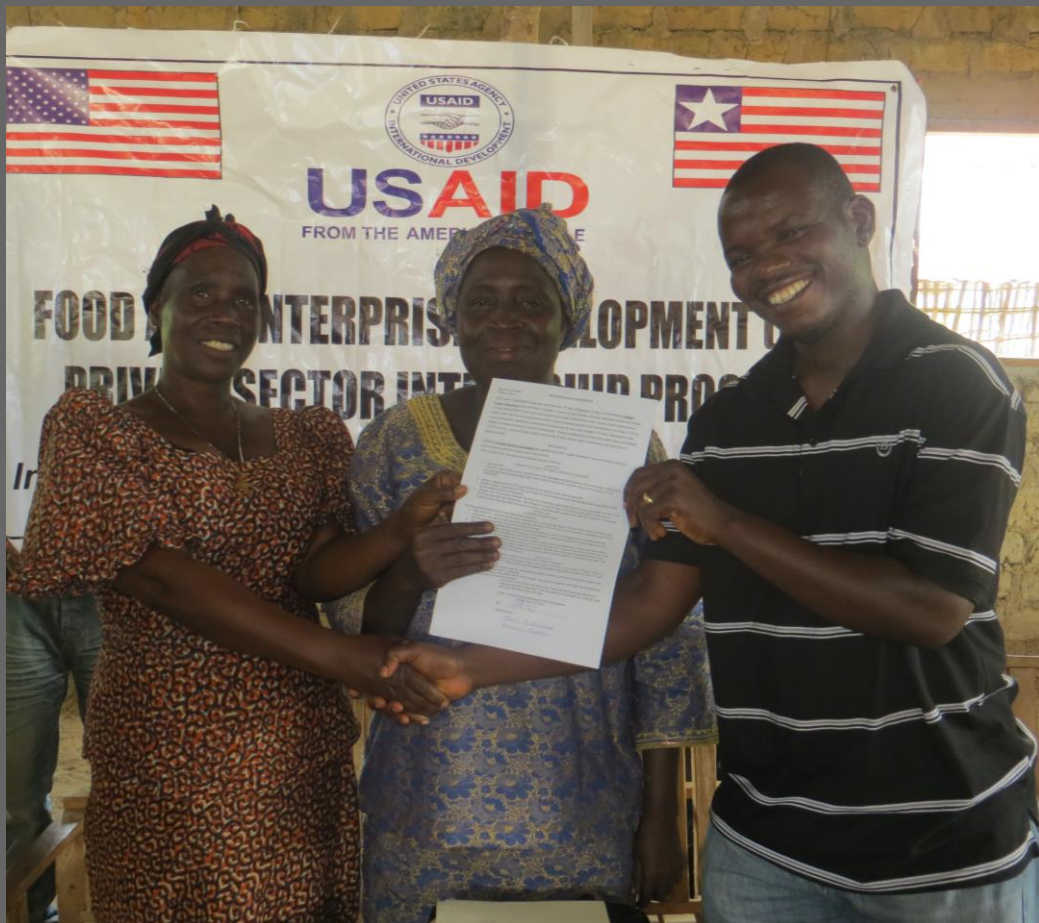




USAID | **LIBERIA**
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

FOOD AND ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT (FED) PROGRAM FOR LIBERIA

MONTHLY REPORT: NOVEMBER 2013



This publication was produced for review by the United States Agency for International Development. It was prepared by DAI.

Contract Number: 669-C-00-11-00047-00
Contractor: DAI
Date of Publication: December 15, 2013
Authors: Marit Woods and Nicholas Parkinson

Photo Caption: *FED Beneficiaries Zoedor Women Association and LEAD National Director Allen Gweh sign a loan agreement for 500,000LD or 6,250USD for group members.*

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

| | |
|--------|--|
| ACE | Africa Cost to Europe |
| AEDE | Agency for Economic Development and Empowerment |
| APDRA | Appaloosa Distance Ride Association |
| AYP | Advancing Youth Project |
| AWEP | African Women Entrepreneurship Program |
| BSTVSE | Bureau of Science, Technical, Vocational and Special Education |
| BWI | Booker Washington Institute |
| CARI | Center of Agriculture Research Institute |
| CYNP | Community Youth Network Program |
| CVC | Cassava Value Chain |
| DAI | Development Alternatives, Inc. |
| DCOP | Deputy Chief of Party |
| ECOWAS | Economic Community of West African States |
| ED | Enterprise Development |
| EMMP | Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan |
| EO | Extension Officer |
| FED | Food and Enterprise Development |
| FTF | Farmer to Farmer |
| FtF | Feed the Future |
| FUN | Farmer Union Network |
| GBCC | Grand Bassa County Community College |
| GCAP | Green Coast Agricultural Program |
| GPS | Global Positioning Systems |
| IFDC | International Fertilizer Developmental Center |
| IITA | International Institute for Tropical Agriculture |
| IP | Implementing Partner |
| IQC | Indefinite Quantity Contract |
| LAUNCH | Liberia Agriculture, Upgrading Nutrition & Child Health |
| LCCC | Lofa County Community College |
| LIFE | Livelihood Improvement for Farming Enterprises |
| LMEP | Liberia Monitoring and Evaluation Program |
| LREC | Liberia Renaissance Education Complex |
| MDF | Market Development Fund |
| MIS | Market Information Systems |
| MoA | Ministry of Agriculture |

| | |
|-------|--|
| MoCI | Ministry of Commerce and Industry |
| MoE | Ministry of Education |
| MoU | Memorandum of Understanding |
| MSME | Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise |
| NAD | National Diploma in Agriculture |
| NCCC | Nimba County Community College |
| NGW | New General Women |
| NV | National Volunteer |
| PIDS | Performance Indicator Database System |
| PMP | Performance Management Plan |
| PUA | Peri-Urban Agriculture |
| R&RF | Rights & Rice Foundation |
| RFTOP | Requests for task order proposals |
| RRA | Rapid Rural Appraisal |
| STTA | Short Term Technical Assistant |
| TAMIS | Technical Administrative Management Information System |
| TVET | Technical, Vocational Education and Training |
| UDP | Urea Deep Placement |
| UL | University of Liberia |
| UMU | United Methodist University |
| VAEO | Vocational Agribusiness Education Officer |

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Background

The Food and Enterprise Development (FED) Program for Liberia is a USAID-funded development program that was launched in September 2011. USAID FED uses an all-inclusive strategy incorporating MSME farmers, processors, suppliers, women and youth while partnering with the government of Liberia and local civil societies to achieve food security.

The goal of USAID FED is to increase food availability, utilization, and accessibility by building an indigenous incentive structure that assists agricultural stakeholders in adopting 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
- Workforce development

FED works with the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), civil societies and the private sector in providing communities access to agricultural inputs (including improved seeds), extension services, nutritious food products, processing services, market information, transportation, credit, agro-business education, training, and enterprise services.

In five years, FED's thrust to expand market linkages is expected to lead to substantial increases in income and job opportunities. FED aims to significantly boost the production, processing, marketing and nutritional utilization of rice, cassava and vegetables, and to enhance the productivity of goat farming in the counties covered by the program.

These initiatives are being carried out in the counties of Bong, Lofa, Nimba, Grand Bassa, Montserrado, and Margibi. FED focused on these counties because they are situated along regional development corridors that are crucial in promoting intra and inter-county commerce. These growth corridors are expected to improve food availability and access for all Liberians.

FED's methodology is market-led and value chain-driven; it is committed to develop indigenous capacity building, with specific focus on Liberia's women and youth.

FED's approach is collaborative and catalytic. It is driven by the goals and objectives of our partner clients. It aims to increase incomes of rural households and create new employment and livelihood opportunities for Liberians; to improve access to food and household dietary diversity scores of food-insecure Liberians; and to promote the use of improved inputs, better farming practices, and technologies that boost agricultural productivity.

FED is implemented by five partners, namely: Development Alternatives, Inc. (DAI), Winrock International, International Fertilizer Developmental Center (IFDC), Louisiana State University (LSU), and The Cadmus Group.

Executive Summary

FED's major activities in the period include harvesting over 20ha of lowland and upland rice in Lofa and Bong counties, including the continued harvest of fields engaged in Urea Deep Placement (UDP) methods of fertilizing.

On November 14th, a FED team traveled along with a high level delegation from the US Embassy including the Ambassador Deborah Malac to Bong Mines, Bong County where the Fuama District Cooperative Farmers launched their first rice harvest. Earlier in the year, FED had demonstrated UDP techniques to fertilize lowland rice fields and farmer leaders and FED staff made preliminary measurements the same day. The trials are expected to help farmers better understand the advantages of UDP.

US Ambassador Deborah Malac gave a speech congratulating hundreds of farmers present at the event saying, "Growing food is more than just growing something to eat. It's about building a livelihood and building an economy. As Liberia is strengthened, we have to start with agriculture, because agriculture helps the country on every level. Here in Liberia, Feed the Future has so much potential to build a strong, prosperous and united Liberia. We want to help give you the skills and knowledge to help you guide your destiny."

After the ceremony all guests marched down the field to the six UDP plots where the ambassador assisted with choosing random plots to carry out the measuring of the harvest. As a group, farmers and FED measured the UDP plot against the Urea Broadcast plot. The UDP plot resulted in 7.4 MT per hectare while the broadcast method yielded an estimated 6.1 MT per hectare.

Results from all of the UDP field trials have been analyzed and show that rice yields from the UDP plots are 17 percent higher than plots where broadcast method was used, and 30 percent higher than the traditional practice of not using any fertilization. Both UDP and broadcast plots have NPK, and the plots with broadcast treatment produced yields 11 percent higher than yields from plots with farmers' practice. FED is currently working with World Bank team contracted by USAID Washington on developing the research mechanisms for a UDP impact evaluation in FY14.

Also in the period, an MOU between FED and Land O' Lakes (USDA implementing partner) was signed, and construction initiated by FED on a goat quarantine facility located at Center of Agriculture Research Institute (CARI). The completed facility will be capable of housing up to 500 goats and will be the only livestock quarantine facility of its kind currently in Liberia. The facility will be used to house and quarantine a total of 5,000 disease resistant West African dwarf goats that will be imported in groups of 500 from Senegal over the next 9-10 months as part of a joint USAID/USDA/Government of Liberia (GOL) activity to renew goat herds in Liberia. In exchange for the construction of the facility, FED will receive 400 goats to distribute among its goat value chain beneficiaries, introducing a much needed new gene pool into the national herd. In addition, 100 goats will be maintained at CARI to establish a disease-free, nucleus breeding center.

Component One: Increase Agricultural Productivity and Profitability

Task I Value Chain Development

Task IA. Increased agricultural productivity and profitability of the rice value chain

Production

In Lofa and Bong counties, FED assisted farmers harvested a total of 20.82 hectares of improved varieties of rice in both upland and lowland rice fields at 14 sites. FED collected random harvest samples at all locations, and farmers began threshing and drying the rice. By the end of the period, over 20 percent of the harvesting process was completed. Final results will be reported in the month of December in Bong County.

Upland farmers in Lofa harvested a total of 1.2 MT of rice while Bong upland farmers harvested approximately 6.5 MT of dried, threshed rice. Among the sites, a total of eight sites measured the UDP fertilization process versus the traditional broadcasting methods.



Figure 1: Rice Farm in Baila Community, Bong County

In Grand Bassa County, two lowland rice sites have harvested 650kg of improved rice varieties and threshing is ongoing.

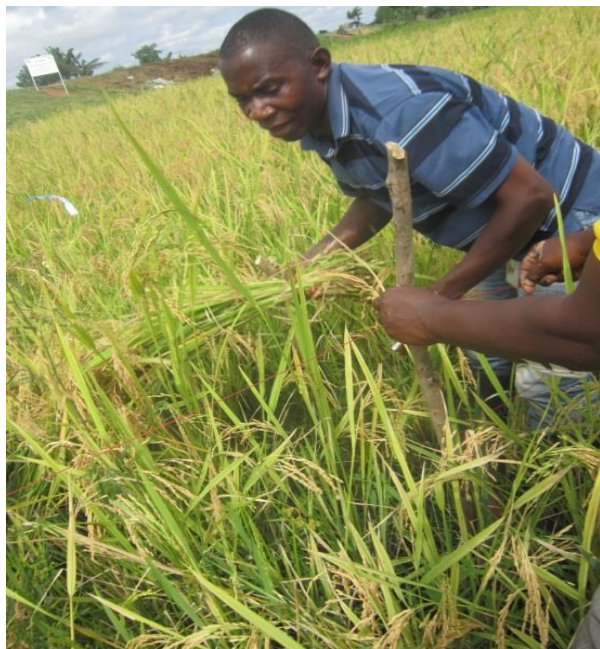


Figure 2: Sub plot measure by FED partner- EOS

Processing

In the period, FED sent published formal requests in Lofa, Nimba, Bong, and Grand Bassa counties for masons and building materials suppliers for the upcoming construction of 8 rice processing structures (2 Bong, 3 Nimba, 2 Lofa, and 1 Grand Bassa).

Figure 3: Sample Rice Harvest



Each site has been selected around a rice production cluster area with high density of rice producers to create a critical mass of clients who will pay for milling paddy rice. The centers will be managed by farmer groups and employ a minimum of four people to manage day to day operations. FED groups will target women and youth for these jobs which include storage management, marketing of agro inputs, and milling the rice. In each area, approximately 10,000 people are expected to benefit from the rice milling technology.

Following the requests, FED selected 24 professional masons (three masons for each structure) to lead the construction of eight buildings. FED has selected three building material suppliers in Nimba County and one supplier in Bong County.

The rice processing centers are expected to be completed by end of February 2014 and form an integral part of FED's

FY14 strategy to increase agribusiness in the rice value chain.

FY14 Farmer Recruiting

FED continues to identify rice farms and farmers across the four main rice producing counties. In the reporting period, a total of 24 new lowland rice farming groups were selected in Grand Bassa and Bong counties comprising of over 1500 farmers.

Rice Seed Multiplication

FED has started the identification and selection process for at least 50 seed multiplication sites for FY14 activities. After reviewing their FY13 performance, a total of 24 UDP sites will renew MOUs with FED to multiply rice seed. An additional 15 sites are expected to be recruited in the month of December. FED's seed multiplication site target is a total of 125ha for lowland seed production and 500ha for upland rice seed.

In the reporting period, FED visited Fuamah and Suakoko Districts in Bong County to assess potential lowland and upland rice plots in terms of water and soil for certified seed rice production for FED's 2014 activities. FED identified 60ha of land (15ha of lowland and 45ha of upland) to use for seed multiplication.

Future Activities

In December, rice activities in all counties will focus on the ongoing harvest, and the identification of new upland and lowland farming groups for commercial production and rice seed production. Activity planning will continue with Fabrar Liberia Inc. for the purchase of new rice milling equipment, warehouse renovation, and the eventual purchase of surplus rice quantities from FED farmer groups.

Task I B. Increased production and profitability of the cassava value chain

Weeding and maintenance practices were achieved in 22 cassava production sites with a total land area of 21.78 hectares, currently under improved cultivation and maintenance practices. In Lofa County, FED farmers planted 8.5ha for cassava nursery expansion sites in the following locations, Zorzor, Voinjama, and Kolahum.



Figure 4: Cassava site in Sucrumu, Lofa county

Task I C. Increased production and profitability of the goat value chain

FED and Land O' Lakes (USDA implementing partner) signed an MOU allowing for the initiation of construction on a goat quarantine facility located at CARI. The completed facility will be capable of housing up to 500 goats and will be the only livestock quarantine facility of its kind currently in Liberia. The facility will be used to house and quarantine a total of 5,000 disease resistant West African dwarf goats that will be imported in groups of 500 from Senegal over the next 9-10 months as part of a joint USAID/USDA/Government of Liberia (GOL) activity to renew goat herds in Liberia. In exchange for the construction of the facility, FED will receive 400 goats to distribute among its goat value chain beneficiaries, introducing a much needed new gene pool into the national herd. In addition, 100 goats will be maintained at CARI to establish a disease-free, nucleus breeding center.

The table below displays the total number of goat farmers identified during the month of November.

Table 1: Total number of Goat identified in November

| Districts | #s of goats identified | Towns | #s of goat treated for diarrhea |
|--------------|------------------------|---------|---------------------------------|
| Salayea | 120 | Sandia | 19 |
| Quandu Gboni | 100 | Kpassay | 13 |
| Foya | 100 | Kpandu | 16 |

FED completed pre-selection and identification of new goat farmers in the four project districts amounting to 15 new communities identified for FY14 goat activities.

Subtask 1.2. Improve access to agriculture inputs

In the reporting period, FED reconciled the pilot voucher program voucher with agro input supplier and partner Wienco. Both FED and Wienco consider the program a success; however future voucher programs will need to better match vouchers with the list of beneficiaries

Table 2: FED Un-reconciled vouchers redemptions

| Group | Original budget | Distributed | % distribution vs. budget | Final distribution ex Roster 3s | | | KGs |
|--------------------------|-----------------|-------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|-------------|
| | | | | 23.10.13 | % vs. distributed | % vs. Original budget | |
| Palala Total | 117 | 107 | 91.45% | 99 | 92.52% | 84.62% | 5125 |
| -450kg | | | | 1 | | | 450 |
| -50kg | | | | 89 | | | 4450 |
| -25kg | | | | 9 | | | 225 |
| -10kg | | | | 0 | | | 0 |
| Kokoyah Total** | 270 | 221 | 81.85% | 86 | 38.91% | 31.85% | 3320 |
| -450kg | | | | 1 | | | 450 |
| -50kg | | | | 34 | | | 1700 |
| -25kg | | | | 44 | | | 1100 |
| -10kg | | | | 7 | | | 70 |
| Dounpa Total | 342 | 250 | 73.10% | 236 | 94.40% | 69.01% | 6755 |
| -450kg | | | | 1 | | | 450 |
| -50kg | | | | 46 | | | 2300 |
| -25kg | | | | 141 | | | 3525 |
| -10kg | | | | 48 | | | 480 |
| Dokodan Total++ | 171 | 94 | 54.97% | 73 | 77.66% | 42.69% | 3300 |
| -450kg | | | | 1 | | | 450 |
| -50kg | | | | 45 | | | 2250 |
| -25kg | | | | 22 | | | 550 |
| -10kg | | | | 5 | | | 50 |
| Menlehkoyee Total | 35 | 35 | 100.00% | 35 | 100.00% | 100.00% | 2150 |
| -450kg | | | | 1 | | | 450 |
| -50kg | | | | 34 | | | 1700 |
| -25kg | | | | 0 | | | 0 |
| -10kg | | | | 0 | | | 0 |
| Payee Total | 158 | 98 | 62.03% | 90 | 91.84% | 56.96% | 1990 |
| -450kg | | | | 0 | | | 0 |
| -50kg | | | | 16 | | | 800 |

| | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|------|-----|---------------|-----|---------------|---------------|--------------|
| -25kg | | | | 30 | | | 750 |
| -10kg | | | | 44 | | | 440 |
| Total Redemptions | 1093 | 805 | 73.65% | 619 | 76.89% | 56.63% | 22640 |
| -450kg | | | | 5 | 0 | 0 | 2250 |
| -50kg | | | | 264 | 0 | 0 | 13200 |
| -25kg | | | | 246 | 0 | 0 | 6150 |
| -10kg | | | | 104 | 0 | 0 | 1040 |

Subtask 1.3 Agricultural Extension Support

Supporting PUA

The vegetable extension training successfully ended on December 6, 2013 with 20 participants consisting mainly of FED lead farmers from selected PUA clusters in Montserrado, Margibi, Grand Bassa and Nimba counties. The training was meant to improve lead farmer knowledge and skills in improved vegetable farming practices while also acting as a type of training of trainers. Lead farmers are expected to provide assistance and support to other farmers in their farming groups.

Training

The extension team has finalized all training schedules and modules for goats, cassava and rice value chains. FED reviewed applications for extension officers, and shortlisted and interviewed eight people. Hiring and training will take place in December and January.

Agriculture Radio Program

FED nearly completed collected of the rural agriculture radio programs produced by FED radio journalist partners in FY13. FED will review each of the 30 minute radio programs to choose four winners. The top

four journalists will be chosen to partner with FED for the duration of the project, producing agriculture-based radio shows highlighting the four value chains.



Figure 5: PUA workshop participants demonstrating elevated nursery in Montserrado County.

Training modules

FED completed the development of training schedules and modules across the four value chains of FED. These schedules are awaiting finalization and certification by value chain leads.

Radio and Video Extension

FED worked on three radio and video programs highlighting the best practices to reduce kid mortality, manage mother goats before breeding, and goat nutrition and treatment and prevention of diseases. FED filmed and recorded the programs at the Blaygbah goat site in Grand Bassa County. The Blaygbah's Village Town Chief

identified as Franklin was instrumental during the filming. The programs are in post-production and are expected to be reviewed by FED value chain leads in January 2014.

Sub-task 1.4 Increased productivity and profitability of the vegetable value chain

During the month of November, FY13 vegetable farming groups continued with vegetable harvest and produce sales:

Table 3: FED vegetable farmers sales, November 2013

| County | Group | Crop | Weight | Sales (\$LD) | Sales (\$USD) |
|--------------|--|---|--------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| Bong | Yalafama | Bitterball | 44kg | 460 | \$5.75 |
| | | Corn | 50kg | 770 | \$9.63 |
| Grand Bassa | Own Your Own, City Gardener, Yeahbee, Pipeline | Cowpea, Groundnut, Pepper, Sweet potato | 206kg | 8,220 | \$102.75 |
| Lofa | VOWOPEDE | Bitterball | 12.5kg | 625 | \$7.81 |
| | | Eggplant | 11.5kg | 575 | \$7.19 |
| | | Plato (greens) | 14kg | 2,400 | \$30.00 |
| Lofa | Help Yourself Farmers Assoc. | Bitterball | 10kg | 680 | \$8.50 |
| | | Corn | 2kg | 150 | \$2.00 |
| | | Groundnut | 5kg | 260 | \$3.13 |
| Lofa | Dengola Farmers association | Pepper | 5kg | 250 | \$3.13 |
| | | Bitterball | 2kg | 100 | \$1.25 |
| | | Eggplant | 3kg | 150 | \$1.88 |
| | | Groundnut | 25kg | 1,180 | \$14.75 |
| Total | | | 390kg | \$15,820 LD | \$ 197.75 USD |

Table 4: Harvested vegetables per area and quantity

| County | Group Name | Vegetable Harvested | Area Harvest in hectares | Quantity Harvested in kilograms |
|--------------|------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Bong | Yalafama | Cowpea | n/a | 32 |
| Nimba | Gbudeamon | Cowpea | 0.08 | 33 |
| Nimba | Zoedoar Farmers Assoc. | Cowpea | 0.09 | 46 |
| Nimba | Kekaiba | Cabbage | 0.02 | 83 |
| Nimba | Menlekoyee | Bitterball | n/a | 39 |
| Nimba | Menlekoyee | Cowpea | n/a | 36 |
| Nimba | Ganta Methodist Sch. | Cowpea | 0.03 | 70 |
| Nimba | Gbedin Veg Farmers | Cowpea | 0.08 | 10 |
| Grand Bassa | Pipeline | Cowpea, Groundnut | n/a | 20 |
| Total | | | 0.36ha | 368.8kg |

FY14 Farmer Recruiting

FED identified an additional four clusters, representing 72 farmers, to participate in FY14 vegetable farming activities. In the first two months of FY14, FED has identified 20 farming clusters representing 371 farmers for the year's activities. In addition, FED has already signed MOUs with the vegetable clusters in Montserrado and Margibi counties, while cluster MOUs with groups in Grand Bassa and Nimba counties will be signed and finalized in December 2013.

In the period, FED held talks with Go-Buy-Chop women and key second-tier traders at the Red Light Market to distribute an expression of interest to find buyers who would like to work directly with FED PUA farming clusters. Those traders interested in working with FED and the clusters will sign a MOU with FED. FED will support participating traders with small toolkits (ledgers and scales) and training and mentorship in record



keeping, forward contracting, and mentorship in proper weighing of produce. The traders will then be linked to the FED farming clusters, and FED will mentor both parties in utilizing formal buying contracts for the first harvest season, which is expected to begin in February and March 2014.

Figure 6: FED supported vegetable group, Menlekoyee, Nimba County harvesting bitter ball.

Component Two: Stimulate Private Sector Growth and Investment

Task 2: Enabling Policy Environment for Private Sector Growth

FED hired policy consultant Arthur Dimas to review policy incentives related to agriculture and agri-businesses specifically agro-input suppliers—and the impact of the Executive Order #30. The objective of Mr. Dimas's consultancy is to review the current situation and make recommendations on ways to incentive the agriculture and agri-business sector. Further, the policy consultant will analyze the reasons for the adoption of the policy incentives and explore the cost/benefit to the government of such incentives based on best international practices and in compliance with ECOWAS tariff regulations.

Subtask 2.1 Access to credit and business development services

Micro Finance Loans

On November 27 2013, Liberia Entrepreneurial & Asset Development (LEAD), a local MFI signed loan agreements totaling \$750,000 LD (\$9,375 USD) for individual vegetable farmers in Nimba County who were part of FY13 farming group demonstration plots.

The groups include:

1. ZOEDOAD Women Farmers Association for \$ 500,000 LD (\$6,250 USD); and
2. MENLEHKOYEE farmers for \$ 250,000 LD (\$3,125 USD).

LEAD has provided \$1,630,000 LD (\$20,375 USD) to seven FED farming groups in Montserrado, Margibi and Nimba Counties in the first two months of FY14. All seven groups were assisted by FED in opening bank accounts with Ecobank, and setting up proper financial record keeping in order to qualify for the loans. The loan terms are six months with a 16% interest rate. Though the loans are given to qualifying individual farmers, LEAD requires that the farmer is a member of a structured group—in this case FED assisted farming groups—in order to maintain accountability.

Village Savings and Loan Associations

The 26 FED farming groups from six counties that begin saving under a village savings and loan association (VSLA) in late FY13 reported the following:

- There are a total of 627 active members that make up the 26 groups;
- The total share purchased by the 26 groups was \$ 801,520 LD (\$10,019 USD);
- Total loan disbursements are \$ 415,200 LD (\$5,190 USD) to 87 members;
- Total interest earned on loans disbursed in the month of November is \$ 44,880 LD (\$561 USD);
- Total amount remaining in savings is \$386,320 LD (\$4,829 USD)

Over the next nine months, the FED will provide mentorship in group leadership, managing conflicts and issues, and record keeping when the group makes the final payout and disburses the savings and accrued interest. FED expects the 26 groups to generate an estimated \$185,000 in ag-related loans for the farmers at a 15.65% annual return for the savings group over a three year period.

FED continues to assess FY14 rice, cassava and goat groups for new VSLA groups. In the first two months of FY14, 18 groups have been recruited 1200 rice farmers, 550 cassava farmers, and 17 goat farmer groups.

Farming as a Business

FED partner Rights and Rice Foundation delivered Farming as a Business (FaaB) training to 12 farming groups consisting of 301 farmers, nine groups in Grand Bassa County (225 farmers) and three groups in Margibi County (76 farmers). The farming groups are taught basic concepts of Farming as a Business to include basic profitability and record keeping. After the training, each group is responsible for delivering a short farm business plan for the upcoming farming season. The last set of three farming groups in Montserrado County will be trained in December 2013.

By-Laws and Bank Accounts

FED assisted eight FY13 FED farming groups from Lofa county with adopting by-laws for the purpose of opening bank accounts. The groups have finished the applications for accounts have, and the bank is in the process of assigning account numbers.



Figure 7: Mary Flomo, head of Menlehkyee group, signs a loan agreement on behalf of group, Nimba County.

Component Three: Build Local Technical and Managerial Human Resource Capacity

Task 3.0 Develop Existing Vocational Centers into Centers of Excellence

Agriculture and Demonstration Plot Activities

The NCCC fish pond #1 nursery is blocked due to improper technical layout by APDRA, and the dikes are cracking. The soil used for the dike construction is not clay with good water holding capacity, as a result the soil is gradually weathering and sinking into the pond. As per FED's agreement with APDRA, the problem was reported to their extension trainer for further action.

Production at fish pond #2 is underway and the pond is stocked with 10 Heterotis genitors meant to increase the fish population. A 10-day fish farming training began at the end of November with eleven beneficiaries from the CoE, including nine students, one community representative and one instructor. A suitable site has been selected for the NCCC goat project on one acre of nearby land. Clearing and fencing activities is ongoing.

NCCC staff finished the construction of a scaffold nursery for vegetable seedling production. Varieties of seeds sown include hot pepper, cabbage, collared green, eggplants and bitter balls, are now undergoing thinning 95% germination have taken place. Agriculture students will transplant the seedlings within three weeks.

At BWI, the compost making process began, and the compost is expected to be ready for sale to area farmers by February 2014. It is projected that with an initial investment of \$103,275.00 LD (\$1,290.93 USD), BWI will see estimated profits of \$76,725.00 LD (\$959.06 USD).

Subtask 3.1 Enterprise Service Centers

The renovation work for the career, enterprise, and agriculture offices at NCCC is nearing completion, and the offices are nearly ready to receive equipment and supplies. A bill of quantity for the renovation of the LCCC career and enterprise office was submitted to FED for review.

Task 4: Crosscutting

Youth Involvement

A four day Technical Agriculture refresher TOT workshop was held for the 28 National Agriculture Volunteers from November 25-28, 2013 in Buchanan City, Grand Bassa County. Volunteers shared their individual experiences and the challenges they encountered since they took up assignments in Q4 of FY13. The training also provided basic instruction in cassava and vegetables production and practical demonstrations for participants.

Nutrition

FED collaborated with USAID partner LAUNCH to identified key Essential Nutrition Actions (ENA) messages to include in extension materials that will be used to target farmers and their families. In addition, FED finalized the plan to justify why nutrition is important and a structure ENA orientation training for FED and MoA extension officers in January 2014.

Communications

Two local papers carried FED press releases on loan disbursement, and due to increased visibility several journalists have requested interviews with FED's COP.

M&E

Task 4.2 Special Studies, Baseline Studies, Impact Surveys, and M&E

Enumerators

The Enumerator survey program was initiated during the month with two-day trainings in each of the four counties, followed by the start of a 12 day survey of rice and vegetable beneficiaries. The rice survey is a follow-up to the initial survey conducted in May 2013 and is intended to determine the cost and type of inputs used on beneficiary plots. For the vegetable value chain, this is a first survey of production costs, estimates and actuals of sales, and time FED follows up on farmer-based record-keeping and yield measurements. The surveyed group of vegetable producers will also be tracked over time to determine their progress and use of improved technologies. The enumerators are expected to begin rice and vegetable household surveys in early December.

Harvests

The 2013 rice harvest yield measurements continued into and through the month. At the end of the month the results were summarized, including 114 samples from 31 sites, both lowland and upland. There are still 97 sites to be measured, but for the UDP sites, 16 of the 20 sites have been measured. The average yields from these demonstration fields (using wet weights) are 5.98 MT for UDP sites, 5.11 MT for the Urea broadcast sites, and 4.62 MT for the farmer practice sites.

4.2a. Improving Data Collection Systems

The M&E staff at the county level has been reduced to enable additional staff to focus on the extension of services to beneficiaries. The remaining M&E coordinators will serve to mentor the EO staff and receive field reports and data from them in excel format for preparing reports to Monrovia. Training will be provided in Q2 by M&E staff to enable the EO staff to better understand their new responsibilities and initiate the data collection process.

FED Collaboration with MoA M&E

FED worked with the MoA M&E officers and completed a field trip to explore the possible collaboration to initiate a pilot M&E effort at the county level. Bong county has been chosen to initiate the effort. A brief proposal has been drafted to define the roles of each participant and is expected to be approved in December.

FED has purchased an additional 30 PDA devices which brings the total to 50. Ten devices will be assigned to each of the four major counties and ten devices will be held in Monrovia. FED plans to use these devices for surveys, such as the current rice and vegetable survey, and to also begin using them with the county EOs for data collecting and reporting on activities in the field.

Task 4.2c. Ongoing Monitoring and Evaluation

Indicators and Work Plan

The USAID FTFMS reporting table was completed during the month, which summarizes the Indicator Progress Report achievements for the preceding Work Plan year. This report also contains the Gross Margin calculations that are transmitted to AID/W for further calculation. In the process of preparing the Work Plan for FY14 (FED Year 3), some Indicators were deleted (all those deleted were Custom Indicators and not FTF Indicators) and a few added. These will be reported in the revision to the Performance Management Plan that is currently be drafted. Since activities are not yet underway, there are no Indicator results to report this month.

END OF REPORT