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# FOOD AND ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT (FED) PROGRAM FOR LIBERIA

QUARTERLY REPORT: JULY 2014



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**Photo Caption:** Musu Dolo (right) is part of a vegetable farmers group that partners with the USAID Food and Enterprise Development Program for Liberia (FED). To improve the farmers' access to small amounts of capital, USAID FED helped the group of 20 women farmers create a Village and Savings Loan Association (VSLA). Between October 2013 and June 2014, the women of Kweeigbein—meaning *We Ourselves*—farmers saved over \$148,000 Liberian Dollars or \$1,600 USD. The group made dozens of loans to its members and generated another \$28,000 LD in interest, all of which stays in the members' hands.

## **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
APDRA	Association Pisciculture et Development 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
CILSS	Permanent Interstates Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel
CoE	Center of Excellence
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
EMMP	Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan
EO	Extension Officer
FtF	Feed the Future
FUN	Farmer Union Network
GBCC	Grand Bassa Community College
GCAP	Green Coast Agricultural Program
GPS	Global Positioning Systems
IBEX	Investing in Business Expansion Liberia
IFDC	International Fertilizer Developmental Center
IITA	International Institute for Tropical Agriculture
IP	Implementing Partner
IQC	Indefinite Quantity Contract
KRTTI	Kakata Rural Teachers Training Institute
LABEE IPG	Liberia Agriculture Business Enabling Environment Inter-Agency Policy Group
LAUNCH	Liberia Agriculture, Upgrading Nutrition & Child Health
LCCC	Lofa County Community College
LIFE	Livelihood Improvement for Farming Enterprises
	USAID Food and Enterprise Development Program for Liberia
	Monthly Report, July FY14

LIPAS	Liberia Integrated Professional Agriculture Service
LMEP	Liberia Monitoring and Evaluation Program
LNGO	Local Non-Governmental Organization
MFI	Micro Finance Institution
MIS	Market Information Systems
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
MoCI	Ministry of Commerce and Industry
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoP	Muriate of Potash
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSME	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise
NDA	National Diploma in Agriculture
NCCC	Nimba County Community College
NIC	National Investment Commission
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
TAMIS	Technical Administrative Management Information System
TSP	Triple Super-Phosphate
TVET	Technical, Vocational Education and Training
UDP	Urea Deep Placement
UL	University of Liberia
USADF	United States African Development Foundation
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VET GOV	Veterinary Governance in Africa
WAAPP	West Africa Agriculture Productivity Program
WAFP	West Africa Fertilizer Project
WASP	West Africa Seed Project
WFP	World Food Program

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## Background

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

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

This incentive structure is built upon:

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

USAID FED works with the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), civil societies 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 five years, USAID FED's thrust to expand market linkages is expected to lead to substantial increases in income and job opportunities. USAID FED aims to significantly boost the production, processing, marketing and nutritional utilization of rice, cassava and vegetables, and to enhance the productivity of goat farming in the counties covered by the program.

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

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

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

## Executive Summary

During the reporting period, USAID FED supported lowland rice farmers and surpassed targets for land preparation, covering over 1,426 ha of lowland rice fields. Rice transplanting on all sites is expected to be completed by next month.

All 50 UDP three-treatment trial sites, covering 150 ha of land, were planted in July as well. In addition, rice seedling transplanting is ongoing at 89 UDP-only sites. The transplanting is expected to be completed in August.

By the end of July, the construction on three rice business hubs in Lofa County (David Selma Town, Foya and Serkonnedu) and one rice business hub in Grand Bassa County (Kpelleh Town) was completed. Including the three rice business hubs inaugurated in Nimba County in Q3, the project has completed construction of buildings to house seven rice business hubs in Bong, Grand Bassa and Lofa Counties. Except for the 3 business hubs in Lofa, the rest are already equipped with rice mills and are now functional.

USAID FED has completed the construction of eight rice business hubs in Lofa (3), Bong (1), Nimba (3) and Grand Bassa (1). Three business hubs inaugurated in Nimba County in Q3 are equipped with rice mills and functional, while equipment installation in Bong, Grand Bassa and Lofa counties will be done in August.

In July, Fabrar Liberia's processing facilities were completed, and a new rice milling line was delivered to the facility. Fabrar Liberia now has two operational rice milling lines. In addition, Fabrar Liberia hired and trained 12 machine operators to work the milling lines. The inauguration of the facility was originally scheduled to take place on August 29, 2014, but has been postponed to September 30, 2014, due to the Ebola outbreak.

USAID FED facilitated meetings between four medium-sized processors in Montserrado County—FALIMA Inc., Liberia Business Incubator, RASA Liberia, Yaehe Agricultural Processors—and cassava clusters in the four counties. The meetings informed the farmers of the processors' requirements in terms of volume, varieties and timing. They also served as platform for negotiating prices. USAID FED expects the four processors to commence cassava purchasing in August 2014.

In July, USAID FED selected 30 bucks from the first batch of 209 goats imported by the partner Land O'Lakes. The goats were distributed to goat production sites in Nimba County. This will introduce new genetic material to the village herds, reduce in-breeding and is expected to improve production performance of the herds.

USAID FED partner Gro Green began the installation of greenhouses at vegetable cluster sites in Montserrado County starting with the Mawah cluster. The rain shelters will allow farmers to grow high value vegetables during the rainy season.

In July, USAID FED and fourteen instructors from the four Centers of Excellence developed the second semester lesson plans and NDA program syllabi. CoE administrations also decided on transition plans to incorporate the NDA in the CoE academic programs.



## Component One: Increase Agricultural Productivity and Profitability

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

#### FY13 Rice Crop Sales

During the month of July, a total of **74.16MT** of FY13 rice paddy crop was sold at a cumulative value of **\$36,399.14 USD**. In total, **1,014.29 MT** of FY13 rice paddy valued at **\$420,106.64 USD** was sold during FY14 (Table 1).

Table 1: FY13 Rice crop sales in Q3 of FY14.

County	Total Rice Sales Volume Q3 (MT)	Total Rice Sales Value Q3 (US\$)	July Sales Volume (MT)	July Sales Value (US\$)	Total Rice Sales Volume YTD (MT)	Total Rice Sales Value YTD (US\$)
Lofa	144.28	57,263.50	24.99	9,495.44	169.27	66,758.94
Nimba	69.00	35,669.00	41.25	23,742.70	110.25	59,411.70
Bong	726.15	290,515.00	7.12	2,821.00	733.27	293,336.00
Grand Bassa	0.70	260.00	0.80	340.00	1.50	600.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>940.13</b>	<b>383,707.50</b>	<b>74.16</b>	<b>36,399.14</b>	<b>1014.29</b>	<b>420,106.64</b>

#### FY14 Lowland Rice Farmers

By the end of July, USAID FED support reached a total of **10,794** lowland farmers from 191 groups across the four rice value chain counties compared to the FY14 target of 8,972 lowland farmers (Table 2). Of the total, 5,652 are men and 5,142 are women.

Table 2: FY14 Lowland rice production groups.

County	# Groups Recruited for FY14 Production	# of Farmers FY14 Targets	Total # of Farmers Recruited YTD	# of Male Farmers	# of Female Farmers
Lofa	44	2,058	2,680	1,280	1,400
Nimba	75	4,434	4,672	2,603	2,069
Bong	58	2,130	3,092	1,574	1,518

Grand Bassa	14	350	350	195	155
<b>Total</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>8,972</b>	<b>10,794</b>	<b>5,652</b>	<b>5,142</b>

### **FY14 Lowland Rice Planting**

During the month of July, all 205 lowland sites developed nurseries and a total of **1,426.72 ha** of lowland were prepared and undergoing transplanting. Apart from Bong and Grand Bassa counties, which are currently under target, Lofa and Nimba had 20 ha and 78.22 ha, respectively, of additional land prepared for transplanting outside of the planned targets. Transplanting on all sites is expected to be completed by August 2014 (Table 3).

*Table 3: FY14 Lowland preparation by county.*

<b>County</b>	<b>Target Sites FY14</b>	<b>Identified Sites FY14</b>	<b>Target Ha FY14</b>	<b>Ha prepared for planting Q3</b>	<b>Ha prepared and transplanting in July</b>	<b>Total Ha undergoing transplanting YTD</b>
Lofa	40	44	150.00	170	170	170
Nimba	72	75	405.00	377.9	105.32	483.22
Bong	32	58	757.00	737.5	11	748.5
Grand Bassa	14	28	44.00	25	0	25
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>1,356.00</b>	<b>1,310.4</b>	<b>286.32</b>	<b>1,426.72</b>

### **FY14 Upland Rice Productivity Program**

#### **FY14 Upland Rice Farmers**

By the end of July, USAID FED support reached a total of **8,595** upland farmers (5,342 male and 3,253 female) (Table 4). While this is below the target number of outreach for upland rice, this brings the total rice beneficiaries for the upland and the lowland to 19,389 farmers, which exceeds the total target of 19,149 by 240 farmers for the rice value chain for FY14.

*Table 4: FY14 Upland rice production groups.*

<b>County</b>	<b>Groups Recruited FY14 Production</b>	<b>FY14 Farmer Recruitment Target</b>	<b>Total # of Farmers Recruited in Q3 FY14</b>	<b># of Male Farmers</b>	<b># of Female Farmers</b>
Lofa	33	3,600	2,478	1,137	1,341
Nimba	37	2,385	2,385	1,432	953
Bong	85	3,667	3,207	2,337	870

Grand Bassa	51	525	525	436	89
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>10,177</b>	<b>8,595</b>	<b>5,342</b>	<b>3,253</b>

### FY14 Upland Rice Cultivation

By the end of July, a total of **2,398.82 ha** of upland have been planted across the 224 identified sites. All counties exceeded their targets on the area for cultivation of upland rice (Table 5).

Table 5: FY14 Upland rice cultivation by county.

County	Target Sites FY14	Identified Sites FY14	Target Ha FY14	Ha prepared for planting Q3	New Ha cleared and planted July FY14	Total Ha cleared and planted YTD
Lofa	65	46	129.00	140.00	0	140.00
Nimba	43	37	90.20	95.32	0	95.32
Bong	66	85	1,600.00	1,620.00	53.50	1,673.50
Grand Bassa	10	56	44.00	490.00	0	490.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>1,863.20</b>	<b>2,345.32</b>	<b>53.50</b>	<b>2,398.82</b>



Figure 1: Completed spillway at Karmei Farm, Sanniquelle Mah District, Nimba

### Construction of Water Management Infrastructure

During the month of July, construction of 12 spillways was completed (4 in Lofa, 4 in Bong and 4 in Nimba) by local communities with the support of Tallobenku Construction Company (Figure 1). USAID FED successfully verified that the spillways were functioning. The improved water management infrastructure will allow farmers to plant a second crop after the rainy season, meaning two crops in a year.

### Community Rice Business Hubs

By the end of July, the construction of three rice business hubs in Lofa County (David Selma Town, Foya & Serkonnedu) and one in Grand Bassa County (Kpelleh Town) was completed. Including the three rice business hubs inaugurated in Nimba County in Q3, the current total of completed rice business hub buildings is eight (Figure 2).

Construction of two rice business hubs in Bong continues. The Bong Mine business hub is expected to be completed in August. The business hub in Totota is expected to be completed at a later date due to its bigger size and therefore also bigger share in the cost of construction of USAID FED partner, Arise and Shine. It is expected to be completed before the harvest in October.



Figure 2: Completed rice processing center in Foya, Lofa County

Rice processing equipment will be installed in Bong, Grand Bassa and Lofa counties in August. In addition to provision of mechanized services to nearby rice farmers, these business hubs will also serve as aggregation centers for rice trading with large buyers such as Fabrar Liberia.

### **Fabrar Liberia**

During the reporting period, Fabrar Liberia's processing facilities were completed, and a new rice milling line was delivered to the facility. Fabrar Liberia now has two operational rice milling lines (Figure 3). In addition, Fabrar Liberia hired and trained 12 machine operators to work the milling lines. The inauguration of the facility was originally scheduled to take place on August 29, 2014, but has been postponed due to the Ebola outbreak.



Figure 3: The new rice milling line at Fabrar Liberia.

### **Market Access for Rice Producers**

During the reporting period, Fabrar Liberia procured 24.98MT of grain rice from USAID FED-supported farmers in Foya, Lofa County, valued at \$9,495.44 USD. An additional 2,500 bags of grain rice, valued at \$47,500 USD, were aggregated by Lofa County farmers to supply Fabrar Liberia.

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

### FY13 Cassava Tuber Harvests and Sales

By the end of July, a total of **152.91 MT** of raw cassava tubers from the FY13 crop were harvested and sold for **\$8,124.54 USD** (Table 6). Sequential harvesting of cassava is expected to continue up to the end of November 2014.

Table 6: FY13 Cassava tuber harvest and sales.

County	FY14 Production Target Raw Tuber (MT)	Raw Tuber Harvest Q3 (MT)	Sales Value Q3 (USD)	Raw Tuber Harvest July (MT)	Sales Value July (USD)	Total Harvest YTD (MT)	Total Sales value YTD (USD)
Nimba	2,130	0	0.00	72.25	6,741.54	72.25	6,741.54
Grand Bassa	1,598	13.86	321	10.94	705	24.80	1,026
Bong	1,065	39.00	0.00	1.84	68	40.84	68
Lofa	532	9.50	35	5.52	254	15.02	289
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5,325</b>	<b>62.36</b>	<b>356.00</b>	<b>90.55</b>	<b>7,768.54</b>	<b>152.91</b>	<b>8,124.54</b>

### FY14 Cassava Production & Preparation

A total of **2,326.70 ha** were prepared with mounds and ridges for FY14 crop production across the four cassava value chain counties by the end of July. In total, **1,729 ha** were planted by the end of the reporting period (Table 7). Cassava planting is expected to continue through September 2014.

In FY15, USAID FED will be piloting phased planting of cassava to allow farmers to plant and harvest throughout the year.

Table 7: Cassava land preparation and planting.

County	FY14 Land Targets (Ha)	Land prepared Q3(Ha)	Land Planted in Q3(Ha)	Land Prepared in July (Ha)	Land Planted in July (Ha)	Land prepared YTD (Ha)	Land planted YTD (Ha)
Nimba	840	490.70	100	257	341.90	747.70	441.90
Grand Bassa	630	900	630	0	0	900	630
Bong	420	469.00	15.00	0	417.00	469	432
Lofa	210	210.00	47.10	0	178.00	210	225.10
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,100.00</b>	<b>2,069.70</b>	<b>792.10</b>	<b>257.00</b>	<b>936.90</b>	<b>2,326.70</b>	<b>1,729.00</b>

### Screening of Improved Cassava Varieties

During the reporting period, USAID FED conducted the second weeding of 34,687 cuttings at the control screening sites in Voinjama, Lofa County (Figure 4). The cuttings are part of the 11 improved varieties imported from the International Institute for Tropical Agriculture (IITA) in Q3.



Figure 4: Cassava varieties at the control site in Voinjama, Lofa.

CARI technicians provide technical oversight and inspections on a bi-weekly basis. The plants are all growing vigorously with average germination at 91.5%. So far, only one variety, TMS 01/1368, has shown symptoms of the cassava mosaic disease. The remaining 10 varieties are proving resistant to each of the six diseases included in the evaluation. An additional 10,000 plants are being screened at CARI in Bong County.

### **Cassava Nursery Establishment**

By the end of the reporting period, 40 commercial nurseries planted a total of 60 ha of land with cassava cuttings. The nurseries are located in Nimba (24 ha), Grand Bassa (18 ha), Bong (12 ha) and Lofa (6 ha). The 40 commercial nursery owners have already been trained on commercial cutting production, and the multiplication of improved planting material is expected to benefit up to 12,000 cassava farmers during the FY15 planting period.

### **Support to Cassava processing**

USAID FED completed needs assessments and equipment verification for 12 micro-processors located in Lofa, Nimba, Bong and Grand Bassa counties. These micro-processors will sign MoUs with USAID FED in August in order to upgrade their processing facilities to better absorb raw tubers from the surrounding cassava production clusters.

In addition, USAID FED facilitated meetings between four medium-sized processors in Montserrado County—FALIMA Inc, Liberia Business Incubator, RASA Liberia, Yaehe Agricultural Processors—and cassava clusters in the four counties (Figure 5). The meetings informed the farmers of the processors' requirements in terms of volume, varieties and timing of delivery. The meetings also served as platform for negotiating prices. USAID FED expects the four processors to commence cassava purchasing in August 2014.



Figure 5: The inside of a medium sized cassava processor in Montserrado County.

## **Task 1C: Increased Production and Profitability of the Goat Value Chain**

### **Establishment of Goat Shelters**



USAID FED completed the distribution of goat shelter construction materials to 64 goat production intensification sites in Bong, Lofa, Nimba and Grand Bassa counties (Figure 6). By the end of July, 28 shelters were completed. All 84 sites will be completed in August 2014: Nimba (30), Lofa (20), Bong (25) and Grand Bassa (9).



Figure 6: Completed goat shelter at Zodoe Farmers Association site in Nimba County.

### Goat farmer recruitment

A total of **2,060** farmers (1,260 male, 800 female) from 84 goat groups were supported during the month of July. The farmers have a cumulative stock of 5,150 goats inclusive of **347** new kids born during July (Table 8).

Table 8: FY14 Goat farmer recruitment and total number of goats.

County	FY14 Farmer Target	# of Farmers Recruited by Q3	# of Male Farmers	# of Female Farmers	Total # of Goats Q3 FY14
Nimba	600	693	341	296	717
Grand Bassa	180	275	166	111	782
Bong	500	596	493	179	1,863
Lofa	400	496	260	214	1,788
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,680</b>	<b>2,060</b>	<b>1,260</b>	<b>800</b>	<b>5,150</b>

### Goat Sales

In July, a total of **318** goats (209 bucks, 104 does and 5 kids) were sold for a total value of **\$23,530 USD**. In total, 1,546 goats valued at \$97,783 have been sold during FY14 (Table 9).

Table 9: Goat sales FY14

County	# of Goats Sold in July	Value of Goats Sold in July (USD)	# of Goats Sold YTD	Value of Goats Sold YTD (USD)
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Nimba	35	1,673.00	133	8,478.00
Grand Bassa	30	2,002.00	196	12,557.00
Bong	166	13,320.00	686	49,420.00
Lofa	87	6,535.00	531	27,328.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>318</b>	<b>23,530.00</b>	<b>1,546</b>	<b>97,783.00</b>



Figure 7: Salt mineral block training at the David Saye farm in Nimba County.

mineral blocks using burnt oyster shells, salt, cement/limestone and/or termite mound soil as active ingredients is critical in addressing the mineral deficiencies of grazing and browsing goats.

### Training of Goat Farmers

USAID FED provided training to 147 goat farmers (136 men and 11 women) from the four goat value chain counties on the fabrication of salt mineral blocks using local materials (Figure 7). The trained farmers are expected to create mineral blocks that would benefit approximately 2,940 goat farmers (1,000 in Nimba, 900 in Bong, 800 in Lofa and 240 in Grand Bassa).

Salt mineral blocks are an essential source of calcium and phosphorus for newborn kids as well as pregnant and lactating animals. The fabrication of salt

mineral blocks using burnt oyster shells, salt, cement/limestone and/or termite mound soil as active ingredients is critical in addressing the mineral deficiencies of grazing and browsing goats.

### Partner Collaboration

A USDA Land O'Lakes (LOL) Food for Progress program is funding the importation of goats for restocking herds lost during the war. Imported goats require 2-3 weeks of quarantining to ensure diseases will not be introduced into Liberian herds. USAID FED rehabilitated the quarantine facility at CARI to provide quarantining services for goats imported to Liberia. The USDA/LOL program is the first to use the facility.



Figure 8: Livestock Specialist, Morris Karnuah, selecting bucks from imported herd at CARI Livestock Quarantine Facility, Bong County.

USAID FED beneficiaries will receive some of the bucks imported by LOL. This will introduce new genetic material to the village herds, reduce in-breeding and is expected to improve production performance of the herds. In July, USAID FED selected 30 bucks from the first batch of 209 imported goats (Figure 8). These goats were distributed to goat production sites in Nimba County.

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

### Vegetable Sales

During the month of July, a total of **40.76MT** of vegetables valued at **\$10,828.61 USD** was sold across the 21 vegetable clusters (Table 10). The reduction in vegetable production is due to the rainy season. In total, **89.90MT** of vegetables valued at **\$49,335.19 USD** has been sold thus far in FY14.

Table 10: Vegetable sales from clusters for the month of July.

County/Cluster	Volume of Sales by Q3 (kg)	Value of Sales by Q3 (USD)	Volume of Sales in July (kg)	Value of Sales in July (USD)	Volume of Sales YTD (kg)	Value of Sales YTD (USD)
<b>Montserrado</b>						
Bokays Town	2,057.30	1,620.76	1,734.90	727.00	3,792.20	2,347.76
CGCWEP Vegetables	4,580.90	3,395.70	913.40	472.00	5,494.30	3,867.70
Central White Plane	2,505.00	1,038.50	534.00	236.00	3,039.00	1,274.50
Low Cost Village	2,049.50	1,958.18	1,013.00	675.00	3,062.50	2,633.18
Kollieman Town	486.00	114.00	358.00	166.00	844.00	280.00
Mawah Farmers Association	4,772.00	7,151.88	1,309.00	1,100.00	6,081.00	8,251.88
Mulleh Farm	6,245.00	6,891.76	610.00	196.00	6,855.00	7,087.76
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>22,695.70</b>	<b>22,170.78</b>	<b>6,472.30</b>	<b>3,572.00</b>	<b>29,168.00</b>	<b>25,742.78</b>
<b>Nimba</b>						
Yekepa	2,243.70	3,876.84	4,000.00	279.97	6,243.70	4,156.81
Sanniquelleh	4,232.00	735.94	3,800.00	178.86	8,032.00	914.80
Ganta	1,714.00	1,493.18	0	0	1,714.00	1,493.18
Gbedin	2,835.00	1,479.30	3,000.00	445.78	5,835.00	1,925.08
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>11,024.70</b>	<b>7,585.26</b>	<b>10,800.00</b>	<b>904.61</b>	<b>21,824.70</b>	<b>8,489.87</b>
<b>Margibi</b>						
Kpoyea's Town	669.00	245.88	2,099.00	369.00	2,768.00	614.88
Joebow Town	221.00	150.18	2,040.00	561.00	2,261.00	711.18
Kollie Kan Ta	3,900.00	1,934.00	4,225.00	966.00	8,125.00	2,900.00
Francis Lewis	1,585.00	677.35	3,339.50	1,073.00	4,924.50	1,750.35
Weala	3,582.50	2,614.24	2,285.50	976.00	5,868.00	3,590.24
Nyanka Ta	2,240.00	837.06	2,870.00	921.00	5,110.00	1,758.06
Gbofellah	1,086.00	502.71	1,603.00	689.00	2,689.00	1,191.71

Horton Farm	1,494.00	1,121.94	4,549.00	567.00	6,043.00	1,688.94
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>14,777.50</b>	<b>8,083.36</b>	<b>23,011.00</b>	<b>6,122.00</b>	<b>37,788.50</b>	<b>14,205.36</b>
<b>Grand Bassa</b>						
Tubmanville	436.87	474.06	0	0	436.87	474.06
New Buchanan	205.00	193.12	481.00	230.00	686.00	423.12
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>641.87</b>	<b>667.18</b>	<b>481.00</b>	<b>230.00</b>	<b>1,122.87</b>	<b>897.18</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>49,139.77</b>	<b>38,506.58</b>	<b>40,764.30</b>	<b>10,828.61</b>	<b>89,904.07</b>	<b>49,335.19</b>

### Trader Association/FY13 Groups Vegetable Sales

A total of **177,027.80kg** of vegetables valued at **\$96,517 USD** was traded or sold by traders and FY13 VSLA groups in July. In total, **302,286.80kg** of vegetables valued at **\$143,795.51 USD** have been sold through these groups during FY14 period.

Table 11: Vegetable sales from supported traders and 2013 Groups for the month of July.

Group	Volume Sold as of Q3 (kg)	Value of Sales as of Q3 (USD)	Volume Sold in July (kg)	Value of Sales in July (USD)	Volume Sold YTD (kg)	Value of Sales YTD (USD)
Monrovia Vegetable Traders Association	18,459.00	15,472.30	93,227.04	71,721.58	111,686.04	87,193.88
United Farmers Association	28,350.00	14,959.38	0	0	28,350.00	14,959.38
Zoedoar Farmers Association	57,450.00	10,761.25	0	0	57,450.00	10,761.25
Menlehkoyee	21,000.00	6,085.00	0	0	21,000.00	6,085.00
Money in the Bush – Nyankata	0	0	12,295.00	12,951.00	12,295.00	12,951.00
Yarnquelleh	0	0	71,505.76	11,845.00	71,505.76	11,845.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>125,259.00</b>	<b>47,277.93</b>	<b>177,027.80</b>	<b>96,517.58</b>	<b>302,286.80</b>	<b>143,795.51</b>

Figure 9: Laying of beds in the green house at Mawah Cluster



### Protected Cultivation

Gro Green began the installation of greenhouses in Montserrado County at the Mawah cluster to demonstrate protective cultivation to vegetable farmers (Figure 9). The rain shelters will allow farmers to grow high value vegetables during the rainy season. One out of 20 greenhouses has been constructed. Greenhouse installation has been stalled by heavy rains and will resume in October or when the dry season starts.

### Integrated Pest Management Training

As part of the strategy to address pests and diseases affecting vegetable crops, USAID FED organized training on Good Agricultural Practices and

Integrated Pest Management between July 15 and 17 in Kakata, Margibi County. The ToT was facilitated

by STTA Emmanuel Owusu, and a total of 30 participants (3 women and 27 men) participated, including 21 lead farmers, 5 extension officers, 2 representatives from MOA and 2 youth observers. At the end of the training, the participants were able to identify common pests and diseases affecting vegetables. The participants are expected to train the farmers in their respective clusters. The second phase of the training will be held in August, where farmers and extension officers will be trained on effective methods to control the major pests identified.

### **Business Management Technical Assistance**

During the month of July, USAID FED provided technical assistance to 292 participants (172 men and 120 women) from the 21 vegetable clusters to improve their capacity in basic record keeping. The technical assistance included ways to keep better production records, expense records, labor records, sales records, profit analysis, cash flow and collective marketing. The clusters provided positive feedback on vegetable purchase agreements that were signed with USAID FED supported vegetable traders at Red Light general market. The majority of the cluster members say they have experienced cordial business relationships with the traders.

## **Subtask 1.1: Special Studies and MoA Data Collection System Developed**

### **Rapid Rural Appraisal**

An initial review of the results of the Rapid Rural Appraisal was conducted following a presentation by implementing partner DEN-L with Technical and Value Chain Leads. It was concluded that the deliverables and expected outcomes had to be clarified in order to gather the needed data that would inform decision making for the FED FY15 and 16 programming activities. A redefined Scope of Work has been developed, and DEN-L has prepared a County-Specific Implementation Plan that would allow the FED Program to put in place supervisory measure and monitor the results in real time. In July, DEN-L and USAID FED agreed on a revised SOW and timeline.

### **Special Studies for FY 15**

The USAID FED M&E team consulted USAID FED technical leads to identify special studies and surveys that need to be conducted in the FY15. The studies will be carried out under subtask 1.1 by the M&E Team of FED. These studies will serve as inputs to strategies and approaches for FY16 workplan as well as inputs to FED's quarterly reports for FY15. Surveys on cassava and rice yields, postharvest losses, rice seed marketing issues, as well as behavior change impediments to improving diet diversity are among the special studies to be conducted.

### **MoA Data Collection System Developed**

To support the Data Collection system for the Ministry of Agriculture, a meeting was conducted with the MOA Director of the M&E and the following discussion points were raised:

1. FED and MOA will jointly review the activity framework provided by FED to be included in the FY 15 work plan.
2. In order for equipment to support the M&E online database, a server should be available to host the database.
3. A meeting will be scheduled in August with the Ministry of Agriculture IT Specialist regarding the online database to initially assess the needs of this proposed system.
4. Further training on data analysis, reports and proposal writing was suggested by Mr. Harry Woyene, MoA Director for M&E.
5. USAID-FED will meet with USAID-GEMS in August regarding the support GEMs have already provided to the MOA. FED will build on GEMS support.



## Subtask 1.2: Improve Access to Agriculture Inputs

### Rice Seed Multiplication

During the reporting period, rice transplanting took place on 10 lowland sites (40ha) and 12 upland sites (120ha). The first round of inspections by rice seed inspectors took place in July. The seed inspectors were previously trained at CARI with the support of USAID FED. In August, the sites will be inspected by Africa Rice Breeders and WAAP to ensure that certified seed production protocols are being followed.

### UDP Sites Selection & Preparation

During the reporting period, all 50 UDP three-treatment trial sites were planted. The 50 sites cover 150 ha of land. Of the 50 sites, there are 29 sites in Nimba, 14 sites in Bong, and seven sites in Lofa. In addition, rice seedling transplanting is ongoing at 89 UDP-only sites. The transplanting is expected to be completed in August.

### Soil Sample Analysis

In July, soil samples were collected from the 50 UDP three-treatment trial sites, 84 sets of samples were collected from vegetable sites, and 8 sets of samples were collected from the UDP-SRI research sites. The test results from the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) in Ghana on 300 soils samples and the results from the International Fertilizer Development Center (IFDC) for 20 additional samples are expected in early August.

USAID FED received the Hach testing kits in July. Training on soil testing and analysis commenced at the end of July. The training is being facilitated by STTA Dr. Sampson Birikorang, and 16 participants are attending the course, including eight instructors from the CoEs, three FED staff, two instructors from University of Liberia and Cuttington University, one staff from BWI and Emmanuel Lincoln, the USAID FED's UDP-SRI Project Manager.

## Subtask 1.3: Agricultural Extension Support

### Video Documentation

To further document USAID FED's success stories, the extension unit completed the material collection for a video documentary about the ROSNA vegetable market linkages in Yekeba, Nimba County. USAID FED interviewed farmers as well as ROSNA employees. ROSNA is a Liberian catering company in Yekeba that provides catering services for Arcelor Mittal. This video will be finalized and shared in August.

*Figure 10: Radio Lacs airing their first radio program using Adobe 3.0*



### Radio Jingles

The National Diploma in Agriculture (NDA) jingle was completed and distributed to partner radio stations for airing along with a goat jingle on the importance of sheltering. USAID FED also provided Adobe 3.0 software trainings to four county radio station partners to enhance the production of their various radio programs (Figure 10). The trainings



were delivered at the stations in Grand Bassa (LACSA RADIO), Bong (Super Bongese radio), Lofa (Radio Tamba Tailor) and Nimba (Radio Kergheamahn).

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

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

#### **Policy Reform Activities**

USAID FED met with an ECOWAS task force, West Africa Seed Program (WASP), West Africa Fertilizer Program (WAFP), Permanent Interstates Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS), and the West Africa Agriculture Productivity Program (WAAPP) to improve the implementation of the regionally harmonized regulations for seed, fertilizer and pesticides. The task force developed an implementation action plan and timeline, which includes setting up a National Regulatory Body to oversee the implementation. USAID FED will work with WAAPP to form a technical working group to assure the process moves forward.

Initial meetings held with Minister Florence Chenoweth and Deputy Minister Sizi Zubah of the Ministry of Agriculture determined that ECOWAS regulations concerning seed certification, fertilizer, and pesticide quality control could immediately be published in the National Gazette and therefore adopted as Liberian law. USAID FED and MoA will still move forward with having two national policies (National Seed Policy and Regulatory framework and the National Plant Protection Policy and Regulatory framework) translated into legal language for submission to National Legislature. The policies represent the vision of the government, are necessary for World Trade Organization accession, and do not conflict with existing ECOWAS regulations. The ECOWAS regulations were officially published in the National Gazette on July 16.

The Liberia Agriculture Business Enabling Environment Inter-agency Policy Group (LABEE IPG) re-drafted its own the terms of reference, which will be finalized in September.

#### **National Standards Laboratory**

USAID FED attended the launch of a technical working group, which will support the National Standards Laboratory in achieving accreditation. The National Standards Laboratory was set up in 2011 with the financial support of UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) to curtail the proliferation of substandard goods on the Liberian market.

The laboratory, which is located in the Ministry of Public Works Complex and is under the supervision of the MoCI, should be used to monitor and test all goods, including food, imported and exported in Liberia. Due to a lack of funding, the lab is not currently functioning at its intended capacity. This has negative implications for USAID FED beneficiaries wishing to invest in food processing for export (cassava, peanuts, and dried and fresh processed vegetables), and for the import of quality fertilizer and agro-chemicals. There is also a need to establish regulations and inspection procedures for the safe import of approved agro-chemicals and veterinary pharmaceuticals. FED will support the MoCI and the technical working group through a small market study, business plan, and phased road map towards accreditation.

MoCI has indicated that the lab should operate as a private entity with a mandate from the government. The business plan will inform donors and potential investors of the required capital and operational investments and of the feasibility of self-sustaining operations for lab services. The USAID FED team began recruiting potential consultants in early July. The consultancy is expected to take place in September or October 2014.

## Subtask 2.1: Access to Credit and Business Development Services

Since Q4 of 2013, USAID FED has supported the creation of 123 Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLA) for 3,400 farmers (mostly women). Through the month of July 2014, the VSLA groups have generated access to capital for investment in agricultural activities in the amount of \$112,000 USD (Figure 11 and Table 12).



Figure 11: Members of Zoedoor Village Savings and Loan Association meet before VSLA graduation, Karnplay, Nimba County.

### Extension of Micro Financing to Farmers

In FY14, Liberia Entrepreneurial & Asset Development (LEAD), a local MFI, signed loan agreements totaling \$31,897 USD for individual vegetable farmers in Montserrado and Margibi counties who were part of FY13 demonstration plots.

Through the month of July, four groups paid their loans as a result of successful sales of vegetables, while other groups have made partial payments (Table 13). Due to the successful payoff rate, LEAD continues to disburse loans to USAID FED farmers. In August, the United Farmers Association (UFA) will receive another \$500,000 LD (\$5,555 USD) in loans.

Table 12: Loans and associated sales as of July 2014.

Group	Loan Principal (USD)	Loan Interest (USD)	Loan + Amount Repaid (USD)	Associated Sales (USD)	Maturity
United Farmers Association (UFA)	\$2,630	\$3,131	\$3,131	\$14,247	May 2014

Zoedoar	\$5,229	\$6,225	\$6,225	\$10,249	May 2014
Menlehkoyee	\$2,614	\$3,112	\$3,112	\$5,795	May 2014
Money In the Bush	\$1,882	\$2,241	\$2,241	\$10,919	May 2014
Kukatonon	\$1,559	\$1,856	\$1,856	TBD	June 2014
Kuwikai	\$1,559	\$1,856	\$1,135	TBD	June 2014
Welekema	\$1,559	\$1,856	\$309	TBD	June 2014
Cinta Horton	\$137	\$163	0	TBD	Sep 2014
Kollie Kan Ta	\$137	\$163	0	TBD	Sep 2014
Weala	\$137	\$163	0	TBD	Sep 2014
Kpoya	\$137	\$163	0	TBD	Sep 2014
Zoedoar (#2)	\$9,545	0	0	TBD	Dec 2014
Menlehkoyee (#2)	\$4,773	0	0	TBD	Dec 2014
				TBD	Dec 2014
<b>Total USD*</b>	\$31,897	\$37,973	\$18,010	\$41,210	-
<b>FY14 target value of loans - \$89,736</b>					
<i>*Loan and repayment amounts based on exchange rate at the time of the loan which ranges from \$80-  ** LD/\$1 USD; Sales based on exchange rates at time of sale which ranges from \$84-\$91 / \$1 USD.</i>					

Table 13: Total loans in USD accessed by farmers through VSLA, LEAD and Embedded Financing to date.

Type	Q1	Q2	Q3	July	Total
LEAD	\$17,033	0	\$14,318	0	\$31,897
VSLA	\$20,308	\$12,048	\$58,314	\$20,750	\$112,285
Embedded	0	0	\$56,320	0	\$56,320
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$37,341</b>	<b>\$12,048</b>	<b>\$128,952</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>\$200,502</b>

USAID FED conferred with LEAD management and representatives from the US African Development Fund (USADF) to determine the feasibility and sustainability of LEAD expanding their farming lending program to include additional USAID FED farmers and expand into Lofa County. Based on an analysis of projections conducted by LEAD and audited by USADF and USAID FED, USADF has submitted a proposal to their headquarters to extend an additional grant for on-lending in agriculture to LEAD for \$245,000 USD. If approved, USAID FED will support LEAD with the provision of motorbikes, training for new employees in financial accounting software and the pilot use of mobile money to facilitate field transactions.

### **Business Training and Mentorship to Access Finance**

USAID FED worked with IBEX to plan the training and official graduation ceremonies for 20 VSLA groups in Grand Bassa, Bong, Lofa and Bong counties for the month of August. USAID FED invited Ecobank, IB Bank, Afriland Bank, LEAD, Microlead (micro-credit union project), and the Central Bank to participate in the events. Training will follow the graduation ceremonies.

Topics to be covered include:

1. VSLAs as informal financial service providers for micro-agribusinesses
2. Agri-business investment
3. Requirements and strategies for accessing credit
4. Basic record keeping for small businesses
5. Options for VSLA expansion

Following the training, the VSLAs can register with APEX, a new Central Bank organization set up to help vet loan applications. If the Central Bank rejects the VSLA groups, USAID FED is currently working with other stakeholders, such as Microlead, to find micro-finance service providers.

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

### **Task 3.0 Develop Existing Vocational Centers into Centers of Excellence in Vocational Agriculture Education (CoE)**

#### **Lofa County Community College**

Efforts to establish an agriculture student association at Lofa County Community College (LCCC) have been put on hold while the students are on vacation, and will resume when classes open. More than 15 students have expressed interest in becoming part of the student-led association.

### **Grand Bassa Community College**



*Figure 12: View of new GBCC campus, the building on the left will be used for USAID FED activities.*

GBCC is expected to move to new facilities in Paynesbury in August. USAID FED conferred with the College's administration and assessed the farms located one kilometer away in nearby Big Joe Town, to identify the type of enterprises that would be feasible for GBCC's revenue generation initiative (Figure 12).

In Paynesbury, a large classroom in the science and technology building is being provided by the College for renovation to house the equipment that USAID FED will be providing for the science laboratory. Part of the \$100,000 USD donated by the GBCC Board of Directors will be used for general maintenance purposes. This assures the maintenance and operation of internet connectivity for the College, a condition set forth by USAID FED before internet connectivity is installed, a lesson learned from the experience with BWI. In addition, the Administration of GBCC indicated that part of its 2014-15 fiscal budget of \$150,000 USD will be used to purchase two 30-seat buses to transport faculty and students to and from the new campus. This will encourage students to enroll at GBCC.

GBCC and USAID FED are developing a business plan that will guide the institution's business activities in agriculture and other services. GBCC is expected to provide the running costs such as staff salaries, labor, water and electricity. This is part of the stipulations of the MoU between GBCC and USAID FED.

USAID FED conducted budget preparation training for four participants from GBCC. The participants learned how to develop and manage budgets.



## Nimba County Community College

During the reporting period, USAID FED donated 5 ceiling fans, 6 bundles of zinc, 10 cartons of nails, 10 hangers and 14 rolls of wire to NCCC for renovation of the building to house equipment and facilities that FED will be providing.

During the reporting period, a group of 35 agriculture students participated in rice planting activities on the NCCC campus. The students developed 28 plots for lowland rice production. Divided into male and female student groups, the female students prepared a total of five plots for lowland rice.



Figure 13: KRTTI students on demonstration site.

## Booker Washington Institute

BWI is recruiting to fill the Career Counsellor position in its Career Center. FED is supporting its career counselling program to provide information to students on job and entrepreneurial prospects in agriculture.

## KRTTI

In July, agriculture students conducted regular site maintenance, ridge construction, and planted the Caricass 1, 2 and 3 cassava varieties (Figure 13).

## The National Diploma in Agriculture

USAID FED is in the process of procuring text books for distribution to four CoEs in order to support the upcoming roll out of the National Diploma in Agriculture. CoE faculty members contributed to the development of the list of textbooks and reference material needed to support the adoption of the NDA curriculum.

During the month of July, USAID FED and fourteen instructors from the Centers of Excellence developed the second semester lesson plans and NDA program syllabi at the NCCC campus in Sanniquelle (Figure 14).

The following transition plans to incorporate the NDA in the CoE's academic programs are as follows:

- The NDA will now replace the associate degree program at GBCC, and all incoming students will register under the NDA program. Students who want to obtain an associate degree will have to complete additional classes.



Figure 14: Workshop participants and trainer created NDA program syllabi in Sanniquelle, Nimba County.



- At BWI, all incoming first year students who would like to pursue vocational training in agriculture will enroll in the NDA program. Second year students who started with the current agricultural Accelerated Vocational Training Program (AVTP) will continue under this program.
- NCCC and LCCC are still in the process of deciding how to incorporate the NDA into their associate degree programs. There will probably be a certain amount of overlap in the first couple of years.

The USAID FED project produced a drama to promote the NDA (National Diploma in Agriculture). The drama is currently being played on four USAID FED partner radio stations. USAID FED and the Ministry of Education are organizing the NDA launch program for later this year at the Booker Washington Institute in Kakata, Margibi County. The President of Liberia, US Ambassador, as well as representatives from the MoE, MoYS, MoA, National Commission on Higher Education, ECOWAS, and the private sector will be invited to formally launch the NDA.

### **ICT Support in Library and Agriculture Department**

USAID FED is currently procuring ICT materials to restore the internet service at LCCC. The LCCC administration is negotiating with a new service provider, ECHELON SATNET, to provide a 1.8 meter VSAT C-Band antenna. The monthly charge for equipment maintenance, including service contract, is \$2,000 USD. GBCC has budgeted approximately \$16,700 USD to cover internet expenses, including bandwidth, routine maintenance of the equipment such as servers, VSAT disc and accessories in its 2014/2015 fiscal budget.

### **Capacity Building for Librarians at the CoEs**

USAID FED is contracting an expert Librarian to train qualified local librarians and library staff at GBCC, NCCC, BWI and LCCC to improve the management and operations of the libraries. The training will take place in August at BWI. The librarians are expected to manage books and reference materials in hard and electronic copies that will support the roll-out of the NDA in September.

### **Agriculture Science Laboratories**

USAID FED hired a local architecture and engineering firm to provide detailed drawings, a bill of quantity and general oversight to construction firms during the renovation of the agriculture science laboratories. The job order is expected to be completed by mid-September for all four institutions, and construction is planned to commence in October 2014.



*Figure 15: Dr. Sampson delivering a practical demonstration during the soil analysis training workshop in Bong County.*

Eight instructors from the CoEs participated in a week-long soil testing training at CARL in Bong County. The students learned soil test analysis methods using the Hach soils testing kit. The training is one of several practical sessions for CoE instructors (Figure 15). Instructors from the University of Liberia, Cuttington University, and select FED staff participated in the training.

USAID FED-supported Centers of Excellence (CoE) plan to establish the following additional demo farms for September:

Relocation Program for Liberia  
 rt, July FY14

- NCCC will cultivate 2.5ha of lowland rice, 4.5ha of cassava, and will engage in goat husbandry.
- GBCC will cultivate one hectare of vegetables and 3ha of cassava.
- LCCC will cultivate 4.78ha of lowland rice, and will engage in goat husbandry. USAID FED will provide LCCC with 25 goats to start the goat farm.
- BWI will cultivate one hectare of vegetables and engage in commercial compost making.

USAID FED will work with the four CoEs to draft business plans for income generation from the demonstration farm activities. MoUs are being revised to ensure that the CoE will provide required resources and support to ensure the success of the agribusinesses. The CoEs have all agreed to provide labor to run the demonstration plots while students are on vacation. At GBCC, the administration has put in place a new strategy so that agriculture students are compensated for managing activities during the vacation period.

### Support to Post-Graduate Students

Former USAID FED Soil Analysis Technical Officer, Wooklee Payee, currently studies soil science as a graduate student at Louisiana State University. Mr. Payee's Master's thesis will study the effects of nitrogen fertilizer deep placement on rice grain yields in a lowland cropping system in Liberia. He will also evaluate the effects of nitrogen fertilizer deep placement on the soil's inorganic nitrogen levels. Mr. Payee is currently conducting studies on rice fields at CARI.

## Task 3.1 Enterprise Service Centers

### Investors

USAID FED issued a Request for Expression of Interest to pre-qualify potential investors for the establishment of Enterprise Service Centers (ECS) in Nimba and Monrovia. The deadline for submissions is the end of August.

The Green Coast Agriculture Project (GCAP), Community Youth Network Program (CNYP) and the Jacob Tomei Enterprise Center received approval to establish Enterprise Service Centers in Bong, Grand Bassa and Lofa counties, respectively.

All three organizations have been providing training and advisory services on agricultural practices in their counties while Jacob F. Tomei Enterprise Center has also been providing tilling, transport and agro-processing equipment maintenance.

The entrepreneurs have committed to investing \$202,610 USD in cash and in-kind as part of the total estimated investment of the \$395,400 USD required in start-up capital. These funds will also cover the first year's operating costs of the three centers. Following one year of operation, the centers are expected to be self-financing. The ESC partner investments represent 51% of the total cost (Table 14).

USAID FED continues to help the organizations raise nearly \$70,000 USD for the development of the ESC facilities. Until this investment is secured, they will be renting facilities.

Table 14: Proposed ESC investment requirements and local matches in Bong, Grand Bassa and Lofa counties.

Bong County	USAID FED		ESC Partner	
	USD	%	USD	%
Investment – Equipment/Furnishings	\$41,709		\$11,264	
Investment - Facilities	\$0		\$39,969	

TOTAL CAPEX	\$41,709	45%	\$51,233	55%
1 <sup>ST</sup> YEAR OPERATIONS	\$23,120	50%	\$23,130	50%
<b>TOTAL ESC Match</b>	<b>\$64,839</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>\$74,363</b>	<b>53%</b>
<b>Grand Bassa County</b>				
Investment – Equipment/Furnishings	\$40,444	49%	\$29,289	51%
Investment - Facilities	\$0		\$13,142	
TOTAL CAPEX	\$40,444		\$42,430	
1 <sup>ST</sup> YEAR OPERATIONS	\$28,492	50%	\$28,492	50%
<b>TOTAL ESC Match</b>	<b>\$68,936</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>\$70,922</b>	<b>51%</b>
<b>Lofa County</b>				
Investment – Equipment/Furnishings	\$38,429	49%	\$20,465	51%
Investment - Facilities	\$0		\$16,273	
TOTAL CAPEX	\$38,429		\$36,738	
1 <sup>ST</sup> YEAR OPERATIONS	\$20,587	50%	\$20,587	50%
<b>TOTAL ESC Match</b>	<b>\$59,016</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>\$57,325</b>	<b>49%</b>

ESC services are designed to address the dual and interrelated production and business constraints that Liberian agricultural based enterprises face. The Agricultural Business Development Services (ABDS) include assistance with business registration, technical advice on production and postharvest handling, assistance with business planning and access to credit, advice on how to organize farmers groups, training for improving business planning and management skills, links with suppliers and buyers, market information and marketing ideas. While these services will also be provided to other value chain actors such as local traders, input dealers and agro-processors, the ESCs will first give priority to FED's farmers groups, especially the farmers' groups which will be undertaking collective processing activities such as rice milling and gari-making.

Based on first-hand experience working with rural entrepreneurs and the market research that each investor group conducted in their respective counties, the following fee-based services (Table 15) are being proposed:

Table 15: Proposed ESC service offering in the counties.

Services to be offered	Grand	Bong	Lofa
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	<b>Bassa</b>		
Mobile digital training on best production and business practices	√	√	√
Agricultural business development services	√	√	√
Administrative & office support services (mobile and stationary)	√	√	√
Haulage and transport services	√	√	√
Market information services	√	√	√
Sprayer services	√	√	√
Felling and cutting services	√	√	√

### **Legal Issues**

Jacob F. Tomei Enterprises, Inc. (Lofa County) and CNYP (Grand Bassa County) registered new for-profit enterprises to spearhead the ESC development in their respective counties, while GCAP will use its existing not-for-profit organization to operate the ESC in Bong County. Their proposed locations are situated in Foya, Buchanan, and Gbarnga, the economic capitals of the three counties.

### **ESC Capacity Building**

USAID FED conducted a capacity needs assessment of the three ESC investors to prepare a capacity-building plan which can be implemented during FY14 Q4 and incorporated into the FY15 work plan. The following suggestions are proposed for the start-up phase of the ESCs:

- Set-up accounting systems on Quickbooks and provide training in financial and administrative management;
- Design of client management databases and conduct monitoring and evaluation, data collection and database management training;
- Conduct training on business plan preparation for a rice milling and cassava processing enterprise;
- Combination of training and one-on-one technical assistance capacity building in logistics management; and
- Training of Trainers in farming as a business.

The three ESCs are already discussing the co-development of training content and joint promotional activities. This is one of the outcomes of the ESC business planning workshop held in June when the ESCs were encouraged to collaborate and form linkages.

In July, the prospective ESC investors in Bong, Grand Bassa and Lofa counties conducted market research to identify constraints/barriers to the development of commercial farming and/or agri-business activities and assess USAID FED farming groups' needs and willingness to pay for business development services.

A total of 46 farming groups were surveyed using a survey instrument the ESC teams developed during the planning workshop in June. While the majority of the groups are growing more than one crop and/or have an integrated farming system which combines cropping with the raising of livestock, cassava is the predominant crop in all three counties.

Participants were asked to rate 35 specific challenge areas that their groups face by indicating whether the matter is of high, medium or low priority. Of the top 15 areas cited by the groups, five are issues concerning marketing, four are production issues, four deal with organizational matters and two are related to the area of finance (Table 16).

*Table 16: Top problems or challenges the groups are facing that impede their development*

<b>Challenge Areas of Highest Concern</b>	<b>% of Grand Bassa groups responding “High Priority” n=12</b>	<b>% of Bong groups responding “High Priority” n=20</b>	<b>% of Lofa groups responding “High Priority” n=14</b>
Access to improved technologies, e.g. equipment, sprayers, for purchase or hire which reduce fuel, water and/or labor costs	75%	90%	93%
Transportation to markets	50%	60%	93%
Timely access to production inputs	100%	35%	43%
Development of goals and business plan for achieving them	50%	55%	43%
Building relationships with and negotiating with buyers to obtain best price and terms	42%	70%	21%
Market information, particularly on prices but also on volumes required and quality requirements	25%	50%	29%
Identifying market opportunity	42%	45%	29%
Adapting product/service to respond to market demand	50%	40%	21%

Raising funds to carry out the business	33%	45%	29%
Sourcing quality inputs and negotiating with suppliers for best price and terms	33%	55%	0%
Legality/Formalization of group	33%	85%	0%
Leadership/Management know-how	0%	15%	29%
Member participation in group meetings and decision-making	50%	5%	14%
Knowledge and use of best production practices	8%	60%	0%
Analyzing potential profitability of market opportunities	0%	15%	36%

When asked about new activities to improve production and business, the majority of the groups said they would first access credit from an external source. Other activities cited include collective marketing, organizing a group savings and loan program, collective purchasing of inputs and supplies and starting-up an agri-business.

To assess the potential demand for business development services that would help farmers address these problems, those surveyed were asked to identify which services they are willing to pay for. In the survey, prices were not established for each of the services. Most groups polled were interested and willing to pay for products and services that they perceived would a) have an immediate impact on their bottom line by helping to market/sell their produce (transport and marketing assistance, and b) increase production or reduce production costs (access to mechanized services, inputs).

While the majority felt that they needed training in management and finance, their willingness to pay for training was quite mixed. The groups in Lofa are more willing to pay for this type of training than their counterparts in the other two counties (Table 17).

The survey also revealed that there is strong demand and willingness to pay for products that are needed in rural communities such as seeds, fertilizers, tools, bags and packaging material.

Table 17: Top enterprise development services need and willingness to pay for service.

Enterprise Development Services Needed	Grand Bassa n=12		Bong n=20		Lofa n=14	
	% indicating Need for Service	% indicating Willingness to Pay for Service	% indicating Need for Service	% indicating Willingness to Pay for	% indicating Need for Service	% indicating Willingness to Pay for



				Service		Service
Delivery/transport of goods	92%	67%	70%	70%	93%	93%
Marketing assistance/information	83%	50%	55%	55%	93%	93%
Equipment for land preparation (chain saw, tilling)	75%	67%	55%	45%	100%	100%
Finding quality inputs, tools, supplies	67%	50%	80%	80%	100%	100%
Finding equipment/spare parts	17%	17%	50%	50%	86%	86%
Training on best production practices	8%	8%	55%	55%	100%	100%
Training on managing the organization	67%	8%	5%	5%	79%	79%
Training on financial management	58%	8%	45%	40%	86%	71%
Animal health services (vaccines for chickens, goats; treating cattle	25%	25%	0	0	14%	14%
Other: Access to or help in renovating storage	0	0	35%	20%	43%	43%

## Component Four: Cross-Cutting Activities

### Task 4.1: Gender

#### Leadership and Business Incubation for Women Entrepreneurs

USAID FED met with representatives from the Angie Brooks Foundation and UN Women to discuss their current gender programs and identify synergies with the USAID FED program. The Angie Brooks Foundation has historically worked with market women and has recently opened a training center for women in Suakoko, Bong County on the Cuttington University campus.

UN Women who have previously worked with cross-border trade women through VSLAs and business training are designing a program that would reach farmers in River Cess, Grand Gedeh, and Maryland

counties. This program is not expected to begin until late 2015. Both organizations utilize the Rural Women Structure, a network of female leaders set up by the Ministry of Gender. Women participating in USAID FED Leadership training will be introduced to this network upon graduation.

## Task 4.2: Youth

### Youth Agriculture NGOs

During the month of July, four local youth NGOs continued to provide technical extension services and supervision for approximately 12,000 cassava farmers and 10,177 upland rice farmers. The 39 youth extension aids recruited during January are currently under the direct supervision of the youth NGOs. In Bong County, Green Coast Agriculture Program (G-CAP) continues to provide extension support to 3,215 upland farmers and 2,158 cassava farmers. In Grand Bassa, Community Youth Network Program (CYNP) continued to provide extension support to 2,517 kuu members under the cassava value chain and 545 upland rice farmers. In Lofa County, Liberia Integrated Professional Agriculture Service (LIPAS) continued to provide extension support to 1,512 rice farmers and 565 kuu cassava members. In Nimba County, Evangelical Children Rehabilitation Program (ECREP) and the youth extension aides continued to provide extension services to 1,593 cassava farmers and 2,385 upland rice farmers.



Figure 16: Cassava field at ZRTTI

### Zorzor Rural Teacher Training Institute

The school garden at the Zorzor Rural Teacher Training Institute (ZRTTI) continued harvesting all four vegetables sites (0.71ha) in Zorzor Districts, Lofa County. The teachers harvested approximately 45kg of vegetables (cucumber, okra, sweet corn and watermelon). In the period, the harvests generated \$32 USD in sales.

The in-service teachers at the institute who are the project beneficiaries are also carrying on regular field maintenance of the vegetables gardens and the two

cassava fields. The two cassava fields are each laid out with mounds and ridges on 0.25ha.

The administration of the institution has decided to expand and improve the school's garden program by using the funds generated from the harvests. A total of 101 in-service teachers are currently benefiting from the USAID FED supported activity.

### Back to School Garden Program

USAID FED in collaboration with USAID Advancing Youth Project (AYP) identified and selected a total of 100 schools (20 schools per county) interested in participating in the FY14 Back to School Garden Program.

Within a period of seven months, a total of 4,500 students (900 per school) are expected to participate in the program as young gardeners in Bong, Lofa, Nimba, Montserrado, Grand Bassa, and Margibi counties.

To date, all of the 100 schools have signed a MoU of participation with USAID FED and the preparation for on-site demonstration, mapping of gardens, distribution of garden tools and inputs are in progress at the county level. The participating schools are expected to attend TOT trainings from August 11 – September 10, 2014 at the county level. These trainings will be carried out by the local youth NGOs hired by USAID FED under technical supervision of the County Youth Extension Agent assigned to each of the counties.

### **Task 4.3: Nutrition**

During the reporting period, 147 individuals received direct nutrition messaging through the Salt/Mineral lick fabrication training under the goat value chain, 30 individuals at the IPM training and 292 individuals under the business management coaching provided by the vegetable value chain. In total, 469 individuals received nutrition training (335 men and 134 women). Nutrition messaging is mainstreamed in FED's training. FED's nutritionist, Jonathan Brown provides TOT on nutrition messaging during TOTs held by the different value chains on various topics. FED's M&E team is carrying out a rapid survey of beneficiaries in August to determine the effectiveness of FED's nutrition messaging. This survey intends to also determine how many of the beneficiaries actually received nutrition messages.

### **Task 4.4: Coordination with Partners**

#### **WAAPP, WAFP, WASP, and CILSS**

USAID FED partners with the World Bank-funded West Africa Agriculture Productivity Program (WAAPP), the USAID-funded West Africa Fertilizer Program (WAFP), the West and Central African Council for Agricultural Research and Development-supported West Africa Seed Program (WASP), the Permanent Interstates Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS), and ECOWAS to establish national seed, pesticide and fertilizer laws and regulations, which will facilitate implementation of improved seed and agro-chemical inputs in Liberia.

In July, the partners collaborated to organize an ECOWAS-led Task Force with the Minister of Agriculture to discuss the regional harmonization process for these policies. As a result of the visit, the three ECOWAS regulations were officially published in the National Gazette on July 16, thereby becoming Liberian law.

The Task Force also developed an action plan and time line to begin the process of implementing all three regulations, including setting up the National Regulatory Body to oversee the implementation. USAID will work with WAAPP representatives to form a technical working group to make sure the process continues to move forward.

#### **USADF**

In July, USAID FED conferred with LEAD management and representatives from US African Development Fund (USADF) to determine the feasibility and sustainability of LEAD expanding their agriculture lending program to additional USAID FED farmers and expanding operations into Lofa County. Based on analysis of projections conducted by LEAD and audited by USADF and USAID FED using MicroFin software, USADF has submitted a proposal to their headquarters to extend an additional grant for on-lending in agriculture to LEAD for \$245,000 USD. If approved USAID FED will support LEAD with the provision of motorbikes, training for new employees in financial accounting software and the pilot use of mobile money to facilitate field transactions.

### Task 4.5: Monitoring & Evaluation

During the month of July, USAID FED issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the development of close to real-time data collection and monitoring system that will allow the FED Management to track progress of project implementation in a timely manner. This will also allow FED Management to determine problem areas and address these in a timely manner.

USAID FED reviewed its project indicators during the reporting period. It was decided that the indicator on financing should be revised to include both formal and informal financing, cash and in-kind in order to reflect the FED's interventions and assistance. The following four indicators are being considered for addition to the existing indicators to capture FED's work.

- a) Number of farmers and others having access to improved planting materials (contractual deliverable)
- b) Average household dietary diversity score
- c) Hunger scale/ Average number of months with adequate household food provisioning
- d) Percentage of postharvest losses

These indicators will be finalized as the FED Team finalizes the LOP targets and the FY15 work plan.

### Task 4.6: Environmental Compliance

USAID FED conducted an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of the bio mass generator at the Fabrar Liberia's rice milling facility in Kakata. The team tested for air quality, noise and vibration, worker health and safety, and air quality. The study turned up very positive results and shows that USAID FED has put in place all necessary mitigation measures. This is the first phase of the assessment pending EPA approval.

### Task 4.7: Communications

#### USAID FED Media Stories

USAID FED issued no press releases in the month of July (Table 18).

Table 18: USAID FED in the news in July 2014.

USAID FED News	Newspapers	Online News Outlets	Radio and Other Media
Miscellaneous Stories	4	0	0

*\*Miscellaneous includes success stories and press stories about irrigation, mechanization and women farmer coaching and mentoring.*

#### July Success Stories

USAID FED submitted two success stories to USAID in the month of July. These stories will be released for publication once approved by USAID.

#### UNMIL Radio Partnership

In July, USAID FED finished the pilot program for On-the-Farm, a 30 minute radio show that will be featured once a week on UNMIL radio. The first program discusses lowland rice planting and irrigation,

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the National Diploma in Agriculture curriculum and storage issues at Red Light market. USAID FED does not know when the program will be aired due to the Ebola outbreak.