



# FEED THE FUTURE

The U.S. Government's Global Hunger & Food Security Initiative



## FOOD AND ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT (FED) PROGRAM FOR LIBERIA

### QUARTERLY REPORT

APRIL 1 - JUNE 30, 2016



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

**Program Title:** Food and Enterprise Development Program for Liberia (FED)

**Sponsoring USAID Office:** USAID Liberia

**Contract Number:** 669-C-00-11-00047-00

**Contractor:** DAI

**Date of Publication:** July 15, 2016

**Cover page photo caption:**

James Wheadyu, a goat farmer in Blaygbahn Town, Grand Bassa County, holds two of his new kids at a goat production intensification site. FED supports goat farmers in four counties in Liberia to build technical skills in breeding and herd maintenance.

**DISCLAIMER**

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

# ACRONYMS

AEDE	Agency for Economic Development and Empowerment
AIIC	Agriculture Infrastructure and Investment Company
APDRA	Association Pisciculture et Développement Rural en Afrique
AVTP	Accelerated Vocational Training Program
AYP	Advancing Youth Project
BSTVSE	Bureau of Science, Technical, Vocational and Special Education
BWI	Booker Washington Institute
CARI	Center of Agriculture Research Institute
CAHW	Community Animal Health Worker
CBF	County Based Facilitator
CBL	Central Bank of Liberia
CGCYWEP	Church Group Children Women Youths Empowerment Program
CILSS	Permanent Interstates Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel
CoE	Center of Excellence
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CSWG	Cassava Sector Working Group
CYNP	Community Youth Network Program
DAI	Development Alternatives Inc.
DCOP	Deputy Chief of Party
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ECREP	Evangelical Children Rehabilitation Program
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EMMP	Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan
EO	Extension Officer
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
FtF	Feed the Future
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FUN	Farmer Union Network
GAP	Good Agriculture Practices
GBCC	Grand Bassa Community College
GCAP	Green Coast Agricultural Program
GCMC	Global Construction & Mechanical Company
GDA	Global Development Alliance
GPS	Global Positioning Systems
IBEX	Investing in Business Expansion Liberia
IFDC	International Fertilizer Developmental Center
IITA	International Institute for Tropical Agriculture
IP	Implementing Partner
IPM	Integrated Pest Management
IQC	Indefinite Quantity Contract

ISFM	Integrated Soil Fertility Management
KRTTI	Kakata Rural Teachers Training Institute
LABEE IPG	Liberia Agriculture Business Enabling Environment Inter-Agency Policy Group
LADA	Liberia Agribusiness Development Activity
LATA	Liberia Agricultural Transformation Agenda
LAUNCH	Liberia Agriculture, Upgrading Nutrition & Child Health
LCCC	Lofa County Community College
LIFE	Livelihood Improvement for Farming Enterprises
LINA	Liberia News Agency
LIPAS	Liberia Integrated Professional Agriculture Service
LMEP	Liberia Monitoring and Evaluation Program
LNGO	Local Non-Governmental Organization
LRC	Law Reform Commission
LSU	Louisiana State University
LWDR	Liberian Women Democracy Radio
MFDP	Ministry of Finance and Development Planning
MFI	Micro Finance Institution
MIS	Market Information Systems
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
MoCI	Ministry of Commerce and Industry
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoHSW	Ministry of Health and Social Welfare
MoP	Muriate of Potash
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSME	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise
NAPEX	National Apex of VSLAs
NDA	National Diploma in Agriculture
NCCC	Nimba County Community College
NIC	National Investment Commission
NSB	National Seed Board
NSL	National Standards Laboratory
PERSUAP	Pesticide Evaluation Report and Safer Use Action Plan
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
RSM	Rice Seed Multiplication
SDCA	Seed Development and Certification Agency
SPSS	Statistical Package of Social Sciences
SWF	Stakeholder Working Forum
TAMIS	Technical Administrative Management Information System
TCi	Top Consulting, Inc.

ToT	Training of Trainers
TSP	Triple Super-Phosphate
TVET	Technical, Vocational Education and Training
UDP	Urea Deep Placement
UEM	Universal Empowerment Mission
UL	University of Liberia
USADF	United States African Development Foundation
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VET GOV	Veterinary Governance in Africa
VSLA	Village Savings and Loans Associations
WAAPP	West Africa Agriculture Productivity Program
WAFP	West Africa Fertilizer Project
WASP	West Africa Seed Project
WFP	World Food Programme

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>ACRONYMS.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>TABLES AND FIGURES.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>BACKGROUND .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>COMPONENT ONE: INCREASE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY AND PROFITABILITY .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>TASK 1A: INCREASED PRODUCTIVITY AND PROFITABILITY OF THE RICE VALUE CHAIN .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>TASK 1B: INCREASED PRODUCTIVITY AND PROFITABILITY OF THE CASSAVA VALUE CHAIN.....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>TASK 1C: INCREASED PRODUCTIVITY AND PROFITABILITY OF THE HORTICULTURE VALUE CHAIN .....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>TASK 1D: INCREASED PRODUCTIVITY AND PROFITABILITY OF THE GOAT VALUE CHAIN.....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>SUBTASK 1.2 IMPROVED ACCESS TO AGRICULTURAL INPUTS.....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>SUBTASK 1.3: AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SUPPORT .....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>SUBTASK 1.4 YOUTH IN AGRIBUSINESS .....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>SUBTASK 1.5: IMPROVING HUMAN NUTRITION .....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>COMPONENT TWO: STIMULATE PRIVATE SECTOR GROWTH AND INVESTMENT.....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>TASK 2: POLICY ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR PRIVATE SECTOR GROWTH.....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Subtask 2.1 Access to Finance.....</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Subtask 2.2: Access to Business Development Support (BDS) Services and Enterprise Service Centers &amp; Promotion of Public-Private Partnership (PPP) to Benefit Feed the Future Objectives.....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>COMPONENT THREE: BUILD LOCAL TECHNICAL AND MANAGERIAL HUMAN RESOURCE CAPABILITIES.....</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>ACTIVITY 3.1 ROLL OUT THE NATIONAL DIPLOMA IN AGRICULTURE (NDA) IN ALL FOUR COES .....</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>ACTIVITY 3.5 COMPLETING BASIC FACILITIES NEEDS TO ENHANCE LEARNING .....</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>ACTIVITY 3.4 ENHANCING AVAILABILITY OF TEXTBOOKS AND REFERENCE MATERIALS FOR THE NDA.....</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>ACTIVITY 3.6 PROMOTING LEARNING BY DOING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PRIVATE SECTOR.....</b>	<b>38</b>

<b>ACTIVITY 3.7 BUILDING THE CAPACITY OF COES TO GENERATE ADDITIONAL FUNDING AND TO MANAGE THEIR FINANCES.....</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>COMPONENT FOUR: CROSS-CUTTING ACTIVITIES .....</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>TASK 4.1 COMMUNICATIONS/KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT.....</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>TASK 4.2 ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE .....</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>TASK 4.3: MARKET DEVELOPMENT FUND MANAGEMENT .....</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>TASK 4.4: MONITORING &amp; EVALUATION .....</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>COMPONENT FIVE: MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONS.....</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>TASK 5.0 PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION .....</b>	<b>46</b>

## TABLES AND FIGURES

<b>Table 1: Upland Rice Establishment by County .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Table 2: Lowland Areas Prepared for Planting by County.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Table 3: Lowland Areas Planted by County .....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Table 4: Lead Farmers Trained by County .....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Table 5: Number of Confirmed Animals Vaccinated by County.....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Table 6: Number of Post-vaccination Blood Samples Collected by County .....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Table 7: Distribution of Cuttings by Variety and County.....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Table 8: NAPEX Certified VSLAs.....</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>Table 9: FED-Supported BSPs Participating in ESC Capacity Building Trainings .....</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>Figure 1: Completed and reinforced rice business hub in Kahenjala, Lofa County.....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Figure 2: Dr. Maurice Ogutu, USAID COR, visits the Mawah farming cluster's lettuce production in Montserrado County and the Kuta Cluster's bitter ball farm in Margibi County. ....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Figure 3: Rain shelter construction in Mount Barclay, Montserrado County .....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Figure 4: Power tiller demonstrations with the Mawah and Mensah farming clusters.....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Figure 5: Preparing the trail shipments of okra for export to France. ....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Figure 6: A goat farmer stands in front of recently constructed goat shelter.....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Figure 7 : Brac Liberia workers vaccinate a goat in Bong County. ....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Figure 8: Lucy Davis, a member of Kaker Agricultural Development youth group, on their cabbage farm in Todee District, Montserrado County. ....</b>	<b>27</b>



## BACKGROUND

The Food and Enterprise Development (FED) Activity is USAID's flagship Feed the Future (FtF) Initiative in Liberia. The project was launched in September 2011 and will end in December 2016. USAID FED uses an all-inclusive strategy incorporating micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME), farmers, processors, suppliers, women, and youth, while partnering with the Government of Liberia (GoL) and local civil society to achieve food security.

USAID FED is increasing food availability, utilization, and accessibility by building an indigenous incentive structure to assist agricultural stakeholders in adopting commercial approaches.

This incentive structure is built upon:

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

The project works with the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), civil society, and the private sector in providing communities access to agricultural inputs, extension services, nutrition messages, processing services, market information, transportation, credit, agro-business education, training, and business development services.

In its fifth and final year of operation, USAID FED is expanding market linkages designed to substantially increase incomes and job opportunities. USAID FED is also significantly boosting the production, processing, marketing, and nutritional utilization of rice, cassava, and vegetables, as well as enhancing the productivity of goat farming in the counties covered by the program.

These initiatives are implemented in Bong, Lofa, Nimba, Grand Bassa, Montserrado, and Margibi counties. USAID FED focuses on these counties because they are situated along regional development corridors crucial to promoting intra- and inter-county commerce. These growth corridors are improving food availability and access for all Liberians.

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

USAID FED is implemented by a consortium led by Development Alternatives, Inc., along with Winrock International, International Fertilizer Developmental Center (IFDC), Louisiana State University (LSU), and The Cadmus Group.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## A. Progress toward implementation of FY2016 workplan activities

USAID FED continued in full implementation mode across its three major components during this third quarter of FY2016, the reporting period covered by this report. These components include increasing agricultural productivity and profitability, stimulating private sector growth and investment, and building local technical and management human resource capability. A no-additional cost extension through December 11, 2016 was awarded by USAID during this reporting period, allowing the project to extend its wide array of activities through the current growing season.

The no-additional cost extension did not include funding up to the contract ceiling, meaning that FED's total funding obligation is capped at \$72.1 million, approximately \$2.9 million below the ceiling. A revised FY2016 workplan was submitted to the Mission during this reporting period reflecting this fact and which included an ambitious set of activities while eliminating others, mostly procurement-related, which are no longer feasible given the funding constraints.

Nevertheless, the project remains committed to full-spectrum implementation and will continue as such until the final close-down phase begins in mid-September. The following represents a partial listing of FED activities implemented during this reporting period that are contributing to the achievement of targets expressed in the submitted FY2016 workplan:

Rice: 12,000 new upland and lowland rice farmers being trained in good agricultural practices (GAP) through 350 lead farmers; construction completed on nine new rice business hubs providing processing and marketing services to farmers within their own communities; 1,200 rice farmers in 42 farming groups trained in double-cropping techniques.

Cassava: 6,000 new cassava farmers being trained in GAP through 300 lead farmers; cassava farmers linked to 80 commercial nurseries to increase their access to improved planting materials.

Horticulture: 6,000 new vegetable farmers undergoing training to apply GAP, integrated pest management (IPM), and improved post-harvest practices; two trial shipments of okra from FED-supported vegetable farmer groups sent to EU buyers with future shipments of eggplant, cucumbers and peppers planned; buyer-seller arrangements negotiated with institutional buyers in Liberia such as major hotels and restaurants.

Goats: 3,900 new goat farmers being trained in herd management practices and mineral salt lick fabrication; expansion of the Center for Agriculture Research Institute (CARI)'s nucleus breeding quarantine facility; more than 100,000 goats vaccinated through the PPR campaign in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture.

Enterprise Service Centers (ESCs): Five business service providers being prepared to offer essential technical assistance to farmer groups and agribusinesses in the counties, where no such services were previously available; these entities are being prepared to graduate to full-fledged ESCs in the next reporting period.

Policy: Efforts are proceeding on domestication of ECOWAS protocols for seeds, fertilizer and agro-chemicals, as well as establishing a policy of 10% cassava composition in all flour produced in Liberia.

Access to Finance: 723 community village savings and loans associations (VSLAs) serving approximately 20,000 women providing capital for household and microenterprise purposes through loans comprised of member savings.

Centers of Excellence: National Diploma in Agriculture (NDA) curriculum developed and evaluated after implementation in three community colleges and Booker Washington Institute (BWI); business plans for revenue generation developed through FED technical assistance; libraries being renovated with textbooks provided; soil science laboratories outfitted with essential equipment and supplies with technicians trained; training in post-harvest practices and grant proposal writing to be conducted in July of the next reporting period.

Building data management capacity of the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA): FED conducted the first two of a sequence of three training programs to build the MoA's data management capacity during this reporting period. The first training involved the importance of data quality and provided an overview of research design for a larger MoA audience, while the second training focused on statistical analysis using the Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) software. The third training, to be conducted early in the next reporting period, addresses data collection practices for MoA field staff. Computer equipment procured by FED will be turned over to the MoA during the next reporting period to support these efforts. In addition, FED is contracting with a Liberian company to expand our database with a current capacity to accommodate the limited number of indicators required by FED to the more than 160 indicators needed by the MoA for its Presidential Liberia Agricultural Transformation (LATA) initiative. Once this expansion is completed, FED intends to request Mission authorization to dispose of the large FED server to the MoA as part of this effort to improve its data management capacity.

Monitoring and Evaluation: As stated above, the foregoing is only a partial listing of the current FED activities. While expanded descriptions of specific project implementation are contained in the next section and throughout this report, it is important to highlight the progress made against the FED data quality deficiencies identified in the previous quarterly report. That report described the results of a data quality review conducted in February and March of this year which concluded that project data reported in quarterly and annual reports going back to project inception lack reliability and precision and, therefore, cannot be used for either reporting or decision-making purposes.

Intensive consultations were conducted involving the Mission and FED during this reporting period in order to address this matter. These deliberations concluded that FED would be responsible for reporting on FY2016 results for fifteen Feed the Future and custom indicators, primarily through two surveys: (1) a smallholder survey to yield data on key indicators such as gross margin for all four value chains, sales, technologies applied, hectares under improved technologies/drainage; and (2) an enterprise survey to address most of the remaining indicators, i.e., number of beneficiaries receiving management/leadership training, number of MSMEs receiving USG assistance to access loans, number of private enterprises applying new technologies, total increase in installed storage capacity, value of new private sector investment, total financing accessed, and number of firms and/or Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) engaged in manufacturing and services now operating more profitably. Installed milling capacity is also being collected from the rice business hubs. Data on other indicators, i.e., number of individuals participating in long-term training, number of students benefiting from improved facilities, number of policies approved, will be collected from existing data sources.

The smallholder survey to include a random sample of 1,200 beneficiaries over three value chains was initiated during this reporting period and in process as the reporting period drew to a close. Three teams of ten enumerators each, trained by FED technical experts, fanned out across all counties comprising FED's zones of influence. Results of this smallholder survey are expected by September. The fourth value chain, cassava, will be surveyed in late-August and early-September given the later

agricultural cycle for that crop. Some problems have appeared in the accuracy of beneficiary lists and the inadvertent exclusion of a number of groups whose inclusion was planned, which we have resolved satisfactorily in a meeting with BFS M&E specialist Lindsey Anna in early July.

The enterprise survey to address the remaining indicators will also be conducted in September. FED expects to be able to report FY2016 results for all indicators for which we have been given responsibility in the Annual Report due at the end of October, in time for the Mission to comply with its annual reporting schedule to USAID/W.

Given the nuances of the agricultural cycle and the limited time remaining in the FED contract, sales taking place at the beginning of FY2016 (i.e., late calendar year 2015 and early-2016) must be used to calculate FY2016 gross margins. This means that the production and post-harvest costs used for the FY2016 calculations will actually be incurred subsequent to the sales figures to be used. While this is less than an ideal situation, it is not uncommon given the fiscal year timing of the Feed the Future annual reporting cycle. Ordinarily, we would conduct a “market survey” in February or March of the next year to be able to compare sales and cost figures for the same agricultural cycle which, unfortunately, cannot be done in this case since FED will be closed by then. In order to provide the best possible information so that the Mission can most effectively evaluate FY2016 gross margins, one suggestion would be for the Mission’s M&E contractor (LSA) to perform the “market survey” in February or March of 2017.

## **B. Further highlights of this reporting period include the following activities:**

### Rice Processing

- FED completed the construction of nine additional rice business hubs this quarter. At the same time, FED-contracted engineers completed reinforcement work on four rice business hubs in Bong and Lofa Counties. It is anticipated that the reinforcement work will be completed in all of the pending rice business hubs in July, bringing the total number of FED-supported rice business hubs to 19. The rice hubs have a significant impact on rice farmers and agribusinesses, providing facilities for milling, threshing, de-stoning, storage, and post-harvest preparation for marketing purposes. Data on increased processing and storage capacity will be reported in the FED FY2016 Annual and Final Reports.

### Goats

- A large-scale campaign to vaccinate a targeted 108,000 small ruminants (sheep and goats) against the PPR disease was completed this quarter. The campaign reached 103,249 goats across six counties of Liberia. FED contracted BRAC Liberia, an INGO, to carry out the campaign, conducted in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture. FED goat specialists said the campaign fell slightly short of its target because of normal wastage typical in a large vaccination campaign, and the fact that some Liberian goat farmers declined to participate. Under our fixed-price contract with BRAC, payment was not based on the number of animals vaccinated but rather on specific deliverables. Nevertheless, the number of goats vaccinated was considered well within an acceptable range, having achieved over 95% of the target.

### Market Linkages and Financing

- A trial shipment of two 5-kilogram boxes of okra produced on FED-supported high-value vegetable cluster farms was sent to a Paris-based importer in the beginning of this quarter. In May, the importer confirmed that he had reviewed the okra shipments and requested additional shipments of more vegetable varieties, including cucumbers and eggplants. The importer has also expressed an interest in investing in cashew nut production in Liberia. The importer, Jean Louise Gruter, the chairman of the VS Compagnie Sarl, will be visiting Liberia in the following quarter to establish more concrete market linkages with potential exporters from Liberia. We are attempting to time this visit with the FED Agribusiness Expo to be conducted in September, 2016.
- FED continued this quarter to facilitate buyer-seller linkages between four project-supported vegetable production clusters and high-end buyers in Liberia. The high-value vegetable farming groups now have established supply contracts with Monrovia's Royal Grand Hotel, to which they will supply approximately 22,500 kilograms of lettuce, cabbage, cucumber, and tomatoes on an annual basis. Meanwhile, FED has added several other high-end buyers to the list, including the Golden Beach Restaurant, a popular venue for U.N. and embassy guests, and several larger grocers and distributors in Monrovia.

### Capacity Building

- Implementation of the standardized National Diploma in Agriculture (NDA) continued during this period in the FED-supported Centers of Excellence (COEs) within three community colleges and Booker Washington Institute. An evaluation of this curriculum was conducted during this reporting period resulting in several important recommendations, which are described in detail in the Component 3 section later in this report. Renovations and upgrades to the libraries and laboratories at the institutions included the installation of internet cabling and computers. New textbooks to augment previous textbook procurements for the libraries have been procured and await delivery. At the end of the quarter, FED hired a Grants Development Consultant who will advise the four institutes on how to identify, procure, and maintain outside funding sources to support the continuation of the NDA program and other FED capacity-building initiatives after project closedown.
- FED continued to collaborate closely with the MoA on significant progress toward finalizing drafts of three pieces of legislation that would “domesticate” ECOWAS seed, fertilizer and pesticide protocols in Liberia. FED continues to collaborate with the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI) and the MoA to draft a strategy paper for the 10 percent Cassava Composite Flour policy.
- An initiative to transform FED-supported business service centers (BSPs) into fee-based enterprise service centers (ESCs) was intensified this quarter. These ESCs are being prepared to provide essential business services in the counties where such services were previously unavailable. Activities included a series of capacity building training and technical assistance

interventions. The weeklong trainings were designed to improve BSP capacity to operate under a “fee-for-service” agribusiness model providing essential business services such as financial management, strategic planning, marketing, etc. The trainings were followed by an awareness campaign in late June to spread the word about the new ESC services in communities, districts, and towns of Lofa, Bong, Nimba, Grand Bassa, and Margibi Counties. The campaign included traveling road shows, radio talk shows, banners, t-shirts, and other marketing products.

## Component One: Increase Agricultural Productivity and Profitability

### Task 1A: Increased Productivity and Profitability of the Rice Value Chain

#### Improving productivity and profitability of upland and lowland rice

##### ***Provide technical assistance to upland and lowland rice groups:***

This quarter, FED prioritized providing technical assistance to the FY16 upland and lowland rice beneficiaries, using its existing field extension staff in Bong, Nimba, Lofa, and Grand Bassa Counties. Technical assistance focused on land preparation and planting in the upland areas. Grand Bassa County is only participating in upland rice production during the FY16 period and not lowland rice production. The focus in this county will be primarily on cassava production, which is the leading staple crop.

##### ***Support 5,250 new rice farmers to apply improved technologies on 750 hectares of upland areas:***

The new upland rice groups planted a total of 750 hectares of upland areas, as follows:

**Table 1: Upland Rice Planting by County**

County	Number of farmers	Number of hectares targeted	Number of hectares planted in May	Number of hectares planted in June	Total number of hectares planted year to date
Bong	1,260	180	75	105	180
Nimba	1,680	240	80	160	240
Lofa	1,680	240	120	120	240
Grand Bassa	630	90	30	60	90
Total	5,250	750	305	445	750

##### ***Train 175 farming groups on improved technologies in producing rice in the upland areas:***

In June, 175 upland rice farmer groups were trained in upland rice-production techniques. FED Extension Officers in Bong, Nimba, Lofa, and Grand Bassa Counties conducted this field-based training.

##### ***Support 7,000 new rice farmers to apply improved technologies on 1,000 hectares of lowland areas:***

By the end of this quarter, the new lowland rice groups had de-stumped and prepared a total of 612 hectares of lowlands, or 61 percent, of the targeted 1,000 hectares of lowlands in readiness for planting. A total of 268 hectares was planted. It is anticipated that all the lowland areas will be planted by the end of August.

**Table 2: Lowland Areas Prepared for Planting by County**

County	Number of farmers	Number of hectares targeted	Number of hectares prepared in May	Number of hectares prepared in June	Total number of hectares prepared year to date
Bong	1,400	200	70	125	195
Nimba	2,100	300	80	50	130
Lofa	3,500	500	191	96	287
Total	7,000	1,000	341	271	612

**Table 3: Lowland Areas Planted by County**

County	Number of farmers	Number of hectares targeted	Number of hectares planted in June
Bong	1,400	200	157
Nimba	2,100	300	0
Lofa	3,500	500	111
Total	7,000	1,000	268

## Promoting embedded services by the private sector

### ***Technical assistance to aggregators, traders, processors, and rice business hubs:***

Afriland Bank approved the Selma Agriculture Corporation's trade-credit loan application valued at US\$100,000, and the first tranche of US\$50,000 was disbursed to this integrator in June. This is the first big loan given to any aggregator in the rice value chain as a result of a FED intervention.

During the reporting period, the Selma Agriculture Corporation also milled and supplied 60.27 metric tons of rice valued at US\$42,779 to the World Food Programme (WFP) as per the contract terms signed between both parties. Similarly, the Agriculture Infrastructure and Investment Company (AIIC) supplied 65 metric tons of milled rice to WFP valued at US\$46,200.

### ***Support aggregators with trucks on cost-share to support timely and reliable aggregation and transportation of paddy rice:***

In April, USAID Liberia provided the Selma Agriculture Corporation with a five-ton truck to support transport of rice in Lofa County. The vehicle will assist farmers across Lofa County to transport their paddy and other agricultural products from farm to processors to market. This will be particularly important during the rainy season, when the cost of transportation increases because of bad road conditions. The aggregator offered a discount of 60 percent to participating FED farmers as part of the



cost-share arrangement with USAID with an average price per 50kg bag varying from US\$0.60 to US\$1, depending on the distance.

The Agriculture Infrastructure and Investment Company (AIIC) is another progressive integrator providing transportation services to farmers in Lofa County and buying and processing paddy rice from farmers. FED conducted an assessment of activities of this integrator and determined that if supported with a truck, AIIC would be able to assist farmers by hauling rice stocks from production centers to processors and markets. FED has requested the U.S. Embassy to supply a truck for AIIC based on a similar arrangement made with Selma Agriculture Corporation. It is anticipated the AIIC will receive a truck in the following quarter.

## **Promoting two rice crops per year**

### ***Hire STTA to provide technical assistance to 42 irrigation spillway sites for double cropping:***

FED Rice Technical Specialist Dr. Pandian Balamurugan concluded his assignment at the end of this quarter. During his tenure, he provided technical assistance to the 42 water-management infrastructure sites in support of double-cropping efforts. These sites have benefitted from demonstrations of drum seeder and cono-weeder use, repair of spillways and head dikes, good land preparation techniques, weed control methods, and fertilizer management. A total of 90 hectares was double-cropped out of 210 hectares with a second crop of rice. By the end of June, seven hectares had been harvested, yielding 17 metric tons of paddy. Dr. Balamurugan gave a very well-received exit presentation on June 22, attended by MoA and USAID representatives. On June 24, Dr. Balamurugan delivered a similar presentation to a larger audience at the MoA offices in Monrovia.

## **Enhancing post-harvest management practices**

FED completed the construction of nine additional rice business hubs this quarter, including the installation and testing of mills, de-stoners and threshers at each hub. At the same time, FED-contracted engineers completed reinforcement work on four rice business hubs in Bong and Lofa Counties. These reinforcement works will be completed in all the pending rice business hubs by the end of July.



*Figure 1: Completed and reinforced rice business hub in Kahenjala, Lofa County.*

## **Task 1B: Increased Productivity and Profitability of the Cassava Value Chain**

### **Improve productivity of cassava farmers**

***Provide technical assistance and farming guides to FY13, FY14, and FY15 cassava groups to ensure they continue to apply improved practices and use improved varieties:***

FED continued to provide technical assistance to new and continuing cassava farmers through its field extension officers. Field preparation and planting began in May.

***Support an additional 6,000 new beneficiaries for FY16 cassava production:***

FED procured and distributed a total of 5,263 bundles of cassava cuttings to 300 *kuus* (farming groups) in Bong, Nimba, and Grand Bassa Counties. In June, FED conducted trainings for 300 *kuu* leaders on establishment of demonstration plots with mounds and ridges. Lofa was not targeted for cassava production during FY2016, as it is largely a rice-producing belt.

### **Increase access of processors, traders, logistics providers, and integrators to financial and business development services**

***Support at least five new micro-processors in Grand Bassa County to upgrade their processing and storage capacities:***

FED conducted a final assessment of five new cassava processors in Grand Bassa. These processors will be assisted to upgrade their processing capacities in the following quarter. These additional processors will provide producers with increased processing facilities in selected clusters to supply their tubers after harvest.

### **Establishing industrial cassava flour processing**

FED this quarter had intended to provide Falama Inc. with an industrial flour mill. However, because of budget constraints, the project shelved the procurement of the mill. Instead, FED linked Falama with the USAID Liberia Agribusiness Development Activity (LADA), where there is potential to leverage LADA's co-investment fund to finance this facility. In addition, FED is actively promoting Falama as a GDA activity, which would make it eligible for Development Credit Authority financing under that designation. By the end of June, Longman Engineering had completed the first deliverable for Falama's Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). FED anticipates the EIA to be completed in July.

## Task 1C: Increased Productivity and Profitability of the Horticulture Value Chain

FED continued supporting high-value vegetable farming clusters in Margibi and Montserrado Counties this quarter to ensure GAP and IPM for pest and disease control, expand rain shelters, strengthen existing market linkages and develop new ones with buyers from mainstream vegetable markets and high-end or niche markets.

### ***Vegetable production and sales:***

By the end of this quarter, the FED-supported vegetable production clusters had sold assorted vegetables with a value of US\$151,337. In June and July, heavy rains caused a reduction in the amount of produce on the market, driving prices higher as is typical during Liberia's rainy season. These numbers are subject to verification, however. The value is about 47 percent of the project's total sales target for vegetables of US\$2.6 million.

### **Improving productivity through GAP and IPM**

#### ***Sustain technical assistance to 321 farmer groups (including 25 agribusinesses) on GAP, IPM, and other productivity enhancing technologies:***

FED focused this reporting period on providing technical assistance for GAP and IPM to four high-value vegetable production clusters in Mount Barclay and Careysburg to enhance their quality and yields. The four clusters, which included Mawah, Mensah, Careysberg, and Whiteplains, received garden tools and equipment such as wheelbarrows, spades and rain-boots from FED in June.



*Figure 2: Dr. Maurice Ogutu, USAID COR, visits the Mawah farming cluster's lettuce production in Montserrado County and the Kuta Cluster's bitter ball farm in Margibi County.*

Local contractors in Mensah Farm and Mawah clusters completed the construction of two water wells this quarter. The wells were installed with culverts, manual hand pumps and protective covering, and have been locked pending a water analysis by the National Standards Laboratory (NSL). The water from these wells will be used solely for irrigation purposes in the open fields and rain shelters on these two high-value vegetable production sites. These two clusters are the major production areas for vegetables supplied to institutional markets and, in the future, to export markets.

## Technology introduction and adoption

### ***Production in rain shelters:***

The Mawah and Mensah farm clusters in Mount Barclay, Montserrado County, completed the construction of rain shelters designed from local materials. These rain shelters have increased the area under protected cultivation and will be used for production of high-value vegetables during the rainy season.

The Church Group Children

Women and Youth Empowerment Program

(CGCYWEP) and Careysburg clusters will also be assisted to expand their existing rain shelters using similar methods.



*Figure 3: Rain shelter construction in Mount Barclay, Montserrado County*

### ***Mechanization in planting bed preparation:***

FED provided 5.5 horsepower rototillers to the Mawah and Mensah clusters to assist with land preparation. The preparation of planting beds is physically intensive, using grub hoes and shovels. It takes about one day to prepare 250 square meters of vegetable bed. The rototillers helped reduce land preparation time from one day to one hour. Moreover, the machine does not require as much physical strength, which promotes increased participation by women in the activity. This reduced preparation time has meant that farmers with children are able to spend more time taking care of their children and on other family caregiving chores.



*Figure 4: Power tiller demonstrations with the Mawah and Mensah farming clusters.*

## **AVRDC (World Vegetable Center) variety trials**

FED's Horticulture Specialist Emmanuel Owusu continued to monitor the growth and adaptability of varieties under trials provided by AVRDC. These included three varieties of okra (kooni, batoumambe, and gombo varieties). A comprehensive report on the growth and morphological characteristics as well as pest and disease prevalence of the introduced cultivars was submitted to AVRDC for review. AVRDC

20



will provide seed kits of improved varieties to 10,000 households in Bong and Nimba Counties under the USAID *Deploying seed kits to tackle malnutrition in Liberia* activity. Mr. Owusu concluded his contract and departed FED at the end of the reporting period.

## Strengthening farmer-market linkages and expanding markets

The FED-assisted production clusters Careysburg, Mawah, and Mensah continued to supply vegetables to the Royal Grand Hotel this quarter. In April, FED also facilitated a vegetable-supply agreement with the Golden Beach Restaurant in Monrovia. The owner, C. Van Ngo, has agreed to provide seed inputs to the high-value vegetable clusters, the cost of which will be deducted from the sales of vegetables. The restaurant also has particular interest in herbs and will provide seeds for specific types.

The first trial shipment for export of two okra varieties (koonie, shankar FI) took place in late-April of this reporting period. The consignee was Jean Louise Gruter, the chairman of the VS Compagnie Sarl (VSCS) of Paris, France. The shipment contained 5 kilograms of shankar FI and 2.7 kilograms of koonie varieties. Brussels Air Cargo contributed the transport cost to Brussels and delivery to the consignee.



Figure 5: Preparing the trial shipments of okra for export to France.

In May, the consignee confirmed that he had received the shipment in good condition. The importer has requested additional shipments and is interested in importing more vegetable varieties, including cucumbers and eggplants. The importer has also expressed interest in investing in cashew production in Liberia. Mr. Gruter will be visiting Liberia either in late-August or September to establish more concrete market linkages with potential exporters from Liberia.

## Task 1D: Increased Productivity and Profitability of the Goat Value Chain

### Promote improved herd management practices

#### Technical assistance to new and continuing farmers:

FED provided technical assistance to new and continuing goat groups this quarter. This assistance was provided through FED's field extension staff and Monrovia based



Figure 6: A goat farmer stands in front of recently constructed goat shelter.

technical staff. FED monitored the farmers' continued use of the goat shelters for better herd management, ensured that farmers fed their animals with locally available nutritious forages, and that they selected and fattened the right animals for sale. During this period, FED prioritized technical assistance to FY16 beneficiaries in 78 goat production sites because of the existing human resource challenges.

***Train 3,928 new beneficiaries on herd management practices and mineral salt lick fabrication:***

FED trained 78 lead farmers (73 men and 5 women) on mineral salt-lick fabrication and on how to design and build goat shelters using locally available materials. These training sessions were held in Bong, Nimba, Lofa and Grand Bassa Counties. The trainees are from 78 new FY16 sites and are, in turn, conducting training to just under 4,000 goat farmers located in their respective sites.

**Table 4: Lead Farmers Trained by County**

County	Number of Lead Farmers	Male	Female
Bong	23	23	0
Grand Bassa	9	4	5
Nimba	26	26	0
Lofa	20	20	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>5</b>

By the end of this quarter, 58 new beneficiary groups had received mineral salt-lick ingredients in Bong, Nimba, Lofa, and Grand Bassa Counties. A total of 973 lead farmers (836 men and 137 women) had been trained on fabricating mineral salt licks for their goat herds. These lead farmers are training goat farmers in their clusters to make mineral salt licks in order to reach FED's target of 3,928 total beneficiary goat farmers.

Twenty-seven goat producer groups constructed 47 shelters using locally available materials. The average cost of constructing these shelters using local materials is US\$1,000 per site, compared with US\$4,000 using materials provided by FED for the previous demonstration sites.

***Kidding and mortality rates:***

A total of 712 new kids (305 males and 407 females) were born in FED-supported goat production intensification sites this quarter. In total, 2,584 kids have been born within these herds since October 2015. Also during this quarter, 1,019 kids were weaned into adulthood after completing a six-month cycle.

Thirty-two goats died during this reporting period within the goat-production sites in Lofa, Nimba, and Grand Bassa Counties as a result of various ailments. After mortality is taken into consideration, the total herd size by the end of this quarter in FED-supported goat-production intensification sites was 19,023 animals (11,477 does, 5,187 bucks and 2,359 kids). A total of 121 animals were treated by Community Animal Health Workers (CAHWs) during the reporting period.

## **Establish nucleus breeding herd center at Central Agricultural Research Institute (CARI)**

### ***Renovate the quarantine facility at CARI for housing the nucleus-breeding herd:***

On June 7, Tallobenku Engineering began the conversion of the quarantine facility at CARI to establish the nucleus breeding herd center. This facility will have slated floors established in 13 of the 16 quadrants. It is anticipated that the facility will be ready for hand over to CARI before the end of July. CARI will source for 100 animals (20 bucks and 80 does) of superior genetic stock for breeding at the facility once the conversion is completed.

## **Provide assistance to MOA in the control of Peste des Petits Ruminants (PPR)**

BRAC Liberia completed the PPR vaccination campaign this quarter in Bong, Nimba, Lofa, and Grand Bassa Counties. A total of 103,249 small ruminants were vaccinated, a bit less than the target of 108,000 since many some farmers refused to have their animals vaccinated and, in other cases, the open vaccines were unusable after eight hours. Only one case of mortality was reported as a result of a pregnant doe being vaccinated in Nimba County. The complete database of animals vaccinated will be submitted by BRAC in July and shared with the MoA and Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nation's (FAO) office in Rome.

**Table 5: Number of Confirmed Animals Vaccinated by County**

County	Number of districts	Number of farmers	Number of animals	Number of animals vaccinated
Lofa	5	4,502	40,987	32,925
Grand Bassa	4	371	4,615	3,700
Bong	8	2,937	34,432	28,634
Nimba	13	3,167	43,186	37,990
TOTAL	30	10,977	123,220	103,249

In June, BRAC Liberia commenced the post-vaccination collection of blood samples, which will be analyzed using the

USAID Food and Enterprise Development Project  
FY2016 Quarter Three Report, April to June 2016



**Figure 7 : BRAC Liberia workers vaccinate a goat in Bong County.**

ELISA Reader provided to the MoA. The samples will measure the effectiveness of antibody reaction to the vaccinations. FAO Rome will send technical experts in July to assist the MoA in conducting these analyses. By the end of June, 200 blood samples had been collected out of a sample size of 200 animals across the four counties.

**Table 6: Number of Post-vaccination Blood Samples Collected by County**

County	Number of districts	Number of samples needed	Number of samples collected
Lofa	5	52	52
Grand Bassa	4	10	10
Bong	8	78	78
Nimba	13	60	60
TOTAL	30	200	200

## **Formalizing livestock marketing**

### **Goat sales:**

A total of 476 goats was sold for US\$33,126 in FED-supported goat production intensification sites during this quarter. In total, 1,534 goats have been sold for US\$155,609 since October 2015. The current sales achievements represent 51 percent of the expected annual sales target of US\$305,074.

## **Subtask 1.2 Improved Access to Agricultural Inputs**

### **Increase access to improved seed and good planting material**

#### ***Provide technical assistance to 70 rice seed multiplication (RSM) sites in collaboration with Africa Rice:***

In April, FED submitted 42 seed samples from the rice seed multiplication sites to the Central Agricultural Research Institute (CARI) for purity and germination tests. Of the 42 samples tested, 32 passed the purity and germination tests, a 76 percent success rate for samples submitted. The overall success rate across the 70 sites was 46 percent. Eighty-five metric tons (85 MT) of improved rice seed that met the certification protocols are available. The information on the successful sites was compiled and passed on to Africa Rice and West Africa Agriculture Productivity Program (WAAPP).



In May, Africa Rice officially launched its USAID Seed Scaling TA Project in Liberia. FED's input supply team gave a presentation on the rice-seed multiplication program and shared information with Africa Rice. The successful rice-seed multiplication sites are expected to be taken up by Africa Rice to upscale certified rice seed production under their new project.

***Support to commercial production and marketing of cassava cuttings:***

In April, FED harvested to total of 131,040 cuttings of nine improved varieties from two screening sites in Lofa County. These cuttings were labeled, tagged, and dispatched to FED county offices in Lofa, Bong, Nimba, and Grand Bassa for onward distribution to 80 commercial nurseries.

**Table 7: Distribution of Cuttings by Variety and County**

County	Nurseries	Cassava Varieties Bundles. (Bundle = 20 Cuttings)									Total Bundles
		TME419	01/1412	98/0581	01/30572	01/0040	98/0505	95/0289	92/0057	96/1632	
Lofa	8	33	38	73	32	101	31	85	143	120	656
Bong	16	66	74	145	63	207	59	173	287	241	1,315
Nimba	32	129	148	289	127	413	124	342	565	486	2,623
Grand Bassa	24	97	112	217	96	308	93	255	420	360	1,958
<b>Total</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>372</b>	<b>724</b>	<b>318</b>	<b>1,029</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>855</b>	<b>1,415</b>	<b>1,207</b>	<b>6,552</b>

  

<b>Total Cuttings</b>	<b>131,040</b>
-----------------------	----------------

**Increase access to agricultural inputs for farmers**

***Promote embedded financing for inputs through agro-dealers and aggregators:***

Three FED community-based facilitators from the Bong County office participated in an agro-dealer training and certification workshop organized by the LADA in June. FED provided LADA with lists of agro-dealers whom we have assisted to participate in the program, while also advising on training content and methods for this workshop. Forty agro-dealers from 15 Liberian counties were trained on quality standards for inputs such as seed, fertilizer and pesticides; how to properly use inputs; and how to operate profitable businesses. After completing the workshop, the agro-dealers were certified and will receive support from LADA to expand their operations. They will also be eligible to participate in the distribution of inputs using a voucher system under the Liberia Agriculture Transformation Activity.

**Promote organic fertilizer mix/efficient use of inorganic fertilizer**

***Provide technical assistance to farmer groups to adopt composting at farm level:***

FED received USAID approval to present a compost-shredding machine to a vegetable farmers' association in Montserrado County. As per USAID's instructions, all vegetable groups which had participated in past composting demonstrations were contacted and made aware of the availability to use the shredding machine based on a 40 percent cost-share proposal, with 60 percent of the costs covered by FED. The shredder was originally slated for disposal to the Mawah vegetable cluster, but it was not able to achieve the 40 percent cost-share contribution on its own. We are currently in discussions with three clusters – Mensah and Careysburg as well as Mawah – to jointly contribute the cost-share in order that Mawah can remain the primary operator, with all three clusters benefiting. The shredder will produce compost and mulch to be sold to the other farmer groups.

### **Subtask 1.3: Agricultural Extension Support**

#### **Create access to and availability of standardized extension materials**

##### ***Print and disseminate extension materials and farmer guides to information access points:***

The original 40 extension materials under development were consolidated into the 28 currently being revised and edited. This does not involve less information, but rather the same information streamlined and contained in fewer individual publications. Upon completion by early-September, these will be distributed electronically, and some printed, to the MoA, lead farmers, CoEs, Extension Officers, LNGOs, the private sector, and other development partners interested in replicating copies. In June, FED Extension Officers were invited to test the revised materials related to ease of use and understanding. It is anticipated that all the materials will be completed and disseminated in electronic and printed copies before the end of next quarter.

##### **Production and broadcasting of agriculture radio programs:**

During this reporting period, FED's Radio Specialist supported Radio LACSA in Compound #3, Grand Bassa County, to develop four jingles promoting the cassava value chain in both English and the local Bassa dialect. FED also conducted a radio interview with a successful VSLA farmer group in Central Buchanan. FED supported the group of 25 women in FY14 to start the VSLA initiative. The VSLA increased its investments from LD2,500 in 2014 to about LD500,000 in 2016. Their success story will be featured on the twelfth edition of the "On the Farm" radio program broadcast on the UNMIL and United Methodist radio stations.

### **Subtask 1.4 Youth in Agribusiness**

#### **Provide technical assistance to 25 youth agribusiness enterprises towards production of high value vegetables and cassava tuber**



### ***Production and sales of vegetables:***

FED provided technical assistance to 25 peri-urban youth agribusiness enterprises in Montserrado and Margibi Counties. This assistance was provided by FED's Horticulture Specialist and Field Extension Officers and included monitoring of GAP and IPM for vegetable production. These enterprises cultivated African eggplant, cabbage, corn, bitter ball, and chili pepper. A total of 162 hectares were harvested, yielding 10.7 metric tons of vegetables which were sold for US\$10,343. Since October 2015, these enterprises have sold a total of 40.3 metric tons of vegetables for a total of US\$57,984.

*Figure 8: Lucy Davis, a member of Kaker Agricultural Development youth group, on their cabbage farm in Todee District, Montserrado County.*

### ***Training on drip irrigation technologies:***

During the same period, the 25 peri-urban youth agribusiness enterprises were trained through field demonstrations on how to manage and maintain drip irrigation technologies for the dry-season vegetable production. The refresher training was conducted to assist groups that were observed to have constraints in managing the drip irrigation technologies that they received from FED.

### ***Train 25 peri-urban agribusiness enterprises on improved cassava production methods and practices:***

A total of 210 youth (103 men and 107 women) in Montserrado and Margibi Counties were trained by FED on improved cassava production methods during the quarter under review. The 25 clusters were provided with cassava cuttings to plant on a total of 50 hectares. By the end of June, the 25 clusters had established cassava demonstration plots on a total of 20 hectares and individual members had planted 50 hectares on their own fields.

## **Subtask 1.5: Improving Human Nutrition**

### **Implement diet behavior change strategy**

#### ***Nutrition messaging:***

FED disseminated nutrition messages to 294 lead farmers (265 men and 29 women) in Bong, Nimba, Lofa, and Grand Bassa Counties. The messaging was disseminated to 78 lead farmers (74 men and four women) during goat value chain training sessions on mineral-block (salt-lick) fabrication and goat-shelter construction using local materials and to 216 lead farmers (191 men and 25 women) during lowland rice training sessions. The lead farmers were provided with nutrition flyers developed by FED, providing guidance on the 12 vital food groups and the importance of consuming a balanced diet. In total, 650 individuals (531 men and 119 women) have received direct nutrition messaging from FED since October 2015.

#### ***Nutrition teaching aides:***

During the same period, FED printed 800 copies of nutrition teaching aids containing targeted messaging on the importance of the 12 vital food groups. Design of these materials was based on development of the behavior-change pilot implemented in Nimba County during FY15. The nutrition teaching aides will be provided to lead farmers and FED Extension Officers in Bong, Nimba, Lofa, Grand Bassa, Montserrado, and Margibi Counties, and will assist the recipients to continue nutrition messaging to their farmer groups.

## **Component Two: Stimulate Private Sector Growth and Investment**

### **Task 2: Policy Enabling Environment for Private Sector Growth**

#### **Policy reform activities via technical working groups and 10 Percent Cassava Composite Flour Policy development:**

FED supported the MOA to host two successful policy working groups during this reporting period. In May, a meeting featured presentations on the FED-supported policy efforts to pass legislation that will codify domestic adoption of three ECOWAS regulations and introduce a 10% cassava flour composite policy. In June, the final Stakeholder Working Forum (SWF) for the draft of the seed, pesticide and fertilizer acts was held in the MOA conference room, alongside an extended session that incorporated the Cassava Sector Working Group (CSWG).

In May, Deputy Minister for Technical Services Sizi Subah and Dr. Roland Massaquoi, the FED Agriculture Policy expert, presented a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis that outlined economic, agricultural, and nutrition-based evidence in favor of the 10% cassava composite policy. They built consensus about the need to adopt such a policy by reviewing similar policies implemented in neighboring African countries, including Ghana, Sierra Leone, Nigeria, and Tanzania. The event concluded when Dr. Massaquoi encouraged the working group to engage in a participatory discussion about the merits of cassava flour by offering the working group members a blind taste test of five products made with varying percentages of cassava flour. In this anecdotal setting, the products that contained flour composites between 10% to 30% cassava received a significantly higher number of favorable votes than the single product that contained only wheat flour. Additionally, the activity was engaging and built consensus among members about the need to capitalize on support of the work from MOA to enact a meaningful policy that can improve the cassava value chain in Liberia.

The final Stakeholder Working Forum reviewing the draft of the seed, pesticide, and fertilizer acts was held at the MOA on June 9. Dr. Moses Zinnah, the Liberian Minister of Agriculture, chaired the meeting before handing the gavel to Deputy Minister Sizi Subah and Dr. Massaquoi to finalize the draft legislation.

The working group addressed technicalities surrounding the draft legislation that operationalizes the ECOWAS regulations. Members discussed the selection process for membership on the semi-autonomous National Seed Board (NSB), import/export requirements, and licensing regimes. Dr.

Massaquoi explained the purpose of the national Seed Development and Certification Agency (SDCA) as a quality control agency. At the conclusion of the discussion, Deputy Minister Subah explained that the draft acts will shortly be passed onto the Law Reform Commission (LRC), which will review the documents and clarify any legal issues before presenting them to the President's Cabinet for final review and submission to the Legislature. As of June 30, the final draft acts were endorsed by the MOA working group and were delivered to the Law Reform Commission, which is reviewing them for technical and legal acceptance before passing them to the Cabinet.

After reviewing the draft legislation, the working group turned to the cassava flour policy, which is being developed by MOA with the support of USAID, the Liberian business community, and other key government entities. Initially, members of the CSWG referred to a national cassava strategy document that was finalized in 2010. Dr. Subah emphasized the importance of addressing the specific flour component, rather than attempting to implement the broad-based, 2010 national strategy. Afterwards, discussion centered on the current national capacity of the Liberian bread industry and the potential for cassava flour to spur additional economic growth.

The forums were attended by approximately 30 key stakeholders including representatives from USAID, FED, Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP); the Liberia Regulatory Commission (LRC); BRAC; CARL; Africa Rice; Environmental Protection Agency (EPA); and the CSWG.

A planning session for the cassava flour policy was rescheduled from June 30 to late July and will be held at the FED office to consolidate support from both MOCI and MOA for the final cassava strategy document. FED is working with the Liberia Agribusiness Development Activity (LADA) to determine if it will support the next steps of transitioning the three draft acts for harmonizing ECOWAS regulations from the LRC to the Liberia Cabinet and Legislature.

## **Subtask 2.1 Access to Finance**

### **Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLA)**

#### **EDUCARE**

EDUCARE completed its exit presentation, which summarized its year-long work to support the FED VSLA activity. The NGO submitted its final report on 373 VSLA groups during the second quarter. The exit presentation was an opportunity to publicize the successful work of EDUCARE. Alongside EDUCARE, FED initiated and sustained a lending program that enriched 373 VSLA groups with more than 10,300 active members. On a quarterly basis, it provided microloans of more than \$175,000 to beneficiaries, averaging \$470 per group. The number of VSLA groups supported in each county is:

Lofa – 75  
Nimba – 75  
Bong – 75  
Bassa – 75  
Margibi – 37  
Montserrado – 36

The presentation was attended by USAID COR Dr. Maurice Ogutu and Alternate COR Mulbah “Jack” Jackollie, as well as other partners, including Universal Empowerment Mission (UEM), which is implementing another VSLA activity with FED. Together, a total of 723 VSLA groups have benefitted from FED support, 350 supported by UEM and 373 by Educare.

### ***Universal Empowerment Mission (UEM)***

UEM also finalized its last deliverable report this reporting period for its role in implementing activities supporting 350 additional VSLAs over a 10-month period. The scope of the project oversaw the final rollout of village savings and loans associations to more than 9,700 beneficiaries in all six FED counties. In the last quarter, UEM reported more than \$290,000 in loan disbursements to members in 350 different village groups. The final report is under review, and UEM will conduct a final presentation in July to summarize the accomplishments, present findings and share lessons learned.

Additionally, and as part of the effort to revise the FED PMP, the Component Two team worked with UEM to collect individualized beneficiary information forms from each of the nearly 10,000 female members benefitting from FED technical assistance. These forms will be used to complete a final database for the project, which can be provided to LADA and other partners as a transition to identify groups that could qualify for future microcredit opportunities. The UEM team finalized all beneficiary forms for Nimba, Grand Bassa, Lofa, Bong, and Montserrado/Margibi Counties, and delivered them to the FED office on June 30.

### ***VSLA Village Agents***

In May, 14 Village Agents (Vas) were hired to support the 350 UEM VSLAs. This is an addition to the short-term FED staff currently supporting 373 VSLAs trained by EDUCARE. This cadre of short-term technical assistance consists of village agents, who are embedded at the county level. Each village agent provides assistance in the form of monitoring, accounting, and reporting for 20 to 25 VSLA groups. Additionally, village agents verify the number of active members in each VSLA, the number of shares purchased weekly, the number of loans taken out, and the loan repayment schedule. In cases in which loans generate short-term jobs within the community, these figures are also recorded and verified by the village agent. The village agents will continue technical assistance until August.

During the reporting period, FED paid a site visit to identified VSLA groups that had paid the cost for certification with the National Apex of VSLAs (NAPEX), but never received proof of their certification. NAPEX certification is required for a VSLA to apply for a loan from the Central Bank of Liberia (CBL), so this posed a key barrier to VSLAs affected by the oversight. FED raised the issue with the NAPEX governing director and informed NGOs working in the region about the delay to issue certificates. VSLA group members were encouraged to firmly press their case with NAPEX to receive certificates in a timely manner while also exercising patience with the Central Bank’s loan processes in the absence of NAPEX certification.

After raising the issue with NAPEX, the FED Access to Finance Officer confirmed that membership dues were paid, and the groups received their official certificates in June, which will allow them to apply for

CBL loans. FED staff traveled to 34 groups in Lofa and Nimba Counties to verify the receipt of the NAPEX documentation. Sixteen groups were registered in 2015, and the additional 34 VSLA groups bring the total number of FED-supported VSLAs to receive NAPEX accreditation to 50. This achieves an important target, but it also highlights a difficulty that many grassroots savings organizations and small-holder farmers face when attempting to navigate the complicated bureaucratic, financial and regulatory systems in Liberia while attempting to access credit from formal lending institutions.

**Table 8: NAPEX Certified VSLAs**

No.	Name of VSLA group	County	Community	Year Formed	Registered with NAPEX	Received NAPEX Certificate
1	Bazagazia	Lofa	Bazagizia	April, 2014	August, 2015	June 16, 2016
2	Kobake Mandigo	Lofa	Krugbomai	April, 2014	August, 2015	June 16, 2016
3	Bazagazia low land	Lofa	Bazagizia	April, 2014	August, 2015	June 16, 2016
4	Kobake Lorma	Lofa	Krugbomai	April, 2014	August, 2015	June 16, 2016
5	Kormia	Lofa	Kormia	April, 2014	August, 2015	June 16, 2016
6	Mongruhun	Lofa	Mongruhun	April, 2014	August, 2015	June 16, 2016
7	Ngoyilangi	Lofa	Ngehemah	April, 2014	August, 2015	June 16, 2016
8	Tenebu	Lofa	Tenebu	April, 2014	August, 2015	June 16, 2016
9	Kahenjala	Lofa	Kahenjala	April, 2014	August, 2015	June 16, 2016
10	Zeelie # two	Lofa	David Selma	April, 2014	August, 2015	June 16, 2016
11	Seekemai	Lofa	Seekemai	April,	August, 2015	June 16, 2016

				2014		
12	Kolliemai	Lofa	Kolliemai	April, 2014	August, 2015	June 16, 2016
13	Lazelamai	Lofa	Lazelamai	April, 2014	August, 2015	June 16, 2016
14	Zenelormai	Lofa	Zenelomai	April, 2014	August, 2015	June 16, 2016
15	Wolumai	Lofa	Fissibu	April, 2014	August, 2015	June 16, 2016
16	Salyea women Agr.	Lofa	Salayea	April, 2014	August, 2015	June 16, 2016
17	Zeaminah	Lofa	Yeala	April, 2014	August, 2015	June 16, 2016
18	Nuleninawoni	Lofa	Zorzor	April, 2014	August, 2015	June 16, 2016
19	Bahn kwadoe #2	Nimba	Bahn	April, 2014	October, 2015	June 15, 2016
20	Bahn kwadoe #3	Nimba	Bahn	April, 2014	October, 2015	June 15, 2016
21	Sackor United Women	Nimba	Bahn	April, 2014	October, 2015	June 15, 2016
22	Lorkerkue Women	Nimba	Bahn	April, 2014	October, 2015	June 15, 2016
23	Kolakeh Women#2	Nimba	Payee	April, 2014	October, 2015	June 15, 2016
24	Kolakeh Women#3	Nimba	Payee	April, 2014	October, 2015	June 15, 2016
25	Karmplay Zone-3 Women	Nimba	Karnplay	April, 2014	October, 2015	June 15, 2016
26	Doaplay/Loguatou	Nimba	Loguatou	April, 2014	October, 2015	June 15, 2016



27	Karnplay Women	Nimba	Karnplay	April, 2014	October, 2015	June 15, 2016
28	Lapea#I Women	Nimba	Lapea	April, 2014	October, 2015	June 15, 2016
29	BleteahWomen	Nimba	Lapea	April, 2014	October, 2015	June 15, 2016
30	Kwakersah Women	Nimba	Douplay	April, 2014	October, 2015	June 15, 2016
31	Karnplay United Women	Nimba	Karnplay	April, 2014	October, 2015	June 15, 2016
32	Make Show Women	Nimba	Manbof	April, 2014	October, 2015	June 15, 2016
33	Bon-Kwadoe	Nimba	Maiplay	April, 2014	October, 2015	June 15, 2016
34	Kwakerser Women Duopay	Nimba	Douplay	April, 2014	October, 2015	June 15, 2016

## Subtask 2.2: Access to Business Development Support (BDS) Services and Enterprise Service Centers & Promotion of Public-Private Partnership (PPP) to Benefit Feed the Future Objectives

### Supporting BSPs to establish ESCs

During the quarter under review, FED engaged in intensive efforts to incubate five participating business service providers (BSPs) so they can graduate to full-fledged Enterprise Service Center (ESCs). To build on the multi-year effort to develop BSP capacity and establish the ESCs, FED initiated a partnership with Top Consulting Inc. (TCi) in April. In May, TCi continued its work on ESC development and conducted an institutional analysis of the management and operations processes of each BSP. TCi identified areas of capacity gaps and also institutional strengths, which it incorporated into the design of business models and operational plans for each BSP. The assessment process included:

- gathering of detailed business data/financial information;
- review of any existing operational plans and best practices; and
- review of standard agribusiness training manuals and operational forms utilized by the pre-selected ESCs.

FED also supported a two-tiered training and capacity building effort in May and June. BSP county offices in Lofa, Grand Bassa, Bong, Margibi/Montserrado, and Nimba received training on May 9-20, 2016. Afterwards, BSP leadership was trained in Monrovia on June 9-15, 2016. The initial training in the county focused on business development and technical services to strengthen the capacity of the 5 pre-qualified BSPs and field-level staff. A key priority was to build the staff at the county level so that each ESC operates as a functional 'agribusiness center' for its district. In turn, the BSP staff trained a total number of 800 beneficiaries on basic BDS services in support of the fee-for-service model under which each ESC will operate.

The second tier of training in Monrovia focused on both improving BSP capacity to operate under a "fee-for-service" agribusiness model, and on the broader strategic visions for each BSP to become self-sufficient as an ESC. (See side bar below.) County level staff was trained in delivering business development services and managing financial systems adequate to generate regular cash flow necessary to keep small businesses afloat in rural Liberia. The leadership of each BSP developed an operational plan that it will use as a full-fledged ESC to engage its client base, strengthen the value chain and ensure profitability. The table below captures the 62 prospective ESC staff who participated in the exercises in Lofa, Nimba, Grand Bassa, Mont/Margibi, and Bong Counties:

**Table 9: FED-Supported BSPs Participating in ESC Capacity Building Trainings**

Name of BSP	County of Operation	Staff receiving capacity building training		Total # of staff trained
		Male	Female	
Jacob F. Tomei Enterprise Service Center (JFTESC)	Lofa	17	1	18
Community Youth Network Program (CYNP)	Grand Bassa	12	1	13
Liberia Entrepreneur Asset Development (LEAD)	Nimba	4	1	5
Green Cost Agriculture Project (G-CAP)	Mont/Margibi	15	1	16
Liberia Initiative Development Services (LIDS)	Bong	8	2	10
Total #: of Beneficiaries		56	6	62

In addition to BSP capacity building, FED and TCi supported an education and awareness campaign in each county to promote the matriculating ESC as the center for agribusiness in each county. FED Communication teams worked closely to develop the awareness campaign materials, which included the ESC radio jingles, talk shows, public relations materials such as banners and a mobile “road show,” in which ESCs moved from village to village, promoting their name brand, their services and their newly refined business models. Sample farming guides and materials for businesses and value chain entities were designed and distributed to farmers as materials to grow business revenue and help clients better understand the ESC services. The awareness campaign ran from June 28 to 30, at the various communities, districts and towns of Lofa, Bong Nimba, Grand Bassa and Margibi Counties.

After the successful roadshows, FED will finalize the ESC activity in August and September. The current plan is to review BSP progress to date, congratulate the BSPs at a small ceremony at the FED office in August, and graduate all five BSPs by designating them an official ESC status at the forthcoming Liberian Agribusiness Expo in September. (See Highlight Snapshot below)

#### **HIGHLIGHT SNAPSHOT: Transitioning BSPs to ESCs for sustainability**

In 2014, FED began supporting small NGOs to become business service providers (BSPs) in six counties across Liberia’s development belt. More than an extension office, the BSPs offer a diverse array of services that filled a niche gap in integrated agribusiness: record keeping trainings, access to finance services, market information, and production/processing technology and techniques.

With FED’s closedown approaching, the project is now actively engaged in transitioning these BSPs to become self-sustaining, fee-based enterprise service centers (ESCs), which will continue to provide services for the agribusiness sector while generating a sustainable revenue stream.

In June, FED and Top Consulting Inc. (TCI), a local consulting firm, implemented a two-tiered program to build ESC capacity and market their services to an expanded client base. The approach began with a three-day training session in Monrovia on leadership, strategic planning, revenue models, business plan analysis, marketing/branding, and equipment leasing. Other topics included entrepreneurship, financial management, and export market strategies.

Daniel F. Weetol, Jr., an executive for ESC Liberia Entrepreneurial and Asset Development who took part in the June training sessions, said the biggest challenge will be attracting clients to their new, fee-based service model. “We are going to face uphill challenges and difficulties in convincing farmers to



*A road show in Bong County talks to communities about ESC services*

adapt to the new approach since they used to receive services for free,” he said. To mitigate this challenge, TCi implemented an intensive marketing and awareness campaign, which included radio talk shows, jingles, flyers, banners, T-shirts, and face-to-face interactive sessions at the community level to convince farmers about the long-term benefits of the new ESCs.

John Miller, a farmer in Todee District, Montserrado County, said after hearing about the ESCs that farmers were initially worried about the fee-based services, but recognized the importance of the services offered.

“We cannot continue to expect that every support given to us as farmers should be free, so we are happy that the Enterprise Service Centers (ESCs) are coming to work with us for reasonable fee,” he said. “This new idea is highly welcomed. Transportation of products is a major problem for us and we hope the ESCs will continue to help us with this.”

## **Component Three: Build Local Technical and Managerial Human Resource Capabilities**

### **Activity 3.1 Roll Out the National Diploma in Agriculture (NDA) in All Four CoEs**

#### **Task 3.1.1: CoEs to recruit more students to enroll in the NDA Program to achieve the LOP target of 2,500**

FED delivered an additional 100 copies of NDA posters and 75 copies of flyers to each of the four CoE institutions in June as part of a recruitment campaign to increase enrollment for the next semester, which begins at most of the institutes in September. The CoEs distributed the posters and flyers to various high schools in and around their communities. Results of the effort will be known when September enrollment numbers are counted.

#### **Task 3.1.4: Evaluate use of NDA curriculum and provide recommendations for refinement**

In April, FED staff visited the four CoEs and verified that instructors effectively delivered the syllabus and lesson plans of the NDA program. The CoEs where the NDA Program is being implemented include the Booker Washington Institute, and the Nimba, Lofa, and Grand Bassa County Community Colleges.

That visit was followed in June by Dr. Carl Motsenbocker, the lead consultant from Louisiana State University (LSU) overseeing Component 3 activities, arrived in late May to complete an impact assessment on the delivery of the program at the four FED-supported vocational training institutions. During the impact assessment, more than 100 students and 21 instructors of the NDA program were evaluated.

The assessment focused on delivery of the curriculum by instructors, students' response to the implementation of the program, text and reference materials, utilization of facilities such as libraries, soil laboratories, demonstration sites, computer labs, and the challenges faced since the inception of the program.

Dr. Motsenbocker presented his findings and put forth recommendations following the assessment on June 17. The objective of the impact assessment was to create an exit strategy for the Ministry of Education (MoE) and the Technical Vocational Education Training (TVET) to take over the NDA Program for the start of the new school year in August.

His recommendations included suggestions of ways to keep the CoEs' programs and functions sustainable after the closure of FED. Some of his main points included:

- Develop protocols and lab fees for use of the lab to process soil samples for non-CoE clients.
- Ensure that computers donated by FED are provided for use by the Agriculture Departments.
- Conduct a yearly review session with each of the CoEs to discuss as a group the successes and challenges of NDA program implementation.
- Provide guidance on institutional governance and procedures for all NDA institutions.
- Ensure that each institution provides a separate budget for the Agriculture Department to ensure funds that are generated are available for agriculture enterprises and teaching in a timely manner.
- Insure adequate staffing to teach courses.
- Provide travel support for students to the practicum sites (farmer and school enterprises) by securing donated vehicles.

### **Activity 3.5 Completing Basic Facilities Needs to Enhance Learning**

#### **Task 3.5.1: Rehabilitation of libraries**

FED began the vetting process in April for the selection of vendors to renovate libraries of the four CoEs. Four construction firms were selected to carry out the rehabilitation as follows:

Global Construction & Mechanical Company (GCMC) - BWI

Five-Star Construction Company - NCCC

Tallobenku Construction Company - LCCC

Kolovalee Construction Company - GBCC

The construction began in June, and FED expects the process to be completed by mid-August.

Meanwhile, FED initiated the process of getting the remaining two CoEs, Booker Washington Institute and Grand Bassa County Community College, wired and online. The two other CoEs were wired during the previous reporting period. FED's Information Communication Technology Unit in April conducted a needs assessment for structural cabling for LAN at BWI and GBCCC. In May, a selected vendor, Ducor Technologies, began installing structural cabling for internet connectivity at these two CoEs. The work was completed and verified by FED local IT in June, after which time FED IT personnel began setting up the computer labs at these institutions. The process is expected to be completed in early July.

### **Activity 3.4 Enhancing Availability of Textbooks and Reference Materials for the NDA**

#### **Task 3.4.1: Procure additional textbooks**

The procurement of additional textbooks to enhance teaching and learning at the four CoEs is ongoing. FED has found it a challenge to find textbooks which address agriculture issues specific to Liberia. FED hopes to have this activity complete before the start of the new school year at the CoEs.

### **Activity 3.6 Promoting Learning by Doing in Partnership with Private Sector**

#### **Task 3.6.1: Student internships with industrial players and government agencies**

Internships started in April for 51 agriculture students at two FED-supported CoEs. The students were placed in international and national NGOs focused on agriculture and agribusiness development to gain hands-on work experience. Supporting institutions included the African Development Corps, ACDIVOCA, BRAC-Liberia, IFAD, RAA, ARS, Winrock, and Rights and Rice. Fifteen of the students were from Nimba County Community College and 36 were from Lofa County Community College. The internships will continue until the end of July.

#### **Task 3.6.2: Support student leadership groups/FFA**

This reporting period, Dr. Bradley Leger, a consultant with LSU, facilitated the establishment of the Future Farmers Associations (FFAs) at the four CoEs. Dr. Leger conducted training-of-trainers (TOT) workshops on leadership training in May for 59 student leaders and eight agriculture instructors at the Booker Washington Institute and the three community colleges in Lofa, Grand Bassa, and Nimba Counties. The trainings support NDA program students and instructors, and assist in developing the activities of the newly established FFAs. The objectives of the FFAs are to support and build the capacity of young agriculture students to organize and develop leadership skills, encourage them to choose agriculture as a career, and increase their future employment potential following the completion of the NDA program. (See Highlight Snapshot below.)

**HIGHLIGHT SNAPSHOT:****Future Farmers Association: Young Leaders in Liberian Food Security**

FED-supported activities in agricultural education have encouraged young Liberian students to take on one of the country's most important roles in food security: a career in farming. By developing and implementing the NDA program in four Liberian CoEs, FED has made tangible achievements in workforce development and technical capacity for Liberia's future farmers, farm workers and agro-entrepreneurs. The FFAs are student-run, professional organizations, which complement the NDA program to help build the leadership skills of young agriculture students.

Dr. Brad Leger's training sessions this quarter with the four FFA groups were praised by several student and CoE administration participants, who took part in instructional activities such as organization set up, bylaws and constitution drafting, and writing FFA five-year action plans. The training sessions encouraged the FFAs to extend their organizational reach to the county level and to serve as an umbrella body of agriculture groups, which would enhance agriculture activities in each county.

"The only way a developing country such as Liberia can graduate from abject poverty is through self-sufficiency in food production," said Samuel Woniyouwu, a member of the Lofa County Community College FFA and a participant in the trainings with Dr. Leger. "I want to be involved in the process of lifting my county—Lofa—to be the bread basket of Liberia. It's important for us to share our knowledge and mobilize in schools, farming groups and potential farmers to join with the FFA, so that we can move the sector forward."

Justin Luo, the coordinator of the Agriculture Department at the Nimba County Community College, also participated in Dr. Leger's sessions. "I see the formation of the FFA in this county as essential, because it provides a platform for us to work together and advocate as a group through leadership."

## **Activity 3.7 Building the Capacity of CoEs to Generate Additional Funding and to Manage Their Finances**

### **Task 3.7.1: Grant Development Workshop**

At the end of this quarter, FED hired Thomas Kanneh as a Grants Development Consultant to work with the four CoEs on identifying and securing outside funding sources for the institutes to continue their activities after the closedown of FED. The consultant will train the institute staff in grant proposal writing and grant management. FED is expected to finalize contractual agreements with the consultant and mobilize him to the field by mid-July.

## **Component Four: Cross-Cutting Activities**

### **Task 4.1 Communications/Knowledge Management**

In May, two members of the FED communications team, Judoemue Kollie, the Communications Assistant, and Robert Reeves, a Communications Specialist, travelled to Lofa and Nimba Counties to collect contents for Success Stories on FFA groups at FED-supported CoEs and speak with BSPs transitioning to ESCs under FED activity guidance. The team also gathered a recording to produce the radio program “On the Farm.” This show was the thirteenth produced by the Communications team for FED’s partner radio stations, UNMIL and the United Methodist, which airs the programs twice each month. Each program highlights different project activities from the field. These programs were interspersed with success stories from program beneficiaries, their use of new technologies, and interviews with agricultural sector stakeholders.

Also during this reporting period, the Communications department collaborated with the FED-contracted Top Consultants Inc. (TCi), and Component Two teams to develop the Business Service Providers’ (BSPs) transition to Enterprise Service Centers (ESCs) awareness campaign materials. Materials developed were used for the ESC road shows, banners, radio jingles and talk shows. The campaign ran from June 27 to 30, in the various communities, towns, and districts of Lofa, Bong, Nimba, Grand Bassa and Margibi Counties.

This quarter marked a final push to increase publicity of FED project achievements before the start of closedown this September. As part of that push, FED’s Communications Team in June began planning and preparing a press tour of FED project activity in Bong and Nimba counties. The four-day tour is tentatively scheduled for July 19, and will be the first of its kind for the five-year project. Five media outlets from local print and radio will travel with the Communication Team to visit FED-supported farmers in Bong and Nimba Counties. The tour will give the press a chance to conduct interviews about the impact of the project during the past five years of implementation. Media institutions that have expressed interest in participating include three print outlets, Daily Observer, New Democrat, and the Liberia News Agency (LINA); and two radio stations, Truth FM and Liberian Women Democracy Radio (LWDR).

The team also played an important role in FED’s planned Agribusiness Expo, which is tentatively scheduled for September 13 to 14. The communications team worked closely with other FED departments to assist in the development of marketing materials and planning for the event, which is expected to draw as many as 150 people, including representatives from Liberian ministries, agribusiness stakeholders, local and international NGOs and the donor and diplomatic community.

### **Task 4.2 Environmental Compliance**

The period under review began with update of the environmental files in Bong, Grand Bassa and Nimba Counties. The file-updating process was to ensure that FY2016 activities were planned in compliance



with the FED Environmental Management and Mitigation Plan (EMMP). After the completion of these three county reviews, the process continued in the remaining FED counties and is expected to be completed in the next quarter. In line with the EMMP, FED conducted an initial water quality test of two water wells constructed in two vegetable clusters in Mensah Farm and Mawah in Mount Barclay, Montserrado County. The test included an analysis of the presence and levels of coliform bacteria, and the level of arsenic. The results will be reported during the next quarter.

An Environmental Sustainability Needs Assessment was conducted by FED subcontractor CADMUS Group in Bong and Montserrado counties during this quarter. The objective of the assessment was to determine the extent to which adoption of agricultural and environmental best management practices across FED's value-chain programming is taking place, and to integrate complementary data to develop an overall picture of environmental management successes and challenges. The final report with recommendations will be submitted during the next quarter.

### Task 4.3: Market Development Fund Management

<b>MDF Budget Estimate FY16 Work Plan</b>	
<b>Component</b>	<b>Budget</b>
<b>Component 1<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>\$-0-</b>
<b>Component 2</b>	<b>\$-0-</b>
<b>Component 3</b>	<b>\$-0-</b>
<b>M&amp;E</b>	<b>\$350,068</b>
<b>Obligations</b>	<b>\$374,389</b>
<b>FY16 Total Estimate</b>	<b>\$4,998,036</b>
<b>Q3 Expenditures</b>	<b>\$4,273,578</b>
<b>Remaining MDF FY16 Budget<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>\$724,457</b>

---

<sup>1</sup> For FY 16, zero amounts for Components 1, 2, and 3 show that the budget estimates have been obligated. The remaining unobligated amount is only with the estimates for M&E. While the estimates were all obligated as of June 30, 2016 for the three components, there are unpaid amounts from these obligations of \$374,389.

<sup>2</sup> This amount is the total of commitments (with subcontracts and purchase orders totaling \$374,389, which FED is obligated to pay), and the unspent for M&E of \$350,068. The detail list below is for those that FED has already committed to pay through subcontracts, purchase orders and individual consultants.

CLIN No.	Activity	Projected Expenditures (US\$)
CLIN01-MDF-083	PPR Campaign-Goats	59,853.15
CLIN01-MDF-144	Establishment of nucleus goat breeding at CARI	11,608.05
CLIN01-MDF-0168	Enhancing rice post-harvest management practices	58,164.43
CLIN01-MDF-170	Supporting job creation through youth extension aides	40,608.20
CLIN01-MDF-176	Promotion of goat shelters	3,154.00
CLIN01-MDF-0195	Enhancing availability of improved cassava varieties	2,500.00
CLIN01-MDF-206	Development of agricultural extension curricula and information access points	5,264.00
CLIN01-MDF-0220	Rehabilitate FY14 rain shelters	2,555.00
CLIN01-TRN-0223	TA to 25 youth agribusinesses enterprises	9,439.00
CLIN01-MDF-0223	Special Studies	14,550.00
CLIN01-MDF-0224	Establishment of industrial cassava processing	5,600.00
CLIN01-TRN-227	Developing capacity of MOA staff	47,979.00
CLIN02-MDF-105	Supporting BSPs to establish ESCs	66,310.00
CLIN02-MDF-108	Policy Reform Activities via TWGs and cassava 10% cassava flour composite development policy	7,100.00
CLIN03-MDF-0060	Enhancing availability of textbooks, completing basic facility needs and promoting learning by doing at the COEs	39,704.48
	Total for all Components	374,389

#### Task 4.4: Monitoring & Evaluation

A significant push was initiated by FED during this reporting period, with crucial Mission guidance and supervision, to address the very problematic findings of the data quality review conducted in February and March of this year. The push included bringing on a new M&E director, Andrea Chartock, full time to oversee the local team. The project initiated its new push by first launching a smallholder survey to collect data for the indicators related to farmers with less than 4 hectares of land. FED then started the design of a beneficiary enterprise survey for August, and put together revised data-collection forms and procedures for the remaining indicators not covered by the smallholder and enterprise surveys. Finally, there was a push from technical teams and county teams to update smallholder beneficiary listing forms and an MSME database, and a training for M&E and county staff.

USAID notified FED this quarter that the project had received a no-additional cost extension. In lieu of this, the M&E team decided to add an additional smallholder survey in the end of September and the

first week of October to maximize results collected for the fiscal year. The fall smallholder survey will cover cassava farmer groups, where the peak sales season runs through the end of August. The additional survey will also cover new FY 2016 beneficiaries, who were excluded from the previous study because they wouldn't have had ample time to apply new technologies and bear results in time.

FED M&E Director Andrea Chartock worked closely with USAID personnel to design a set of surveys that would yield reliable data on FY2016 performance. During her in-country work on two trips this reporting period, she met with USAID four times and together with the COP, clarified with USAID the 12 priority Feed the Future indicators, as well as an additional three priority custom indicators. It was agreed with USAID that FED would modify the FED PMP for these 15 indicators and report on FY 2016 data accordingly. Because of a lack of time and resources, as well as additional third party data being collected, USAID approved the deletion of the other 10 indicators from the original PMP. USAID also provided guidance on its priorities for improving the FED M&E system. Chartock made a revised data-collection plan for each prioritized indicator. A summary table can be seen below:

#	Indicator	Revised FED Data Collection Plan
(1) 4.5-4	Gross margin of smallholder farmers	Smallholder Survey (S)
(2) 4.5.2-5	# farmers and others applying improved technologies	Smallholder Survey +Enterprise survey (ES) of beneficiary MSMEs like the tuk-tuk drivers who transport the crops, traders, rural entrepreneurs
(3) 4.5.2-2	Ha under improved technologies	Smallholder Survey, ES for larger farmers
(4) 4.5.2-28	Ha under improved irrigation/drainage	Smallholder Survey, ES for larger farmers, subcategory of the above
(5) 4.5.2-23	Value incremental sales (about Smallholder farmers only)	PIRS says this is about Smallholder farmers only: Smallholder Survey
(6) 3.2.1(i)	# receiving management/leadership training (c)	VSLAs- training attendance forms from Educare, UEM CFO/ VA query of members according to new customized form, other BDS training attendance forms FY 2016, Include a question on Smallholder Survey
(7) 4.5.2-	Number of MSMEs, including farmers, receiving USG	VSLA records + ES survey (ES) + a question in (S) for Smallholder Survey

30	assistance to access loans	UEM- will fill in new form provided, USADF loans- summary report provided by Educare for \$1mil in loans received by named individual FED beneficiaries  Launching audit of random sample of VSLA ledgers and passbooks.
(8) 4.5.2-42	# private enterprises etc. applying new technologies	Enterprise survey of the MSME enterprises+ VSLAs
(9) 4.5.10	Total increase installed storage capacity	Enterprise Survey + Reporting on Select Cooperatives
(10) 4.5.2-38	Value new private sector investment in for-profit firms and CBOs-	Not smallholders, ES + Coops. Has to be “formal for profit business”, doesn’t seem relevant to VSLAs as they are not registered/ formal.
(11) 2.2.1	Total financing accessed (c)	VSLA records (Educare records + form being completed by UEM) + ES + select learning like the USADF FED recipients reported by Educare
(12) 4.5.2-43	Number of firms (excluding farms) or CSOs engaged in agricultural and food security-related manufacturing and services now operating more profitably (at or above cost) because of USG assistance	Enterprise survey + VSLA records (Educare share out + new UEM form)+ Query of Select Coops that seem that they could be operating more profitably  “A firm should be counted if it operated more profitably in the reporting year than it did the previous reporting year. A CSO should be counted if it was financially self-sufficient in the reporting year and it had not been financially self-sufficient in the previous reporting year.” Relevant to new VSLAs from FY 2015: 350 VSLAs with UEM and 250 from Educare. Which ones shared out higher share price are operating more profitably.
(13) 4.5.2-6	Long term training	FED has the records, William will make a special M&E file
(14) 3.2.1	# students etc. benefitting improved facilities (c)	Albert Bass will distribute redesigned questionnaires for each university/ college to fill in and sign;
(15) 4.5.1-	Policy Matrix	Covered with existing documents, Julius is reconstructing and

24		documenting with links to regulations and TAMIS documents
----	--	---

Based on the prioritized indicators, it became urgent to design and launch a small-holder survey before the Liberia's annual rainy season make roads impassable. A budget, staffing plan, and small-holder survey design were all constructed. The small-holder survey concept note was shared with USAID.

The smallholder beneficiary survey launched in June was designed to obtain M&E data for USAID reporting purposes for the following indicators:

1. gross margin;
2. incremental sales;
3. technologies applied;
4. hectares (ha) upon which new technologies are applied; and
5. hectares under improved irrigation/drainage.

In support of the survey launch, Chartock came out for two weeks with the Field Operations Manager and Survey Specialist, Matt Innes, who will spend one month in Liberia on a 42-day STTA. Working together, they finalized the survey questionnaires, and trained the 30 enumerators from June 14 to 17. Innes helped the local FED expert program the survey into the PDAs. The survey effort was also supported by remote STTA from John Magill, Senior Survey Advisor, who compiled and cleaned all of the databases to facilitate the sample selection. The random sample was selected by DAI M&E Director Oleksandr Rohozynsky. Magill also provided inputs and advice at each stage of the survey, while Innes backstopped the survey teams by traveling out to the field for several days at a time during the survey.

The three teams of 10 enumerators launched the survey in three different counties on June 20, each with one local FED supervisor. The two teams upcountry are visiting randomly selected, beneficiary farmer groups and carrying out a survey "take all" approach with farmer group members. Each enumerator is surveying 21 different farmer groups. One team started in Lofa County, and then transitioned to Bong County, led by FED M&E Officer William Massaboi. Another team started in Nimba County, and will move to Grand Bassa County, led by M&E Specialist Joseph Morris. The third team is surveying individual producers of vegetables in Montserrado and Margibi Counties, led by Nelson Kanneh, who also led an enumerator team during the FED baseline survey and is an experienced facilitator. The survey targets a sample of more than 1,500 farmers, leaving plenty of room for non-response rates if less than expected numbers participate. By July 4, mid survey, 792 smallholders had been surveyed, included 262 individual vegetable farmers in Margibi and Montserrado County, 377 rice groups, 106 goats groups and 47 vegetable groups.

Also in June, FED staff worked on compiling a spreadsheet of micro, small and medium enterprise (MSME) beneficiaries. This will be used in August for the FED Enterprise Beneficiary Survey. Because many enterprise beneficiaries have cell phones, and August-September is a period of torrential rains, the team will start with a phone-based survey and then follow up in-person with non-respondents as well as

those who do not have cell phones. Currently, another option being explored is interactive voice recognition technology (IVR), which is the same technology used in telemarketing. A pre-recorded FED voice would introduce the survey and ask questions, to which the respondent could enter numbers to represent their responses for yes, no, and other options. The data entered would be channeled into a spreadsheet for use in analyzing and compiling result data. A text message would go out in advance to prepare beneficiaries for the survey call. FED is accessing remote support from HQ IT expert Anand Varghese to help backstop the effort and subcontract a company for providing the IVR software after an open competition to select the best bidder. The IVR mechanism will be pre-tested before applying it more widely to the entire survey.

## **Component Five: Management and Operations**

### **Task 5.0 Project Management and Administration**

#### **Procurement**

- Sixty-nine (69) Purchase Orders were created and issued to vendors for the purchase of project goods and services to support program operations.
- Thirty-nine (26) Purchase Orders with supporting documents were uploaded into TAMIS and record tracker sections were subsequently closed.
- Began international procurement of 200 GPS trackers to support trucking transport cost research. This is expected to clear customs in mid-July.
- Completed international procurement of 120 agricultural textbooks to support Centers of Excellence; expected to arrive in country in late July.

#### **ICT**

- Deployed replacement UPSs at the Bong field office and the Monrovia main office, and replacement printers at the Nimba and Grand Bassa offices.
- Deployed replacement servers at the Nimba and Lofa field offices given age and condition of existing servers.
- Coordinated with Component 3 team to oversee the cabling of both the GBCC & BWI campuses.
- Began additional ICT infrastructure setup and configurations at the GBCC including the activation and testing of internet service.
- Conducted routine quarterly IT equipment maintenance at all of FED offices in April.

#### **Finance**