acres was surveyed and the community provided 342 local farmers (165 males and 177 females) for both lowland rice and vegetable production.

Currently, the lowland development is about 80% complete; de-stumped trees are cut and debris cleared, peripherals dug, head dyke constructed, tail dyke over 60% constructed, main canal constructed, sloping of main canal underway, peripheral bunds constructed, and lateral and inner bunds are constructed. On the upland vegetable site, 1 hectare of land has been burnt, cleared, digging is 60% complete, a platform nursery has been built, and sowing seeds for the nursery has taken place.

### **The construction of the main drain, bunds and head dyke**

The activities below were done by 75 males and 12 females. As a result of the work done, the following were achieved:

- 155 m long head dyke (1.2m wide, 75cm wide) was constructed
- 0.4 ha debris of area was cleared

### **Peripheral canal and bund construction**

The construction of the main drain was completed involving 90 males and 20 females; the work resulted in the construction of 474m long peripheral and canal bunds.

### **Construction of lateral bunds**

A total of 205 (172 males, 33 females) constructed a 991m long lateral bunds (80cm wide and 50cm high).

### **Construction of inner bunds:**

A total of 61 (51 males, 10 females) constructed a 300m long inner bunds.

### **Vegetable nursery preparation:**

At the fringes of the 2.232 ha of lowland, 1 ha of upland is being utilized for growing vegetables. The following work was done:

- Platform (10m long, 1.2m wide) was built;

- Shaded the platform (10m x 1.2m wide);
- Compost prepared and nursery beds filled;
- Prepared compost and filled 10m long platform; and
- Sowed assorted vegetable seeds (cabbage, eggplant, local eggplant, hot pepper, local pepper, local bitter balls, and eggplant balls).

#### **Land preparation for vegetable:**

A total of 179 (0 male, 179 females) worked on achieving the following:

- 0.2 ha area of upland was cleared, piled and built; and
- Dug 1000m<sup>2</sup> (0.1 ha) for vegetable plots construction.

#### **Challenges:**

With the intensification of the vegetable production activities there is a large attendance of women for the feeding/lunch program. This is becoming problematic as it gets quite expensive. FED will monitor this and determine whether or not we can continue with the lunch feeding program.

We are concerned about the timely delivery of the seeds (rice and vegetable) to the project; it is the late arrival of seeds that causes poor yields. The rice seeds are needed before the end of June and the vegetable seeds are already delayed.

## **COMPONENT TWO: STIMULATE PRIVATE ENTERPRISE**

During the reporting period, the Component 2 team carried out the following activities:

### **Activity 2.3.A.i Profile Commercial Buyers**

Component 2 team visited four Counties (Lofa, Nimba, Bassa and Bong Counties) to identify and assess producer groups along the four value chain. During the time, (24) producer groups were identified and assessed to see where they fit along the four value chain in Lofa, Nimba, Bassa and Bong Counties.

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

As part of this technical support, the Enterprise Development Team in collaboration with Agatha Johnson, STTA/Trainer, organized the second phase of the Business Management Skills training workshop for SMEs and Producer groups in Monrovia which was held from May 24-26, 2012 at the Liberian Chamber of Commerce. During the second phase training, 24 SMEs/Producer groups were trained. The team also organized in collaboration with the trainer the first phase for the Business Management Skills training for farmers/producer groups in Buchana City, Grand Bassa County and Ganta City, Nimba County beginning May 28, 2012 in Grand Bassa County.

### **Task 2.1 Enabling the Policy Environment for Private Sector Growth**

FED consultant Steven Lawry was on a three-week STTA in May to assess how Liberia's land tenure arrangements might affect adoption by FED partner farmers of new agricultural practices and technologies. Of particular interest was whether or not farmers had sufficient land tenure security to merit investments that generate benefits over the longer-term. Additional topics of interest included how farmers gain access to land under customary and statutory systems, how people establish long-term land rights in customary areas, land acquisition strategies employed by women farmers, and the status of efforts to reform the tenure system, lead by the Land Commission. Greatest attention was given to agricultural land tenure arrangements under customary systems, though key issues affecting statutory tenure, including the title deeds that prevail in Monrovia and along the coast, were also examined.

In carrying out the review, Dr. Lawry met with farmers, traditional leaders and local officials in Bong and Lofa counties. He met with a number of Government of Liberia officials in Monrovia, including the chairman and other senior staff of the Land Commission. He met also with USAID mission personnel and USAID-funded projects working on tenure reform, and with Liberian academics and other persons knowledgeable of Liberia's land tenure problems.

Dr. Lawry findings indicate that, with care, land tenure should not be a constraint to pursuit of FED's objectives of increasing agricultural production. Tenure security of land held under customary tenure is sufficiently strong for most farmers to accommodate long-term investments in agricultural. Dr. Lawry's

report provides a checklist that FED staff can use to help assess the agricultural tenure status of farmers the project is considering supporting. The report also recommends FED incorporate tenure measures into surveys of a subsample of the M&E sample. Also, area-based studies and studies on special topics, such as land acquisition strategies used by women vegetable producers, are also recommended. Data collected and lessons learned should be shared in a systematic fashion with the Land Commission and USAID projects supporting the Land Commission, including LPIS and LCRP. The insights FED gains on agricultural tenure issues can help inform the development of future land policy.

## **Task 2.2 Access to Finance**

### *Achievement*

DAI's home office Finance Specialist, Mary Miller, completed an STTA in May which focused on continuing information collection and planning for facilitating access to finance. Meetings were held with additional financial institutions and prospective projects that may eventually qualify for bank finance. A presentation was made to FED staff on access to finance findings. Meetings were also held with IFC concerning its planned Investment Forum on Leasing to be held in June, which will include presentations on agricultural leasing and micro leasing (typically financial leases of less than USD 10,000). FED is making arrangements for the presentation on agricultural leasing to also be presented to all staff at FED, to familiarize them with the capacity of financial leasing to provide credit for equipment acquisition. The priority in the coming months in access to finance will be to support the development of VSLAs among farmer groups in the regions where FED is working, but giving financial support to CARE and other NGOs to do this organization using standardized policies and procedures. FED may also look at using existing VSLAs as entry points to new farmer groups in the value chains. Information on costs of facilitation are being obtained so that FED can do MDFs or an RFP to source services.

FED will also start providing agricultural information to financial institutions, to further educate them on advances in the value chains, and to build a transparent, strong relationship with them. Access to finance is expected to be a long run activity, and no credit is expected to be immediately facilitated.

# COMPONENT THREE: BUILD LOCAL HUMAN CAPACITY

## Task 3.1 Creating Centers of Excellence

During the month of May, the Vocational Educational Specialist performed the following tasks:

Visited BWI and discussed the Action Plan prepared by the Principal of BWI, the head of the BWI Agriculture Department, and FED Vocational Education Specialist. The team agreed that:

- BWI and FED should develop separate budgets and notes based upon the various areas of responsibilities with dates of executions;
- The Plan should include the short-term training needs of the various sessions of the Agriculture Department; and
- BWI should invite the stakeholders to their campus for a stakeholders' meeting to discuss the areas of the budget they would be willing to finance and to solicit their participation with the development of the curriculum.

The Vocational Education Specialist (VES) and Mahawa Kaba Wheeler, FED's Capacity Development Advisor, had a meeting with Dr. John Flomo, President of the Bong County Community College who informed the VES and the FED-CDA that:

- The County decided that they will operate as a technical university and not a community college;
- The infrastructure will be completed by January 2013; and
- The college will commence classes in September 2013.

On May 9, 2012 The FED Chief of Party, MDF Acting Manager, Eugene Nathaniel and Albert N. Bass had a meeting with Farm Builders the following were discussed:

- That Farm Builders is interested in collaborating with BWI and FED and would like to see positive action taking place;
- FED is always going to make BWI a FED priority;
- FED is willing to help with the testing of Farm Builders' soil if there is a need;
- That Farm Builders is interested in FED's ICT when it is put in place;
- Farm Builders basically wants to work with trained community farmers coming out of the Farm School to be established at BWI;
- Farm Builders is willing to conduct crop surveys for FED through their GPS program. They are offering GPS services to the public and also drafting business plans for farmers free of charge;
- Farm Builders wants a Farm School established that will be run by BWI;
- Farm Builders should meet the Registrar of the Cooperative Development Agency to get an insight about the cooperative movement in Liberia;
- FED is willing to finance a farmer advisory service if it is put in place;
- FED is not impressed with a model farm; we would not put money into it.
- Farm Builders is willing to provide monitoring and evaluation services to FED when needed; and

- It was agreed that Farm Builders, BWI, and FED should meet at BWI to discuss a way forward for collaboration.

A follow-up meeting was held in the conference room of Farm Builders. Farm Builders distributed copies of their Social Investment Project Plan to members of the group and the plan was discussed in detail. It was agreed that:

- Farm Builders will manage the Resource Center;
- BWI will run the Farm School;
- Farm Builders will collaborate with FED to develop the curriculum;
- FED & BWI will take care of marketing, soil testing/management and extension services; and
- BWI, Farm Builders and FED should meet on BWI Campus to finalize the collaboration.

The Vocational Education Specialist and the Soil Scientist, Mr. Matthew Curtis visited the office of International Institute for Tropical Agriculture (IITA) to inquire about their position with the soil laboratory at the University of Liberia (UL). The lab at the UL has all the necessary equipment and testing materials/supplies, but it is not functioning because of the lack of water and electricity. Mr. Assumana Henries explained that IITA has trained three laboratory technicians and is willing to train two more technicians at the Master level but the UL is not showing any interest.

On May 17, 2012 The VES attended a meeting in the conference room of FED to discuss the internship program with Dr. Walter Wilese of the University of Liberia. Representing FED was the COP, Jessica Stretz, Mary Miller, Chloe Wardropper and the VES. Issues discussed were as follow:

- That the Dean of the Agriculture College of UL, Dr. Roland Massaquoi, had traveled but Dr. Wilese will inform him about the discussions;
- That the UL is interested in the internship program for the Agriculture and the Management Students;
- That the student population at the UL has more than doubled.
- That the UL is asking the Ministry of Agriculture to be involved with the UL agriculture extension program.; The Vocational Technical College in Sinje has been turned over to the UL; the UL wants FED's support in this direction;
- The UL should think about getting the agriculture students involved with agribusiness.
- That Boima should arrange an appointment for Matthew Curtis with Dr. Wilese. From May 22 to 26 the Vocational Education Specialist was in Nimba and Bong Counties visiting the FED's Nimba Office, the Nimba County Community College, the Doumpa Agriculture Project, the Venn Town Cassava Project and the Bong County Technical University.

The Vocational Education Specialist and the FED County Manager, Mr. Horace V. Yansine, visited the Nimba County Community College. Upon our arrival, they met Dr. Yard Donald Gonway-Gono, President of the College, who informed about the functions of the College. Dr. Gono informed FED that:

- Dr. James Thompson, Vice President for Administration of the College was released from his post in April 2012;
- Mr. J. Anandhavel Raja, head of the Agriculture Department, traveled to India to get married, he will be back soon.
- The College has 104.68 acres of farm land of which about 10 acres is under cultivation through a joint project of the community and the College. There is a community work force of 300 men, women, girls and boys rendering volunteer services three times a week. They have

- planted cassava, peanuts, corn, Lofa peas; Okra, watermelon, sweet potatoes, laying out the swamp to plant rice and preparing the land area to plant yam. Dr. Gono informed us that she was feeding the group, but ran short of funds. However, the community has decided to bring their own food to continue the work and is still working three times a week.
- The Nimba County Community College is constructing its library hoping to open it by September 2013. The College has a computer program in operation; there are eight computers operating. The computers were donated to the College by Cornell University. The President is still soliciting for more computers from donors.

**Outstanding activities include :**

1. The appraisal of the curricula of BWI;
2. Finalization of the action plan;
3. The appraisal of curricula at Buchanan and Nimba Community Colleges; and
4. Conducting a meeting with Farm Builders, BWI and FED to establish the collaboration needed to enhance BWI curricula and training strategies.

## **TRAINING CONDUCTED**

### *Achievements*

During the month of May 2012, FED trained a total of 638 people (328 males and 310 females) in the following subject areas:

- A three days Business Management Skills training workshop for SMEs and Producer groups was held in Monrovia from May 24 – 26, 2012. Total number of participants 26 (9 females and 17 males).
- From May 1-31, 2012, periodic trainings were conducted by the peri-urban and urban agriculture team. Farmers were trained in establishing nurseries and sowing seeds in the nursery. The total number of 270 (146 males and 124 females) was trained.
- 342 farmers (165 males and 177 females) from the Doumpa Community Agriculture Project also received training in lowland rice and upland vegetable farming.

# MONITORING AND EVALUATION

During the month of May, Agricultural Economist Ray Greer completed the analysis and write-up of the baseline survey and presented key findings to FED staff and USAID. Rhona Walusimbi, another M&E STTA, arrived on May 16<sup>th</sup> to conduct a special study during May and June around food consumption patterns and income usage among potential FED intervention groups.

Three new staff members joined the M&E team for field office positions in Bong and Grand Bassa. The newly hired M&E Coordinators received orientation on data collection methods, monitoring tools, and the on-going development of the FED M&E System from the M&E officers in Monrovia.

Development of the FED M&E system continued this month with the customization of FED M&E module on TAMIS. In addition to monitoring tools to capture data for FED indicators, the rain gauge data collection tool was finalized and the M&E Assistant/GIS Officer traveled to Bong, Nimba, Lofa, and Grand Bassa to train County Manager on the collection and recording of the rain gauge data.

Business Management, Vegetable Production and Rice Production trainings were conducted during this month and the M&E Officers and Coordinators traveled to Bong County, Margibi, and Montserrado to collect data.

## Baseline Survey

The M&E team has finalized the FED Baseline database. This involved cross-checking the interview data uploaded into the database from the mobile phones against hardcopy data collection instruments such as the Enumerator Interviewee Logs and Village Visited Trackers. All geographic data was thoroughly examined and revised to ensure each village's district and county level information was accurate and consistent across the database. This will provide the program with a clean sample to draw from in the future for sub-sample, mid-term and endline studies of the program. Baseline Participant IDs were developed in line with the FED program's Participant Training IDs which will assist the team in monitoring individuals sampled in the baseline study who become direct beneficiaries of the FED program.

The M&E Specialist and Special Study's Team Leader finalized the "FED Baseline Lessons Learned" document which will be incorporated into the final FED Baseline Report. Based on their experience implementing the FED Baseline survey, the M&E team detailed challenges faced in the field as well as recommendations for future research. The recommendations are divided into three main components in the data collection process: (1) Logistics and Planning, (2) Sampling Strategy, and (3) Monitoring and Reporting. In addition, the document provides an appendix that includes examples of data collection tools, reporting templates, and checklists that may assist others in setting up and executing data collection in the future.

**Outcome:**

FED Baseline Lessons Learned finalized.

**Outstanding activities:**

A companion document is being finalized by the Mobile Phone Specialist on the team's experience using mobile phones for the FED Baseline survey entitled "Lessons Learned on Using Mobile Phones for Data Collection."

**Participant ID Trainings**

The M&E team is receiving training on data cleaning, maintaining databases and creating Participant IDs with the Special Studies Team Leader. Instructions and exercises (both hardcopy and excel worksheets) have been compiled into a "Participant ID Toolkit." Exercises include developing Participant IDs on hardcopy tools, using excel formulas to generate Participant IDs in worksheets, and identifying and reporting on errors within completed Participant ID worksheets.

**Outcome:**

5 Participant ID exercises developed, administered, and scored.

**Outstanding activities:**

Administer exercises to new M&E staff and continue administering similar exercises to develop and test M&E staff's data entry and cleaning skills.

## MARKET DEVELOPMENT FUND

The Market Development Fund and training activities continue to develop and expand. New partners continue to be developed and formulated across the value chains and many potential activities are currently being discussed across Components. Active activities and trainings include the following:

### Component 1:

**MDF Activity: Rice Production and Processing Demonstration, County: Bong, Grand Bassa, Lofa, and Nimba.** Activities are underway for the training by module (site selection, rice variety selection, nursery establishment, land preparation, fertilizer application (including cover crop production), seedling production, transplanting, irrigation, weeding, harvesting, post-harvest practices and processing) starting in mid-May and continued until September, with the latter months devoted to monitoring and mentoring.

**MDF Activity: Water Well drilling.** Oumarou Abdou will assess local conditions for the installation of tube wells, including a technique that increases the recharge rates of existing shallow wells, and train the FED project technical trainer and workers from two local enterprises in the manual installation of tube wells.

**Training Activity: MoA participation in international conference.** FED will support logistical costs for Mark Yarnlay, Program Officer, to attend the Scientific Conference of the Global Cassava Partnership, to be held in Kampala, Uganda from June 18-22, 2012.

**Training Activity: Training Private Sector on Soil Testing Processes and Procedures.** FED has met with potential partners to increase the capacity of the private sector to provide quality soil testing services to local farmers.

### Component 2:

**Training Activity: SME training.** Training for SMEs will be held in Monrovia from May 24-26, 2012, Buchanan from May 28-June 1, 2012 and Nimba County from June 4-8 2012.

### Component 3:

FED and BWI continue to make steps to formalizing tasks and timelines for the FED/BWI partnership

# TECHNICAL FIELD COORDINATION

## Technical Field Program

### Nimba

#### Doumpa Rice and Vegetable

The lowland rehabilitation is about 80% complete on the 2.232 ha.; de-stumped trees are cut and debris cleared, peripherals dug, head dyke constructed, tail dyke over 60% constructed, main canal constructed, sloping of main canal began, peripheral bunds constructed, lateral and inner bunds constructed, etc. On the upland vegetable site, one (1) hectare of land burnt, cleared and digging up to 60%, platform nursery built, sowing of seeds on nursery has been completed.

#### Vegetable nursery preparation:

At the fringes of the 2.232 ha of lowland, one (1) ha of upland is being utilized for growing vegetables. The nursery has been a training ground for the farmers who continue to ask for training.

#### Outstanding activities

- Complete all water control structure in the field
- Lowland (plot) land preparation
- See rice nursery preparation and seed sowing
- Digging of plots
- Land preparation for vegetables

### Bong

The Bong County Field office over the period was involved in series of activities ranging from farming groups identification, holding meetings farmers, verification exercise to screen the groups already identified and participation in the regular county coordination meeting.

#### Program Activities

- The County team over the period reinforced their efforts by starting building relationship with groups already identified through regular engagement during site visits to their fields.
- Five groups (Tohlo women in Palala; Zensue farmers' Association; Arise and Shine in Maimu/Totota; Balela rural women structure; Pointed women rice production in Gbarnga ) have been identified to participate in the lowland rice demonstration training in 5 districts (Panta, Kpaii, Salala, Jorquelleh and Yealequelle) in Bong County.
- Similarly 6 groups (Palala rural women structure; Welekama women group; Kporma women group; Yeapukeima women group; Janyea Kponma women group and Willing women in Totota have also been identified to commence the cassava demonstration with them. These groups are already into production; but in principle agreed to provide a land space to carry out the demonstration;

- During the site visits to verify most of the group's activities, it was revealed that all of them are still cultivating their cassava traditionally rather than the improved way (mound/ridges)
- There were specific discussions with other 2 rice producer groups (Kwapageh in Gaimu, Panta districts and Gbansue Development Association) which we think should be considered for small scale production activities by providing some level of technical support to them. These are groups already in the operation of their normal production activities in a large scale which has the potential making greater impact on the communities there.

#### Outstanding activities

- Commence signing of MOUs with the identified groups for the lowland rice demonstration activities, now that the MOUs have been finalized
- Finalize plan with Rice Officer to commence the training for Extension Officers in Bong County
- Commence lowland rice demonstration training with the selected groups will sign the MOU
- Commence purchasing of Cassava cuttings for the cassava demonstration and provision of training

### Grand Bassa

The Grand Bassa County team demonstrated mounds and ridges to interested individual cassava farmers.

The team during the period received on power tiller to be used for rice demonstration in the FED rice intervention districts.

#### Outstanding activities

- The signing of MOU between farmer groups and FED to start operation
- Provision of initial rice seeds and some basic tools for demonstration purposes

### Lofa

The Lofa County team during the period under review in collaboration with the District Agriculture Officers conducted an assessment farming groups in the county. Below is the data of the assessment:

#### Voinjama District

| No. | Farming Group         | Total Membership | Location    | Land under cultivation | Farming Activities  | Crop    | Contact person |
|-----|-----------------------|------------------|-------------|------------------------|---------------------|---------|----------------|
| 1   | Selegal Farming Group | 43               | Selega Town | 9 hectares             | Low Land Production | N-L- 19 | Ernest Borzie  |
| 2   | Kuluka                | 43               | Voinjama    | 1 hectares             | Low Land            | N-L- 19 | Layee          |

|    |                               |     |                |             |                     |                   |                 |
|----|-------------------------------|-----|----------------|-------------|---------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
|    | Farmers Association           |     |                |             | Production          |                   | Kamara          |
| 3  | Voinjama Rural women Farmers  | 50  | Voinjama       | 1 hectares  | Upland Production   | Mix Vegetables    | Yongor Sherma   |
| 4  | Wolamai Farmers Association   | N/A | LPMC           | 1 hectares  | Low Land Production | N-L- 19           | Sekuo Selma     |
| 5  | Kormai Farmers Association    | 12  | Kormai Town    | 1 hectares  | Low Land Production | N-L- 19           | Kolliba Jaygbeh |
| 6  | Betijama Farmers Association  | 50  | Betijama Town  | 11 hectares | Low Land Production | N-L- 19 & FKR- 19 | Koluboi Zuku    |
| 7  | Vezala Farmers Association    | 23  | Vazala         | 1 hectares  | Low Land Production | N-19              | Vegola Sorsor   |
| 8  | Souwormai Farmers Association | 20  | Souwormai Town | 1 hectares  | Low Land Production | N-19              | Sakura Kennedy  |
| 9  | Kolliemai Farmers Association | 50  | Kolliemai Town | 1 hectares  | Low Land Production | N-19              | Anthony Kormah  |
| 10 | PDOV - Local NGO              | 45  | Voinjama       | 3 hectares  | Upland Production   | Roots & Tubers    | Ahmed Lahun     |

### **Zorzor District**

| <b>No.</b> | <b>Name of farming group</b> | <b>Membership</b> | <b>Location</b> | <b>Land size</b> | <b>Farming Activities</b> | <b>Type of crop</b> | <b>Contact person</b> |
|------------|------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| 1          | Flomoku & Friends Farm       | 18                | Zorzor          | 1.3 hectares     | Upland production         | Cassava & Pineapple | Anthony Flomoku       |
| 2          | Help Ourselves Farmers       | 9                 | Zorzor          | 1.2 hectares     | Upland production         | Cassava             | Suah Mulbah           |
| 3          | Talk about yourself Farmers  | 25                | Zorzor          | 0.5 hectare      | Upland production         | Cassava & Corn      | Cecelia Mulbah        |
| 4          | Zelor-yai-seed Farmers       | 27                | Zorzor          |                  | Upland production         | Cassava             | Mama Howard           |

### **Salayea District**

| No. | Name of farming group      | Membership | Location | Land size    | Farming Activities | Type of crop   | Contact person    |
|-----|----------------------------|------------|----------|--------------|--------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| 1   | Salayea Vegetables Farmers | 4          | Salayea  | 4 hectares   | Upland Production  | Mix Vegetables | Wilfred D. Mensah |
| 2   | Togetherhness Farmers      | 17         | Salayea  | 1.5 hectares | Lowland Production | Mix Vegetables | Amadu Barry       |

#### **Kolahun District**

| No. | Name of farming group            | Membership | Location  | Land size   | Farming Activities | Type of crop      | Contact person |
|-----|----------------------------------|------------|-----------|-------------|--------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| 1   | Kissi Ethnic Farmers Association | 30         | Kolahum   | 1.5 hectare | Lowland production | Lac - 23 & N-L 19 | John Kollie    |
| 2   | Kahenjala Farmers Association    | 35         | Kahenjala | 4 hectares  | Lowland production | N-L 19            | Moses Nyamba   |

#### **Foya District**

| No. | Name of farming group    | Membership | Location | Land size  | Farming Activities | Type of crop  | Contact person |
|-----|--------------------------|------------|----------|------------|--------------------|---------------|----------------|
| 1   | Foya Youth Dev. Farmers  | 200        | Foya     | 9 hectares | Lowland & Veg      | N-L-19/Lac-23 | Nyuma Tamba    |
| 2   | Foya Rural Women Farmers | 127        | Foya     | 5 hectares | Lowland & Veg      |               | Mawatta Fayah  |

# PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

## Administration and Logistics

### *Achievements*

During this month, we continued to provide effective administration and logistical support to program and administrative staff, while assuring contract compliance. Highlights for this monthly from May 1-31, 2012 include:

Staff Recruitment, Local LTТА Staff :

- i) Aaron Kokolie- M&E Coordinator- Bong County
- ii) Varney Kollie- M&E Coordinator- Grand Bassa
- iii) Mohammed Selleh- Extension Officer- Nimba
- iv) David Harmon- Extension Officer- Bong County
- v) Marvin Neeplo- Extension Officer- Grand Bassa
- vi) Gonyeyee Bartual- Rice Officer
- vii) Horace Yansine- County Manager- Nimba County
- viii) Catherin Karmo- Training Specialist
- ix) James Yeawolee- Extension Officer- Lofa
- x) Kelvin Richardson- Extension Officer- Lofa
- xi) Edwin Karmoh- Extension Officer- Bong

### **Currently ongoing:**

- Recruitment is currently ongoing for the Market Development Funds staff, Environment Officer, and M&E Officer.

### ***Workshop support***

The HR Office is working with other sections on organizing workshops and meetings.

During the period, 2 workshops were held.

- Agri- inputs workshop- hosted by the Input Supply Team on May 2nd and a Business Management for SME hosted by the Enterprise Development Team from May -24-26.

The deployment of IT equipment and setup was completed in Ganta, Nimba County. Staff can now use the Local Area Network for printing. Also, at the Monrovia office, the grounding of generator and server equipment were successfully completed.

As of May 31, 2012, FED has 43 CCNs and negotiated with WFP for cost sharing of the Bong sub-office operational cost.

**APPENDIX I:      Doumpa Community Agricultural Project  
Lowland Rice and Vegetable Field Development**



**Photo XV: Field Layout into plots**



**Photo XVI: A partial view of the peripherals and the field layout in plots**



**Photo XVII: A view of one of the constructed lateral bunds**



**Photo XVIII: A view of the peripheral bunds leading to the tail dyke**