



FOOD AND ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT (FED) PROGRAM FOR LIBERIA

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Photo Caption: Study Tour participants from the Centers of Excellence in Ghana

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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
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FUN	Farmer Union Network
GAP	Good Agriculture Practices
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
ISFM	Integrated Soil Fertility Management
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
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
MoHSW	Ministry of Health and Social Welfare
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 society 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 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 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

On February 15, 2015, a USAID FED delegation headed by its Training and Administrative Coordinator along with Sr. Vocational Agriculture Educational Officer traveled on a study tour with representatives from the four supported Centers of Excellence (CoE) to the following institutions in Ghana: Animal Health & Production College (AHPC), Kwadaso Agriculture College and Adidome Farm Institute. Twelve members (11 males and 1 female) from the four CoEs participated in this study tour. The general objectives of the tour included: studying the achievements of the Ghanaian institutions; identifying profitable enterprises for establishment in Liberia; forming partnerships with our Ghanaian counterparts and providing the platform for teaching staff to learn from each other, improve the quality of their curriculum and teaching methods; learning new techniques for the development of farm enterprises and promoting sustainable income generation; and developing action plans, budgets and deliverable timelines for implementation.

In order to boost rice production, USAID FED has partnered with rice producers in Liberia to help them transform from subsistence farmers to commercial rice producers. During February, USAID FED partner farmers sold a total of 694.75MT of FY14 rice crop at a value of USD \$297,328.82. A cumulative total of 2,063.67MT of FY14 rice crop has been sold at a value of USD \$851,653.03 year to date. Both numbers represent a substantial increase compared to previous year's harvest in the same months.

During February, a total of 135.30 MT of FY13 cassava tubers were harvested from 6.01 Ha of FY13 FED supported demonstration sites. In total, 117.67 Ha has been harvested yielding 2,210.68 MT of cassava tubers. Also in February, a total of 453.90 MT of FY13 cassava tubers were sold for USD \$44,503.58. In total, 4,779.14 MT of FY13 crop has been sold for USD \$511,973.74 year to date

USAID FED convened its first Policy Forum for FY15 to discuss issues around optimal rice pricing, Executive Order #64 (Duty Free Waiver for Agricultural Importation) and the local procurement law. It was concluded during the forum that in order for Executive Order # 64 to be effective, the GoL should draft a law that will: be applicable for more than the current one year time period of the EO, simplify the language in the document, clarify the duty waiver procedure and shorten the amount of time private investors spend following up on the paperwork. LABEE Technical Working Group Members such as USAID Liberia, USAID FED, Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI), Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), Ministry of Finance and Planning Development (MoFPD), Liberia Revenue Authority (LRA), National Investment Commission (NIC), Representatives from the House of Representatives Agriculture Committee, private sector representatives (including Grogreen, Greenfield Liberia, Fabrar Inc.) and many other representatives attended this forum. The Central Bank of Liberia Micro-Finance Unit, through the Loan Extension and Availability Facility (LEAF) program, has provided L\$1,250,000 (USD \$15,000) loan to five VSLA groups supported by USAID FED, namely: Zeelie VSLA, WOFPD VSLA, Kobeke VSLA, Yeapugimai VSLA and Kukatonon VSLA. Each group received L\$250,000 or USD \$3,000 to be paid back within a three year period in three installments at a 3% interest rate. To date, out of the total of 50 VSLA groups, five have had the opportunity to receive the loan and this figure will increase in March 2015.

Component One: Increase Agricultural Productivity and Profitability

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

Rice Sales from FY14:

During February, a total of 694.75MT of FY14 rice crop was sold at a value of USD \$297,328.82. A cumulative total of 2,063.67MT of FY14 rice crop has been sold at a value of USD \$851,653.03 year to date (Table 1).

Table 1: FY14 Rice Crop Sales

County	Sales volume as of January 2015 (MT)	Sales value as of January 2015 (\$USD)	Sales volume in February 2015 (MT)	Sales value in February 2015 (\$USD)	Sales Volume YTD (MT)	Sales value YTD (\$USD)
Lofa	1,187.09	\$473,983.31	446.00	\$178,400.00	1,633.09	\$652,383.31
Nimba	0.00	\$0.00	31.25	\$15,598.82	31.25	\$15,598.82
Bong	158.13	\$71,060.90	216.5	\$102,985.00	374.63	\$174,045.90
Grand Bassa	23.70	\$9,280.00	1.00	\$345.00	24.70	\$9,625.00
TOTAL	1,368.92	\$554,324.21	694.75	\$297,328.82	2,063.67	\$851,653.03

Rice crop harvests from FY14:

During February, a total of 225.5 Ha of upland commercial rice sites were harvested yielding 415MT. In total, 2,464.82 Ha of upland rice areas have been harvested fiscal year to date yielding a total of 5,041.55MT of upland rice (Table 2).



Figure 1: 50 kg bags of paddy rice in Lofa County.

Table 2: Upland rice commercial sites harvests

County	Hectare established in FY14	FY14 Hectares harvested by January 2015	Volume harvested by January 2015 (MT)	FY14 Hectare harvested in February 2015	Volume harvested in February 2015 (MT)	FY14 Hectares harvested YTD	Volume harvested YTD (MT)
Lofa	226.00	226.00	483.85	0.00	0.00	226.00	483.85
Nimba	95.32	95.32	266.90	0.00	0.00	95.32	266.90
Bong	1,653.50	1,653.50	3,309.80	0.00	0.00	1,653.50	3,309.80
Grand Bassa	490.00	264.50	530.00	225.50	451.00	490.00	981.00
TOTAL	2,464.82	2,239.32	4,590.54	225.50	451.00	2,464.82	5,041.55

During the same period, a total of 11.50 Ha of lowland rice commercial sites were harvested yielding 46MT. In total, 1,091.51Ha of lowland rice areas have been harvested fiscal year to date yielding 4,138.68 MT of lowland rice (Table 3).

Table 3: Lowland commercial sites harvests

County	Hectare established in FY14	FY14 Hectare harvested by January 2015	Volume harvested by January 2015 (MT)	FY14 Hectare harvested in February 2015	Volume harvested in February 2015 (MT)	FY14 Hectare harvested YTD	Volume harvested YTD (MT)
Lofa	139.00	139.00	532.45	0.00	0.00	139.00	532.45
Nimba	308.01	308.01	1,027.73	0.00	0.00	308.01	1,027.73
Bong	622.50	622.50	2,490.00	0.00	0.00	622.50	2,490.00
Grand Bassa	22.00	10.50	42.50	11.50	46.00	22.00	88.50
TOTAL	1,091.51	1,080.01	4,092.68	11.50	46.00	1,091.51	4,138.68

Activity I.A.1 Improving productivity and profitability of upland rice

Task I.A.1.1 Identify and recruit 11,025 new upland farmers to produce upland rice

By the end of February, 11,296 upland rice farmers (6,787 male and 4,509 female), had been identified in the four counties to produce rice on 2,964.50 Ha of land. MoUs were signed with 297 farmers groups who have commenced land clearing in their respective communities (Table 4).

Table 4: Upland rice farmer recruitment

County	FY15 Upland Farmer Target	FY15 Upland Target Ha	# of Farmers Identified Q1, FY15	# of Farmers verified by February	# of Male Farmers		# of Female Farmers	
					No	60 %	No	40 %
Lofa	1,750	420.00	2,729	1,912	934		978	
Nimba	4,550	182.00	4,553	4,550	2,684		1,866	
Bong	4,060	2,030.00	4,064	4,064	2,599		1,465	
Grand Bassa	665	332.50	770	770	570		200	
TOTAL	11,025	2,964.50	12,179	11,296	6,787		4,509	

During February, USAID FED-supported farmers have cleared a total of 2,466.00 Ha of upland commercial sites towards FY15 production (Table 5).

Table 5: Upland commercial sites cleared for planting

County	Number of FY15 targeted sites	Number of sites identified by February	Targeted hectares for FY15 production	Number of Hectares cleared in February	Total number of Hectares cleared YTD
Lofa	61	61	420.00	420.00	420.00
Nimba	110	110	182.00	182.00	182.00
Bong	109	109	2,030.00	1,840.00	1,840.00
Grand Bassa	17	17	332.50	24.00	24.00
TOTAL	297	297	2,964.50	2,466.00	2,466.00

Task I.A.1.2 Recruit local NGOs to provide implementation support to up-land rice farmers

During the month of February, contracting processes were completed with five local NGO's to provide technical implementation support to both upland and lowland rice producing groups (Table 6). The LNGOs will be training lead farmers, ensuring farmers receive their inputs, supervising the establishment and management of demonstration sites, providing extension services, monitoring and reporting production and sales.

Table 6: LNGOs contracted per County

County	# of LNGOs	Contracted LNGOs	Ecological focus
Bong	2	Action for Safer Community Organization (ASCO), Green-Coast Agriculture Program (GCAP)	Lowland and Upland
Lofa	1	Rural Agriculture Alternatives (RAA)	Both upland and lowland
Nimba	1	Agriculture Relief Services (ARS)	Both upland and lowland
Grand Bassa	1	Community Youth Network Program (CYNP)	Both upland and lowland

Task I.A.1.3 Establish 297 hectare of new demonstration sites

During February, 222.50 hectares of new demonstration sites have been cleared across the four counties USAID FED works in (Table 7).

Table 7: Upland demonstrations sites establishment

County	Demonstration sites target hectares	Number of hectares cleared in February 2015	Total number of hectare cleared YTD
Bong	109.00	54.50	54.50
Lofa	61.00	61.00	61.00
Nimba	110.00	90.00	90.00
Bassa	17.00	17.00	17.00
Total	297.00	222.50	222.50

Task I.A.1.6 Procure and distribute 17.82 MT of Nerica-14 seeds to 297 ha of new demo-sites

During February, solicitations and the selection of vendors at the county level towards the procurement of 17.82 MT of Nerica-14 seeds were concluded. It is anticipated that all the seeds will be supplied to the upland sites in March.

Task I.A.1.7 Procure and distribute 60 MT of fertilizer to 297 ha of new demo-sites

In February, the vendor to supply 60 MT of fertilizer was selected and the contracting process was concluded. It is anticipated that all the fertilizer will be delivered and distributed to farming groups by April.

Activity I.A.2 Expanding lowland rice production

Task I.A.2.1 Identify and recruit 7,175 new lowland farmers to produce lowland rice

By the end of February, 11,154 lowland rice farmers (6,062 male and 5,092 female) had been identified in the four USAID FED-supported counties to produce rice on 3,545.90 Ha of land. MoUs were signed with 267 farmer groups (Table 8). After an assessment of the post- Ebola implementation capabilities of the USAID FED counties, lowland rice production was further expanded from 7,175 farmers planting on 1908.20 Ha to 12,100 farmers planting on 3,910.40 Ha in FY15. After verification of farming groups, the total number of farmers now stands at 11,154 cultivating on 3,545.90 Ha.

Table 8: FY15 Lowland rice farmer recruitment

County	FY15 Lowland Farmer Target	FY15 lowland Target Ha	# of Farmers Identified by February	# of Farmers verified by February	# of Male Farmers	# of Female Farmers

Lofa	1,400	350.00	3,525	2,950	1,500	1,450
Nimba	4,060	812.00	4,796	4,435	2,437	1,998
Bong	1,400	700.00	3,290	3,280	1,826	1,454
Grand Bassa	315	46.20	489	489	299	190
TOTAL	7,175	1,908.20	12,100	11,154	6,062	5,092

During February, the farmers cleared 1,119.3 Ha of new lowlands against the new target of 3,545.90 Ha (Table 9).

Table 9: Lowland commercial sites cleared for planting

County	Targeted hectare for FY15	New targeted hectare for FY15	Hectare cleared in February	Hectare cleared YTD
Bong	700	1,654.50	978.00	978.00
Lofa	350	969.90	135.00	135.00
Nimba	812	835.5	0.00	0.00
Grand Bassa	46.2	86.00	6.30	6.30
TOTAL	1,908.2	3,545.90	1,119.30	1,119.30

Task 1.A.2.3 Establish 191 hectare of new demonstration sites

During the month of February, 150.50 Ha of new demonstration sites had been cleared across the USAID FED-supported counties (Table 10). As a result of the increase in number of new lowland areas, the number of demonstration sites increased from 191 Ha to 267 Ha.

Table 10: Lowland demonstrations sites establishment

County	Demonstration sites target hectare	New demonstration sites target hectares	Number of hectares cleared in February 2015	Total number of hectares cleared YTD
Bong	38	79	30.00	0.00
Lofa	37	50	135.00	135.00
Nimba	108	111	0.00	0.00
Bassa	8	27	9.20	9.20
Total	191	267	150.50	150.50

Task 1.A.2.6 Procure and distribute 7.64 MT of Nerica-L19 seeds to 191 ha of new demo-sites

During February, solicitations and selection of vendors at the county level towards the procurement of 10.68MT of Nerica-L19 seeds for lowland rice production demonstration sites were concluded. It is anticipated that all the seeds will be supplied to the lowland sites in March.

Task 1.A.2.7 Procure and distribute 59.4MT of TSP, MOP, and Urea Briquette & Urea fertilizer to 191 demonstration sites

In February, the project selected and contracted a vendor to supply 220.67MT of fertilizer for the increased demonstration sites for lowland rice production. It is anticipated that all the fertilizer will be delivered and distributed to farming groups by April.

Task 1.A.2.10 Link low-land rice farmers to financial services providers and agro-inputs suppliers

By the end of February, 11 rice farming groups comprised of 675 members had been submitted to LEAD for possible microfinance loan assistance. LEAD will be conducting due diligence on these groups for lending consideration as per their internal criteria.

Activity 1.A.3 Enhancing mechanization for lowland rice production

Task 1.A.3.5 Procure 8 paddy drum seeders for demonstration trials in the 4 counties

During the month of February, FED selected and contracted the vendor who will supply paddy drum seeders to the rice business hubs. In FY15, one paddy drum seeder will be distributed to each of the FY14 and FY15 rice business hub, bringing the total number of paddy drum seeders to 20. It is anticipated that the paddy drum seeders will be delivered in March. This will ensure that additional mechanized fee-based services are available to farmers in the clusters.

Task 1.A.3.6 Procure and distribute 8 cono-weeders for demonstration trials in the 4 counties

During the month of February, FED selected and contracted the vendor who will supply the cono-weeders for the rice business hubs. In FY15, one cono-weeder will be distributed to each of the FY14 and FY15 rice business hub bringing the total number of cono-weeders to 20. It is anticipated that the cono-weeders will be delivered in March. This will ensure that additional mechanized fee-based services are available to farmers in the clusters.

Activity 1.A.4 Promoting use of fertilizers in up-land and low-land rice production

Task 1.A.4.2 Distribute Leaf Color charts to determine Nitrogen requirements to 424 up-lands and 696 low-lands demo-sites

During the month of January, USAID FED commenced the process of procuring leaf color charts from outside Liberia. These charts are not locally available in Liberia. The vendor has been selected and the project anticipates receiving these leaf color charts in April.

Activity 1.A.6 Promoting 2 rice crops per years

Task 1.A.6.2 Construct 30 new irrigation spillways and head dykes

By the end of February, 30 water management infrastructure sites were selected. 24 MoUs were signed in Bong, Lofa and Grand Bassa (Table 11). The selection of firm that will supervise construction of the spillways in the four counties was also concluded. Construction of the spillways on the 30 sites will begin in March.

Table 11: Water management sites targeted

County	# of sites	Hectare targeted	Number of beneficiaries	# of Males	# of Females	# of MoU prepared	# of MoU signed	# of MoU outstanding
Lofa	11	55.70	653	342	311	11	11	0
Nimba	6	35.00	296	195	101	6	0	6
Bong	10	55.00	574	322	252	10	10	0
Grand Bassa	3	14.50	60	32	28	3	3	0

TOTAL	30	160.20	1,583	891	692	30	24	6
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Activity 1.A.7 Enhancing post-harvest management practices

Task 1.A.7.2 Construct and equip identified community rice business hubs

By the end of February, the project contracted an Architectural and Engineering (A&E) firm to carry out the design and supervision for the construction of 10 new rice business hubs. The construction of the 10 new rice business hubs will commence in late March and or early April.

Activity 1.A.8 Stimulating private sector investment in commercial rice production

Task 1.A.8.2 Provide technical assistance to 2 larges scales rice growers to develop business plan

During the month of January, FED commenced verification and mapping of land owned by four pre-selected, large scale land owners in Margibi, Nimba and Bong counties. The mapping exercise was to determine the actual size of lowlands available within these farms, which in turn will help determine the level of capital investment required. A total of 500 Ha of lowlands were verified from the 4 farms. In March, discussions will be held with the land owners to discuss cost share agreements and possible MoU partnerships.

Task 1.A.8.5 Facilitate linkages between FABRAR, Government Agencies and Institutional buyers

In February, FABRAR Liberia completed the processing of 250MT of milled rice valued at USD \$185,000 for existing contract with World Food Programme (WFP). FABRAR Liberia procured 412MT of paddy rice value at USD \$152,440.00 from USAID FED-supported farmers in Lofa and Bong counties.

Task 1.A.8.7 Recruitment of Rice Technical Specialist

During February, the Rice Technical Specialist Dr. Pandian Balamurugan supported the extension unit in reviewing rice extension materials for lowland and upland rice production. These materials will be used as part of the extension curricula to be developed for modern rice production practices. Dr. Balamurugan also began assessments of paddy rice and seed rice storage methods in Bong and Nimba counties.

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

FY13 Cassava crop harvests and sales:

During the month February, a total of 135.30 MT of FY13 cassava tubers were harvested from 6.01 Ha of FY13 FED supported demonstration sites. In total, 117.67 Ha has been harvested yielding 2,210.68 MT of cassava tubers (Table 12).

Table 12: FY13 Cassava crop harvests - Demonstration sites

County	Total area planted FY13 crop (Ha)	Expected harvest FY13 Crop (MT)	Area harvested by January (Ha)	Volume Harvested by January (MT)	Area Harvested in February (Ha)	Volume Harvested in February (MT)	Total FY13 Area Harvested YTD (Ha)	Total FY13 Crop Harvested YTD (MT)
Bong	15.70	345.40	14.07	315.60	2.71	61.40	16.78	377.00
Nimba	24.16	531.52	24.16	434.88	0.00	0.00	24.16	434.88
Lofa	17.90	393.80	17.90	393.80	0.00	0.00	17.90	393.80

Grand Bassa	67.20	1,478.40	55.53	931.10	3.30	73.90	58.83	1005.00
TOTAL	124.96	2,749.12	111.66	2,075.38	6.01	135.30	117.67	2,210.68

In addition, a total of 405.53 MT of FY13 cassava tubers were harvested from 22.25 Ha of farmer fields during the same reporting period. In total, 177.59 Ha has been harvested, yielding 3,234.89MT of cassava tubers (Table 13).

Table 13: FY13 Cassava crop harvests - Farmer fields

County	Total Area Planted FY13 crop (Ha)	Expected Harvest FY13 Crop (MT)	Area Harvested by January (Ha)	Volume Harvested by January (MT)	Area Harvested in February (Ha)	Volume Harvested in February (MT)	Total FY13 Area Harvested YTD (Ha)	Total FY13 Crop Harvested YTD (MT)
Bong	17	374	0.62	17.6	1.05	23.2	1.67	40.8
Nimba	259.5	5,709	113.76	2,083.89	15.5	279	129.26	2362.89
Lofa	5	110	1.04	23.37	0.7	13.33	1.74	36.7
Grand Bassa	630	11,340	39.92	704.5	5	90	44.92	794.5
TOTAL	911.5	17533	155.34	2829.36	22.25	405.53	177.59	3234.89

During February, a total of 453.90 MT of FY13 cassava tubers were sold for USD \$44,503.58 (Table 14). In total, 4,779.14 MT of FY13 crop has been sold for USD \$511,973.74 year to date.

Table 14: FY13 Cassava Crop sales

County	Sales volume Target for FY13 crop (MT)	Sales target value for FY13 crop (US\$)	Volume sold by January FY15 (MT)	Value of Sales by January (US\$)	Volume Sold February (MT)	Value of Sales February (US\$)	Volume Sold YTD (MT)	Value of sales YTD (US\$)
Bong	611.5	\$27,517.00	284.6	\$19,537.30	79.9	\$5,293.00	364.5	\$24,830.30
Nimba	5,304.44	713,341.36	3,082.37	\$391,027.51	271	\$33,969.70	3353.37	\$424,997.21
Lofa	428.23	19,270.35	50.37	\$3,458.35	13	\$955.88	63.37	\$4,414.23
Grand Bassa	1209.6	60,300	907.9	\$53,447.00	90	4,285.00	997.9	\$57,732.00
TOTAL	1,039.73	\$27,517.00	4,325.24	\$467,470.16	453.90	44,503.58	4,779.14	511,973.74

FY14 cassava crop harvests and sales:

During February, a total of 153.90 MT of FY14 cassava crop was harvested from 6.90 Ha of FY14 FED-supported demonstration sites in Grand Bassa County. In total, 17.80 Ha have been harvested yielding 388.40 MT of cassava tubers (Table 15).

Table 15: FY14 Cassava crop harvests - Demonstration sites

County	Total area planted FY14 crop (Ha)	Expected harvest FY14 Crop (MT)	Area harvested by January (Ha)	Volume Harvested by January (MT)	Area Harvested in Feb (Ha)	Volume Harvested in Feb (MT)	Total FY14 Area Harvested YTD (Ha)	Total FY14 Crop Harvested YTD (MT)

Bong	30.00	540.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Nimba	120.36	2,647.92	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Lofa	230.00	5,060.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Grand Bassa	90.00	1,620.00	10.9	234.5	6.9	153.9	17.80	388.40
TOTAL	470.36	9,867.92	10.90	234.50	6.90	153.90	17.80	388.40

Cassava production occurs over a period of nine to eleven months and at such harvesting of FY14 crops will commence in the third quarter of FY15.

During the month of February, a total of 153.90 MT of FY14 cassava tubers were sold for USD \$5,900.00. In total, 234.50MT of FY14 cassava tuber has been sold for USD \$8,020.00 (Table 16).

Table 16: FY14 Cassava Crop sales

County	Sales volume Target for FY14 crop (MT)	Sales target value for FY14 crop (US\$)	Volume sold by January FY15 (MT)	Value of Sales by January (US\$)	Volume Sold February (MT)	Value of Sales February (US\$)	Volume Sold YTD (MT)	Value of sales YTD (US\$)
Bong	8,110.80	\$38,166.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	\$0.00
Nimba	17,952.02	\$2,414,187.25	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	\$0.00
Lofa	276.25	\$12,431.25	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	\$0.00
Grand Bassa	16,200.00	\$64,000.00	80.6	\$2,120.00	153.9	\$5,900.00	234.50	\$8,020.00
TOTAL	42,539.07	\$2,528,784.50	80.60	\$2,120.00	153.90	\$5,900.00	234.50	\$8,020.00

Activity I.B.1 Facilitating access to high yielding cassava varieties:

Task I.B.1.1 Screening of cassava cuttings on 2 sites in Lofa through collaboration with CARI

In February, CARI technicians conducted the final inspections of the two screening sites in Lofa County with improved cassava varieties imported from IITA in FY14. It is anticipated that the inspection results will be made public in March, and final release of adaptable varieties completed by May after palatability tests are concluded.

Task I.B.3.2 Identify and recruit 12,960 new farmers in 648 Kuus towards FY15 cassava production

By the end of February, a total of 477 Kuus had signed MoUs with FED across the four counties (Table 17).

Table 17: FY15 beneficiary signed up for production

County	FY15 farmer targets	FY15 Kuu target	Total FY15 farmers identified YTD	Male		Female		# of Kuus YTD	# of MOUs signed
				No	%	No	%		
Bong	2,500	125	2,500	1,286	51	1,214	49	125	125
Nimba	5,360	268	5,360	2,791	52	2,569	48	268	143
Lofa	1,500	75	1,500	900	60	600	40	75	75

Grand Bassa	3,600	180	3,600	2,356	65	1,244	35	180	134
TOTAL	12,960	648	12,960	7,333	57	5,627	43	648	477

Activity I.B.4 Improving access to market information and market:

Task I.B.4.2 Provide cassava clusters with market information on varieties required, volumes and prices:

During February, meetings were facilitated between Monrovia based processors and cassava production groups in Nimba County. Relevant information on volumes, varieties required and prices were disseminated to farmers. The results of these meetings are detailed under Task I.B.4.3.

One of the Monrovia based processors receiving FED support in FY15, YAEHD Agri- Processing Center, began construction of new processing facilities in Montserrado and Bong counties respectively. These processing facilities are expected to have a processing capacity of 2 MT of raw tuber per day. In total, YAEHD Agri- Processing Center has invested USD \$25,000.00 towards the establishment of the two new processing facilities in Monstserrado and Bong counties.



Figure 2: YAEHD Agri- Processing Center's processing facility under constructed in Montserrado.

Task I.B.4.3 Organize meetings between identified processors and cassava clusters to develop trade linkages

During the meetings facilitated between Monrovia based processors and production groups in Nimba County, the buyers and sellers were able to interact, share market information and negotiate commodity supply and prices. Agreements on weight, price per ton, volume to be supplied weekly and payment terms were negotiated (Table 18).

Table 18: Agreements for cassava sales between processors and producers in Nimba

Agreement	Bahn	Karnplay	Saniquella	Tappita	Ganta	Kpain
One bag of 80kg is considered	65 kg	65 kg	65 kg	65 kg	70 kg	70 kg
Price per ton	USD \$33.75	USD \$67.50	USD \$67.50	USD \$33.75	USD \$56.25	USD \$56.25
Volume Weekly	6 MT	6 MT	6 MT	6 MT	6 MT	6 MT
Transaction Type	Cash and Carry	Cash and Carry	Cash and Carry	Cash and Carry	Cash and Carry	Cash and Carry

Activity I.B.5 Facilitating access to financial services for processors

Task I.B.5.4 Link processors to financial services providers

In February, the capital needs of 29 processors were assessed, and a list of 25 processors submitted to LEAD towards potential loan considerations with assistance from Component 2.

Task IC: Increased Productivity and Profitability of the Horticulture Value Chain

Vegetable harvest and sales from FY14 clusters

During the month of February, 0.287 MT of vegetables were sold at USD \$8,939.00 from the FY14 high value vegetable clusters in Montserrado, Margibi, Grand Bassa and Nimba counties. A total of 98MT of vegetables were sold at USD \$62,882.23 by these clusters fiscal year to date (Table 19).

Table 19: Vegetable 2014 Harvest

County/Cluster	Volume of sales as of end of January(kg)	Value of Sales as of the end of January (USD)	Volume of sales in February (kg)	Value of sales in February (USD)	Total Sales Volume YTD (kg)	Total Sales Value YTD (USD)
Montserrado						
Bokays Town	5,989.00	\$3,684.75	18.21	\$208.00	6,007.21	\$3,892.75
CGCWEP	6,144.30	\$5,398.28	0.00	\$0.00	6,144.30	\$5,398.28
Central White Plane	1,972.00	\$865.57	51.00	\$1,505.00	2,023.00	\$2,370.57
Low Cost Village	1,475.00	\$1,084.93	0.00	\$0.00	1,475.00	\$1,084.93
Kollieman Town	1,323.00	\$1,001.29	0.00	\$0.00	1,323.00	\$1,001.29
Mawah Farmers	12,380.00	\$11,227.06	0.00	\$0.00	12,380.00	\$11,227.06
Mulleh Farm	2,095.00	\$722.35	62.00	\$2,015.00	2,157.00	\$2,737.35
Sub Total	31,378.30	23,984.23	131.21	\$3,728.00	31,509.51	27,712.23
Nimba						
Yekepa	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0	\$0.00
Sanniqueleh	2,700.00	\$2,094.20	0.00	\$0.00	2,700.00	\$2,094.20
Ganta	6,300.00	\$4,079.00	0.00	\$0.00	6,300.00	\$4,079.00
Gbedin	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0	\$0.00
Sub Total	9,000.00	6,173.20	0.00	\$0.00	9,000.00	6,173.20
Margibi						
Kpoyea's Town	5,741.00	\$1,982.81	0.00	\$0.00	5,741.00	\$1,982.81
Joeblow Town	6,755.00	\$2,009.46	44.00	\$916.00	6,799.00	\$2,925.46
KollieKan Ta	13,586.00	\$4,314.92	0.00	\$0.00	13,586.00	\$4,314.92
Francis Lewis	7,727.00	\$5,133.93	42.00	\$1,540.00	7,769.00	\$6,673.93
Weala	5,817.00	\$2,569.16	4.00	\$400.00	5,821.00	\$2,969.16
Nyanka Ta	6,455.00	\$2,814.63	0.00	\$0.00	6,455.00	\$2,814.63
Gbofella	7,071.00	\$2,438.79	66.00	\$2,355.00	7,137.00	\$4,793.79
Horton Farm	4,279.00	\$2,522.10	0.00	\$0.00	4,279.00	\$2,522.10
Sub Total	57,431.00	23,785.80	156.00	\$5,211.00	57,587.00	28,996.80
Grand Bassa						
Tubmanville	0.00	\$0.00	0	\$0.00	0.00	\$0.00
New Buchanan	0.00	\$0.00	0	\$0.00	0.00	\$0.00

Sub Total	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	\$0.00
Total	97,809.30	\$53,943.23	287.21	\$8,939.00	98,096.51	\$62,882.23

Vegetable sales from FY15 clusters

During the month of February, a total of 42MT of vegetables were sold at \$51,173.29 from 188 FY15 local vegetable production clusters in six counties. In total, these clusters have sold 51MT of vegetables valued at \$61,425.29 USD year to date (Table 20).

Table 20: Vegetable 2015 harvest

County/Cluster	Total volume of sales as of end of January (Kgs)	Total value of sales as of end of January(USD)	Total volume of sales in February (Kgs)	Total value of sales in February (USD)	Total Volume of sales YTD (Kgs)	Total value of sales YTD (USD)
Montserrado	6,835.00	\$9,071.00	15,417.33	\$30,644.47	22,252.33	\$39,715.47
Margibi	2,689.00	\$1,181.00	8,310.00	\$14,821.00	10,999.00	\$16,002.00
Bong	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	\$0.00
Nimba	0.00	\$0.00	16,660.00	\$5,338.82	16,660.00	\$5,338.82
Lofa	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.00	\$0.00
Bassa	0.00	\$0.00	1,474.00	\$369.00	1,474.00	\$369.00
Total	9,524.00	\$10,252.00	41,861.33	\$51,173.29	51,385.33	\$61,425.29

Establishment of rain shelters on 20 FY14 sites

During February, 19 of the established FY14 rain cultivation shelters in Montserrado, Margibi, Nimba and Bassa lay out beds within the rain shelters for the cultivation of high value vegetables. 4 out of 19 sites nursed tomatoes and cabbage seeds in March.

Activity I.C.2 Promoting Integrated Pest Management (IPM) practices

Task I.C.2.1 Identify 3,750 farmers and establish 18 demonstration plots in 6 counties

By the end of February, a total of 194 clusters representing 3,746 farmers (2,203 male, and 1,543 female) had been verified and MoUs signed with 165 clusters. These clusters had also put under vegetable cultivation 45.81 Ha of land (Table 21, 22 and 23).



Figure 3: Mawah cluster farmers sowing seed for rain cultivation shelters.

Table 21: FY15 Cluster identification

County	FY15 Targeted Clusters	Total # of Clusters YTD	Number of MoUs signed to date
Montserrado	48	50	46
Margibi	41	42	31
Nimba	28	35	28
Lofa	25	25	25
Grand Bassa	19	21	10
Bong	27	21	25
Total	188	194	165

Table 22: Horticulture beneficiaries signed up for FY15 production

County	FY15 Farmer Target	FY15 Target Ha	No. of Farmers signed up YTD	No. of Male farmers		No. of Female farmers	
				No	%	No	%
Montserrado	967	31	1000	595	60	405	40
Margibi	777	25	769	441	57	328	43
Nimba	569	19	686	432	63	254	37
Lofa	509	17	485	221	46	264	54
Grand Bassa	379	20	391	285	73	106	27
Bong	549	13	415	229	55	186	45
TOTAL	3,750	125	3,746	2,203	59	1,543	41

Table 23: Horticulture Hectare targets

County	FY15 Hectares Target	Area cultivated to date
Montserrado	31	26.61
Margibi	25	14.60
Nimba	20	2.00
Lofa	17	0.00
Grand Bassa	13	0.60
Bong	19	2.00
Total	125	45.81

Task 1.C.2.2: Provide demos with improved seeds and pesticides to demonstrate IPM

During the month of February, improved seed varieties were distributed for production to 13 demonstration sites in 6 counties. These included water melon, cabbages, cucumber and lettuce varieties. These have already been planted on a total of 4.59 Ha (Table 24).

Table 24: Demonstration sites seed distribution and area of land cultivated

County	Targets	No of demonstration sites	Area cultivated up to date (hectare)
Montserrado	3	3	1
Margibi	3	3	2.4
Bong	3	2	2
Nimba	3	3	0.75
Lofa	3	0	0
Bassa	3	2	0.6
Total	18	13	4.59

Task 1.C.2.6 Recruitment of Horticulture Specialist (STTA):

In February, the Horticulture Specialist continued to provide technical assistance to the horticulture value chain team and clusters supported by FED. The specialist visited several clusters within Montserrado and Margibi counties where he provided technical guidance to farmers on pests and diseases, land preparation, nursery layouts and maintenance, as well as on the use best utilization of rain shelters. One of the critical challenges has been the availability of pesticides required by FED in-country, and the time vendors are taking to source them externally. This will have a potential negative effect on the ability to manage pests. The Horticulture Specialist will be looking at locally available pesticides that are not banned by the authorities to encourage farmers to procure in the meantime.



Figure 4: USAID FED's Horticulture Specialist inspecting cabbage for pests and diseases with farmers in Kpanghan Town.

Activity 1.C.3 Reducing harvesting and post-harvest losses

Task 1.C.3.4: Identify financing requirement for trader associations and private sector firms towards establishing cold storage facilities

During February, LEAD concluded their due-diligence with one vegetable trader association in Montserrado County. It is anticipated that these traders will benefit from up to USD \$18,000 in disbursed loans from LEAD in March.

Task 1.C.3.6: Provide 6 trader association with low cost charcoal cooler technologies on cost share

In February, a carpenter was contracted by FED to construct the prototypes of a charcoal cooler through an EOI process. Construction of the charcoal coolers will commence in March once all MoUs with trader associations have been signed.

Task 1.C.3.7: Provide 2 private sector firms with cold storage facilities on cost share

The vendor that will supply the cold storage facility was selected and contracted in February. The importation process for the refrigerated containers began in February. It is anticipated that the containers will be delivered by May.

Activity I.C.4: Farmers produced vegetables for the markets during the wet and dry seasons

Task I.C.4.1 Procure, distribute and install 360 drip irrigation kits to high value vegetable producers

In January, the vendor that will supply drip irrigation kits was selected. It is anticipated that the vendor will supply the drip irrigation kits in early March. One vendor (Gro Green) signed the PO in February to procure and install 360 drip kits, with a notification to FED that it takes them 45 days to order and deliver the kits to Liberia. To date, 15 days have passed since the PO was signed.

Task I.C.4.2 Procure and distribute motorized pumps to 188 vegetable farming clusters

In January, the vendor that will supply motorized pumps was selected. It is anticipated that the vendor will supply the drip irrigation kits in March. One vendor (Gro Green) signed the PO in February to procure and install 188 motorized pumps with the notification to FED that it takes them 45 days to order and deliver the kits to Liberia. To date, 15 days have passed since the PO was signed.

Task I.C.4.3 Procure and distribute vegetable seeds as start seeds, chemical and tools as start-up kits to 360 farmers

During February, distribution of tools and seeds began in clusters who had already signed MoUs with FED. The distribution of pesticides did not commence, as these are not available in the Liberia and the vendors are trying to import the required chemicals.

Task I.C.4.4: Train 3750 farmers in improved production of local and exotic vegetables

During February, two local NGOs (TECURD and Gborkwado) were contracted by FED to provide implementation support to the vegetable value chain. These LNGOs will be deployed in March and will commence with training of farmers in the counties.

Task I.C.4.5 Improve wet season production through protected cultivation

18 high value vegetable sites have been selected for the installation of rain shelters to improve wet season vegetable production. A vendor has been selected to procure, distribute, install and train farmers on protective cultivation.

Task I.C.4.6 Enhancing linkages with local and high value vegetable markets

The horticulture value chain team and Grain Coast Inc. met and finalized the implementation strategy and model to be used towards producing vegetables for export through contracting out-growers. During this meeting, it was agreed that six vegetable youth groups and two youth cooperatives (CHAP and CYNP) in Montserrado and Margibi counties will be cultivating okra, and GCI will serve as an aggregator for the okra to standardize grading and quality for their export market. Implementation of these activities will commence in March.

Task ID: Increased Productivity and Profitability of the Goat Value Chain

FY14 Goat production sites - kidding rates:

During February, a total of 412 new kids (164 male and 248 female) were born within the FY14 goat production sites (Table 25). The total herd size of the FY14 supported sites is 6,403 goats (3,240 Does, 784 Bucks and 2,379 Kids). The remaining 609 surviving kids (459 males and 150 females) born during the FY14 have reached maturity age and are now added to Bucks and Does totals.

Table 25: Herd statistics for FY14 sites

County	# of farmers supported in FY14	# of Males	# of Female	Total # of Goats in herd	# of Does	# Bucks	# of Kids recorded by January	Kids recorded Feb FY 15	Total # of kids FY14 herds
Nimba	637	341	296	1,269	551	94	575	49	624
Grand Bassa	277	166	111	753	453	227	55	18	73
Bong	672	493	179	2,723	1,326	420	863	114	977
Lofa	474	260	214	1,658	910	43	474	231	705
Total	2,060	1,260	800	6,403	3,240	784	1967	412	2,379

FY14 goat production sites - sales:

During February, a total of 680 goats (359 Bucks and 321 Does) were sold for USD \$17,425 from the FY14 goat production sites (Table 26). This brings the total goats sold from FY14 sites to 2,150 valued at USD \$108,811.78 during the FY15 period.

Table 26: Goat sales from FY14 goat production sites

County	FY15 Goat sales target	FY15 Goat Sales Target (\$USD)	# of goats Sold by January	Value of goats sold by January (\$USD)	# of goats Sold February	Value of goats sold February (\$USD)	# of goats sold YTD	Value of goats sold YTD (\$USD)
Nimba	932	\$65,280.00	257	\$11,495.78	23	\$1,185.00	280	\$12,680.78
Grand Bassa	330	\$23,040.00	167	\$10,685.00	16	\$810.00	183	\$11,495.00
Bong	795	\$55,680.00	560	\$46,050.00	106	\$8,610.00	666	\$54,660.00
Lofa	686	\$48,000.00	486	\$23,162.00	535	\$6,820.00	1,021	\$29,982.00
Total	2,743	\$192,000.00	1,470	\$91,392.78	680	\$17,425.00	2,150	\$108,817.78

FY14 goat production sites veterinary care

During the month of February, a total of 472 animals received veterinary treatment from Community Animal Health workers in Bong, Nimba, and Grand Bassa counties (Table 27).

Table 27: Animals that received veterinary care

County	# of Goats treated	Cause
Bong	229	Internal and External parasites, Physical injuries and diarrhea
Nimba	35	Internal and External parasites and diarrhea
Lofa	0	
Grand Bassa	208	Internal and External parasites and diarrhea
Total	472	



Figure 5: CAHW treats Goats in Gbangee town, Grand Bassa County.

Activity I.D.I Promote Goat Shelters

Task I.D.I.1 Identification and recruitment of Lead farmers

During Quarter One of FY15, a total of 77 lead farmers (69 male, 8 female) in 77 clusters were identified to sign up as lead farmers for FY15 goat production intensification sites (Table 28).

Table 28: FY15 goat lead farmer recruitment

County	FY15 Lead Farmer Targets	Total Lead Farmers Identified YTD	# of Male Lead Farmers		# of Female Lead Farmers	
			No	%	No	%
Bong	22	22	22	(100%)	0	(0%)
Nimba	26	26	23	(87%)	3	(13%)
Lofa	19	19	15	(79%)	4	(21%)
Grand Bassa	10	10	9	(90%)	1	(10%)
Total	77	77	69	(90%)	8	(10%)

Within the 77 identified new goat production clusters, a total of 1,545 beneficiaries (929 male, 616 female) were identified and verified (Table 29).

Table 29: FY15 goat farmer recruitment

County	FY 15 Farmer Target	# of Target Sites	Total # of Farmers Identified YTD	# of Male Farmers		# of Female Farmers	
				No	%	No	%
Nimba	522	26	522	370	71	152	29
Grand Bassa	201	10	201	101	50	100	50
Bong	441	22	441	202	46	239	54
Lofa	381	19	381	256	67	125	33
Total	1,545	77	1,545	929	60	616	40

During February, all 77 MoUs (Bong-22, Grand Bassa-10, Lofa-19 and Nimba-26) were signed between FED and the 77 goat producer groups.

Task I.D.I.2 Contract and train eight sawyers to cut wood for shelter construction

During the month of February, four LNGOs were contracted to assist with the implementation of the FY15 Goat Value Chain Work Plan. These included Gborkwado (Nimba), Liberia Integrated Professional Agricultural Services (Lofa), Human Development Foundation (Bong) and Community Network Youth Program (Grand Bassa). These LNGOs will recruit sawyers to cut wood provided by the communities in March.

Task I.D.1.3 Contract and train eight carpenters (two per county) on shelter construction

During the month of February, four LNGOs were contracted to assist with the implementation of the FY15 Goat Value Chain Work Plan. These LNGOs will recruit carpenters to supervise construction of goat shelters in March.

Task I.D.1.5 Design and construction of two wells in Grand Bassa County

Proposals from various companies for developing alternative water wells in FY14 sites in Neorpeh and Blaybah in Grand Bassa County were evaluated, and one construction firm was selected during the month of January. The sinking of wells did not commence as planned in February due to the process of conducting background checks of the selected firm. The sinking of wells will start in March.

Task I.D.1.7 Construct 77 Shelters in Bong, Nimba, Lofa, and Grand Bassa through cost share

During February, four LNGOs were contracted to assist with the implementation of the FY 15 Goat Value Chain Work Plan. The four LNGOs will be deployed in March to begin the constructing the goat shelters.

Activity I.D.2 National PPR Campaign

Task I.D.2.1 Acquire MoA agreement to provide PPR vaccine and contract BRAC to implement PPR campaign

In FY14 USAID FED, in collaboration with BRAC and the Ministry of Agriculture, planned to implement the national Peste des Petits Ruminants (PPR) vaccination campaign. However, due to the Ebola Virus Disease outbreak, implementation of the activity was deferred to FY15. During Quarter One of FY15, meetings were held with the BRAC Country Representative to plan new timelines of implementation. It was agreed that implementation could commence during March to April 2015. In follow up meetings, MoA informed FED that due to budget constraints, the Ministry was unable to provide the required vaccines but would assume responsibility of the importation process if FED would make finances available. For the entire exercise, a total of 1,500 vials valued at USD \$5,000 will be required to vaccinate approximately 150,000 animals country-wide. During the month of February, revised scopes of work for the execution of the PPR Campaign were developed and Request for Proposal (RFP) resent to BRAC. The revised RFP will be submitted by BRAC during the first week of March.

Activity I.D.5 Formalizing livestock markets

Task I.D.5.6 Facilitate 1 marketing event every month in each county

In February, two meetings were held with live goat traders under the auspices of the National Livestock Union of Liberia towards ascertaining their interest in purchasing goats from FED-supported goat clusters during marketing events. The traders stated their requirements as at least 100 healthy goats for each event. Information on the herd size population from the four counties was also compiled towards prioritizing clusters with higher numbers of bucks that can be sold. The marketing events will commence in March.

Activity I.D.6 Improving nutrition for higher livestock value

Task I.D.6.1 Develop databases for forages most suitable for Liberia

Towards developing a comprehensive database of forages and animal nutritional requirements that goat farmers can benefit from, USAID FED recruited a Forage Production Expert to implement this assignment. The Forage production expert will commence his assignment in March.

Sub Task I.1 Special Studies and MoA Data Collection System Development

During the month of February, one of the two STTAs who would support the development, coordination and implementation of specific special studies was approved to support USAID FED M&E Office. Final administrative arrangements are being concluded and the STTA is to begin work by mid-April 2015.

Activity I.1.3.1 Equipment and Materials Procured for the MOA Offices in Nimba, Lofa and Grand Bassa Counties

Task I.1.3.1.3 Procurement of equipment

To date, NXP requests have been forwarded to USAID for review and approval. However, this procurement will be granted final approval from USAID based on the pilot activity in Bong County. Additional equipment for Lofa, Nimba and Grand Bassa will be approved based on the results from the pilot activity in Bong.

Activity I.1.4.2 Piloting/quality Assurance of the database system design

Task I.1.4.2.1 Training materials, manual and modules approbation

During the February, USAID FED M&E and MDF finalized the selection process of a local firm who will carry out the development of the online database system. The SOW for the development of the database mandates the firm prepare training materials, manuals and modules that will be used for training of the system users. The development of the online database system will begin mid-March 2015.

Activity I.1.5.1 Assessment of the training capacity needs for technical and M&E capacity

Task I.1.5.1.2 Preparation and approval of concept notes to conduct training

The training manual is being developed that will be used for these trainings. Based on the training modules, Management will decide on using FED in-house M&E resources or a local STTA to facilitate the training.

Sub Task I.2 Improved access to Agricultural Inputs

Deliverable I.2.1 Improving access to good seeds and other planting materials

Activity I.2.1.1 Support to establishment of commercial production and marketing of rice seeds

Task I.2.1.1.1 Technical Assistance and Business Development Services to 22 RSM site operators

During February, samples were collected from the 22 rice seed multiplication sites by the county offices. These samples will be provided to CARI for testing during the March period. The test will include an analysis on Seed Health, Analytical Purity and Germination.

Task 1.2.1.1.3 Identify and support a private sector firm for commercial production and marketing of seed rice

During February, USAID FED undertook the decision to repurpose equipment that was provided to Arjay Farm during previous MOU engagements. This decision was made after close consultation with USAID, taking into consideration the failure of Arjay Farm to utilize the equipment for the intended purpose and deliver results in accordance with the expectations of the partnership. From February 26 and 27, USAID FED was able to recover 7 power tillers from Arjay Farm. USAID FED is in discussions with Arjay Farm on possible dates for the recovery of other vital equipment, such as the seed cleaning machine.

FED identified three private sector firms for vetting that the project can support for commercial production and marketing of rice seed. These included Arise and Shine, Sumo Farms and Karmara. It is anticipated that the selection of an appropriate partner may be concluded in March depending on the possibilities of cost sharing agreements by successful companies.

Task 1.2.1.1.6 Identification and development of additional sites for rice seed production and training of new seed producers

In an effort to ensure the target of 3,000MT by Life of Project is met, the total number of rice seed multiplication sites was increased in the lowland areas where irrigation spillways have been constructed. The upland rice seed multiplication sites established in FY14 will be replanted in FY15. The total area to be planted in FY15 will be 435 Ha, expected to yield 1,474MT in FY16 as well as in FY17.

Table 30: RSM Lowland and Upland sites - seed rice production estimates

Year Harvest is Completed						
	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17
Lowland						
Total Ha	0.00	0.00	40.00	315.00	315.00	315.00
10 FY14 Sites (MT)	0.00	0.00	0.00	156.00	156.00	156.00
48 FY15 Sites (MT)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1073.00	1073.00
Total yield (MT)	0.00	0.00	0.00	156.00	1229.00	1229.00
Upland						
Total ha	0.00	0.00	120.00	120.00	120.00	120.00
12 FY14 Sites	0.0	0.0	0.0	245.0	245.0	245.0
Annual Total Yields				245.0	245.0	245.0
Accumulative at Harvest year on year				401.00	1474.00	1474.00

Task 1.2.1.1.7 Collaboration with WAAP and WASP in developing the rice seed industry in Liberia

On February 25, USAID FED’s Input Supply Specialist held a meeting with the World Bank Representative Mr. Abimbola Adubi to discuss potential partnership opportunities in rice seed development. During the meeting, the World Bank Representative mentioned that through the West Africa Agricultural Productivity Program (WAAPP), the World Bank was willing to provide certified seed rice to FED farmers engaged in

rice seed multiplication. A meeting with Mr. Cyrus Saygbe of WAAP has been confirmed for March 6 to discuss further how this can be made possible.

Activity 1.2.1.2 Support to commercial production and marketing of cassava cuttings

Task 1.2.1.2.1 New improved varieties released by CARI, distributed to and multiplied by 40 nurseries

CARI will complete the inspections of improved cassava varieties at the two screening sites in Lofa by March 2015. It is expected that the official release of suitable varieties will take place in May after palatability tests are completed. After the successful completion of the screening exercise, FED will distribute the recommended varieties to the 40 cassava nurseries for multiplication.

Deliverable 1.2.2 Improved Access to and Increased Utilization of Inputs

Activity 1.2.2.2 Support to adopt optimal packaging sizes

Task 1.2.2.2.1 Hire STTA to determine optimal packaging

During February, USAID FED began the process of recruiting a specialist to support optimal packaging for seed, fertilizer and chemical products. The consultant will also assist in developing group marketing for inputs with selected beneficiaries, as well as providing support to an input supplier to market inputs in optimal pack sizes (*Task 1.2.2.2.2 Engage and support an input supplier for sale of inputs using optimal packaging sizes*). It is anticipated that the selected consultant will commence the assignment in March.



Figure 6: UDP + SRI nursery at Karmei Farm Zoelay Memorial site.

Deliverable 1.2.3 Efficient inorganic fertilizer use and organic fertilizer mix introduced and promoted

Activity 1.2.3.2 Demonstrate on-farm composting for vegetables

Task 1.2.3.2.1 Support demonstration of composting and training in composting in at least one farm in FED's vegetable clusters

A shredder has been ordered from United States and is expected to arrive in March. This shredder will be used to demonstrate composting on a commercial scale, and will serve to encourage potential entrepreneurs from vegetable clusters in Montserrado and Margibi and 25 youth from FED Youth Program to engage in composting as an enterprise.



Figure 7: After calibrating the briquette machine the perfectly formed 1.8g Urea briquette were produced.

Activity 1.2.3.4 UDP+SRI research

Task 1.2.3.4.1 Complete UDP+SRI research and carry out comparative analysis of cost and benefits vs. UDP only and SRI only

During February, two new UDP+SRI trial sites were selected and verified in Nimba County as replacement for Gwenimah and Taylay. The replacement of the two sites was necessary due to the shortage of water during the dry season, an important requirement for SRI technology. The two new sites, in addition to Garmue 2 and

Gbarngasiequelleh, are Karmeï Farm Zoelay Memorial and Gausi Farm Deaduk sites. Plowing, puddling and leveling of plots at all four sites was completed. Seeds for all treatment plots were put on nursery. Transplanting of seedlings for all four trial sites will take place during the 1st and 2nd week of March. Gro Green also produced 1.8g Urea briquettes from urea supplied by FED for applications on these sites in March (Figure 7).

Sub Task 1.3: Agricultural Extension Support

Task 1.3.3.1 Extension material and packages covering technical aspects of production techniques, production planning, integrated pest and disease management, variety selection and post-harvest handling developed for rice, cassava, goats and horticulture value chains

During the first week of February, the Extension Unit and USAID Food for Peace videographers Adam Parr and Jonathan Gaynes collaborated on capturing video content of the FED project. USAID Food for Peace is developing documentary material to highlight the impact of USG funds to sustain food production and distribution during the Ebola Virus Diseases outbreak period. The following groups were included in the footage: Fabrar Liberia, WFP food distribution sites, Ebola Treatment Units (ETUs), EVD survivors and affected communities, as well as the USAID FED supported War Affected Women's group in Bong, who produce cassava and rice.

In anticipation of facilitating demonstration field days in the counties, the Extension Support Unit developed a schedule and four training modules covering Rice, Cassava, Vegetables and Goats for use during the training. The field demonstration exercises will commence during March on FED-supported demonstration sites.

Task 1.3.3.5 Agricultural radio program content for monthly radio shows produced in collaboration with communications unit and five community radio stations

During the reporting period, USAID FED collected radio content material from rice farmers in Panta, Bong County on rice production. This material will be used for the "On the Farm" radio program. USAID FED signed an agreement for a 30 minute slot with United Methodist Radio during the month of January.

USAID FED's Extension Support and Communication teams also met with the MoA Public Relations Specialist, Mrs. Gertrude Francis Deshield to discuss possible collaboration and merger of FED's "On The Farm" radio program with MoA's "Back to the Soil" radio program aired on ELBC radio, Truth FM and UNMIL Radio. The MoA was provided with a copy of "On the Farm" on February 19 in order to provide feedback on the quality of programming. It is anticipated that consensus on this collaboration will be officially decided in March.

Sub Task 1.4 Youth in Agribusiness

FY14 Back-to-School Garden Program

During February, 35 out of 60 of the school gardens supported by Advancing Youth Project (AYP) and USAID FED produced a cumulative value of 0.09 MT of assorted vegetables which were sold for USD \$98. Since January, a total of 0.22 MT of vegetables have been sold for USD \$717.64 (Table 31).

Table 31: FY14 USAID FED school garden vegetable sales

County	Sales Volume Target for FY14 crop	Volume sold in January (kg)	Value of sales in January (\$USD)	Volume sold in February (kg)	Value of sales in February (\$USD)	Volume sold YTD (kg)	Value of sales YTD (\$USD)
Bong	\$90.58	39.89	\$191.00	23.09	\$26.00	62.98	\$217.00
Nimba	\$90.58	45.09	\$205.64	20.03	\$20.00	65.12	\$225.64
Lofa	\$90.58	20.08	\$98.00	10.20	\$17.00	30.28	\$115.00
Grand Bassa	\$90.58	25.30	\$125.00	18.14	\$12.00	43.44	\$137.00
Montserrado	\$90.58	0	\$0.00	10.07	\$13.00	10.07	\$13.00
Margibi	\$30.43	0	\$0.00	10.14	\$10.00	10.14	\$10.00
TOTALs	\$483.33	130.36	\$619.64	91.67	\$98.00	222.03	\$717.64

The schools also harvested a total of 1.88 MT of cassava tuber which was sold for USD \$125.00 (Table 32). With the reopening of schools anticipated in March, it is expected that production and sales will increase once the students return to their regular farming activities.

Table 32: FY14 FED school garden cassava sales

County	Sales Volume Target for FY14 crop	Volume sold in January (MT)	Value of sales in January (\$USD)	Volume sold Feb (MT)	Value of sales in February (\$USD)	Volume sold YTD (MT)	Value of sales YTD (\$USD)
Bong	90	0	\$0.00	0.288	\$20.00	0.288	\$20.00
Nimba	90	0	\$0.00	0.576	\$34.00	0.576	\$34.00
Lofa	90	0	\$0.00	0.234	\$16.00	0.234	\$16.00
Grand Bassa	90	0	\$0.00	0.432	\$27.00	0.432	\$27.00
Montserrado	90	0	\$0.00	0.086	\$9.00	0.086	\$9.00
Margibi	30	0	\$0.00	0.261	\$19.00	0.261	\$19.00
TOTALs	480	0	\$0.00	1.88	\$125.00	1.88	\$125.00

Activity 1.4.1 Establishment of agribusiness horticulture pilots

Task 1.4.1.1 Identification of 500 youth in 25 clusters in 2 counties of Montserrado and Margibi:

In February, the 25 agribusiness clusters in Montserrado and Margibi counties began clearing sites for the establishment of horticulture pilots. The vendor to supply the tools and inputs was also selected and is anticipated to deliver these items to the clusters in March. In addition, 6 of the 25 clusters have also been selected to serve as out-growers for Grain Coast Inc. under the “Vegetable for Export” activity.

Activity 1.4.2 Supporting job creation through youth extension aides

Task: 1.4.2.1 Identify and recruit 25 youth extension aides to support agribusiness pilots:

In February, USAID FED signed a contract with Green Coast Agriculture Program (G-CAP), a Local NGO (LNGO) that will provide technical assistance to the 25 agribusiness pilots. The LNGO will recruit 25 youth extension aides as part of their contractual obligations and will be deployed at the beginning of March to assist the lead farmers with technical implementation of the agribusiness pilots.

Activity 1.4.3 Supporting job creation through youth enterprises as transport service providers

Task: 1.4.3.1 Identify and recruit 49 youth towards establishment of transport businesses:

By the end of February, all 49 identified youth entrepreneurs had signed contracts with USAID FED towards cost sharing on the establishment of transport enterprises (Table 33). These youth entrepreneurs will be assisted to sign contracts with rice business hubs, cassava micro-processors and farmer groups for the provision of transport services along the value chain. It is anticipated that the procurement of the Tuk-Tuk motor bikes will be completed before the end of March for distribution to the counties.

Table 33: Identification of youth entrepreneurs (Transport Services)

County	FY15 Youth Targets	# of Youth Identified YTD	Male		Female	
			No	%	No	%
Bong	17	10	9	(90%)	1	(10%)
Lofa	13	11	9	(82%)	2	(18%)
Nimba	15	24	14	(58%)	10	(42%)
Grand Bassa	4	4	4	(100%)	0	(0%)
TOTAL	49	49	36	(73%)	13	(27%)

Activity 1.4.4 Supporting job creation through youth enterprises as power tiller service providers

Task: 1.4.4.1 Identify and recruit 20 youth towards establishment of power tiller businesses

By the end of February, a total of 20 MoUs had been signed between identified youth enterprises and USAID FED towards establishment of power tiller enterprises through cost share in the four counties (Table 34).

Table 34: Identification of youth entrepreneurs (Power tillers services)

County	FY15 Youth Targets	# of Youth Identified YTD	Male		Female		# of MoUs signed YTD
			No	%	No	%	
Bong	5	5	5	(100%)	0	(0%)	5
Lofa	7	7	6	(86%)	1	(14%)	7
Nimba	5	5	5	(100%)	0	(0%)	5
Grand Bassa	3	3	3	(100%)	0	(0%)	3
TOTAL	20	20	19	(95%)	1	(5%)	20

Between February 3 - 7, USAID FED conducted a five day practical training on power tiller operation and maintenance for 10 youth enterprises with a cumulative membership of 31 people (2 women and 28 men) in Lofa County. The participants were trained on checking and changing engine oil, water, the rotovator and

case wheel, how to adjust the rotovator during plowing, and what to do if the machine gets stuck during plowing.

Activity 1.4.6 Supporting job creation through blacksmiths and carpenter enterprises

Task: 1.4.6.1 Conduct training for 8 master blacksmith and 16 youths as blacksmiths

In February, the 16 youth apprentices fabricated and sold assorted farming tools (shovels, knives, hoes and rakes) for a cumulative value of USD \$270.20. Sales are expected to increase as the next farming season approaches. The apprenticeship program for youth also ended in February. Each of the 16 apprentices will receive a toolkit to enable them to establish blacksmith shops to fabricate affordable farming tools for local farmers.

Sub Task 1.5: Improving Human Nutrition

Activity 1.5.1 Development of Diet Behavior-Change Communications (DBCC) Strategy

Task 1.5.1.1 Hiring of Behavior Change Communication Specialist

During the month of February, the candidate recruited for the Behavior Change Communication Specialist STTA assignment declined the offer after she was offered a full-time position with another agency. Additional interviews have been conducted and it is anticipated that a new candidate will be selected for recruitment in March.

Activity 1.5.2 DBCC Strategy implemented and monitored

Task 1.5.2.1 Community materials printed and multiplied for dissemination

The implementation of this activity is dependent on the recruitment of the Behavior Change Communications Specialist and successful development of the DBCC strategy. The recruitment process under Task 1.5.1.1 will be completed before the end of March and activities are anticipated to commence during Quarters 3 and 4 of FY15.

Activity 1.5.3 Nutrition messaging outreach to more households

Task 1.5.3.1 Revise existing material, develop posters, flyers and radio messages conveying nutrition messaging with specific focus on behavior change targeting: diet diversification within HH general and for pregnant women and children under two years

By the end of February, a new poster highlighting the importance of nutrition for pregnant women and children under two years old was designed taking into consideration recommendations from MoHSW. This poster will be discussed with MoHSW in March for approval before printing.



Figure 8: One of the participants demonstrates the use of the power tiller during training in Lofa County.

Component Two: Stimulate Private Sector Growth and Investment

Task 2: Enabling Policy Environment for Private Sector Growth

Activity 2.1.1 Policy Reform Activities via Technical Working Groups

Task 2.1.1.1 LABEE Technical Working Group

USAID FED convened its first Policy Forum for FY15 to discuss issues around optimal rice pricing, Executive Order #64 (Duty Free Waiver for Agricultural Importation) and the local procurement law. It was concluded during the forum that in order for Executive Order # 64 to be effective, the GoL should draft a law that will: be applicable for more than the current one year time period of the EO, simplify the language in the document, clarify the duty waiver procedure and shorten the amount of time private investors spend following up the paperwork. LABEE Technical Working Group Members such as USAID Liberia, USAID FED, Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI), Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), Ministry of Finance and Planning Development (MoFPD), Liberia Revenue Authority (LRA), National Investment Commission (NIC), Representatives from the House of Representatives Agriculture Committee private sector representatives (Grogreen, Greenfield Liberia, Fabrar Inc.) and many other representatives attended this forum.



Figure 9: USAID FED staff presenting on EO #64 at the Policy Forum held in February at the Cape Hotel in Monrovia, Liberia.

Activity 2.2.1 Village Savings and Loan Expansion

As of February 28, USAID FED has supported the creation of 123 Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLA) for 3,400 farmers (mostly women). To date, the VSLA groups have generated access to capital for investment in agricultural activities in the amount of USD \$150,196. The savings and financing mechanism provides farmers with access to capital as well as experience in financial organization.

VSLAs that have 'graduated' and shared out after the first cycle are eligible to apply for loans from the Central Bank's Loan Extension and Availability Facility (LEAF). The loans, which are typically three years with quarterly payments at a 3% annual interest rate, will be used by the VSLAs for on-lending to their members.

The Central Bank of Liberia facilitated the creation of The National Association of Village Savings and Loan Association (NAPEX) to streamline the application process. NAPEX has elected leadership structures from a base of existing VSLAs at the national, county and district levels throughout the 15 counties.

NAPEX is intended to enhance the delivery of information among member VSLAs in a coordinated fashion, provide the opportunity for feedback on the implementation of activities, and help the Central Bank improve risk management by assisting in loan origination due diligence and the repayment process. All VSLAs wishing to apply for loans through LEAF will be required to register with NAPEX.

Task 2.2.1.2 Upgrade to VSLA Curriculum and Order Materials (MDF)

During the reporting period, the existing VSLA curriculum was upgraded to include topics such as leadership, gender equality, investing in agri-business, record-keeping, and accessing more formal finance topics, to address improved management practices among these VSLA groups. Nutrition messages were also integrated in the VSLA curriculum. A total of 14 modules were upgraded to enhance the learning needs of VSLA groups within FED supported communities.

In January, USAID FED awarded EDUCARE, a local NGO with a PO to work on producing 50 copies of VSLA training materials. By March 2015, all 50 copies of the materials will be finalized and rolled out to the counties.



Figure 10: VSLA group members receiving their loan from the LEAF program.

Task 2.2.1.3 Recruitment and training of CFOs, M&E

During the reporting period, a Local NGO (LNGO), EDUCARE was recruited to hire County Finance Officers (CFOs) and M&E to support the VSLA activities in the six FED-supported counties. To date, a total of 50 CFOs and five M&E staff have been recruited to implement the VSLA activity (Table 35). The newly recruited staff will receive formal TOT training in March, 2015 by EDUCARE.

Table 35: Recruitment by County

Position	Bong	Nimba	Lofa	Grand Bassa	Margibi	Montserrado	Total
Monitoring & Evaluation Officer	1	1	1	1	0	1	5
Community Facilitating Officer	10	10	10	10	5	5	50
TOTAL	11	11	11	11	5	6	55

Task 2.2.1.8 Application to NAPEX and CBL for Loans

The Central Bank of Liberia Micro-Finance Unit under the Loan Extension and Availability Facility (LEAF) program has provided L\$1,250,000 (USD \$15,000) loan to five VSLA groups supported by USAID FED, namely: Zeelie VSLA, WOFPD VSLA, Kobeke VSLA, Yeapugimai VSLA and Kukatonon VSLA. Each group received L\$250,000 or USD \$3,000 to be paid back within a three year period in three installments at a 3% interest rate. To date, out of the total of 50 VSLA groups, five have had the opportunity to receive the loan and this figure will increase in March 2015.

Loan repayment:

Two farming organizations in Nimba, ZOEDOAR women farmer association and Menledkoyee vegetable farming group have paid back LD\$ 1.5 million (USD \$ 18,072) loan to LEAD. The loan has provided them with financial assistance over the past six months, and was obtained through the support of FED.

Activity 2.2.3 Extension of Micro Finance to Farmers and Entrepreneurs

Task 2.2.3.3 Recruitment of Farming Groups / MSMEs for Loans

United States African Development Foundation (USADF) has also provided the second phase of the grant to LEAD with the purpose of providing loans to FED farming groups. Farming groups are expected to receive these loans in March.

Due to the availability of the grant, LEAD is conducting its due-diligence on farming groups/MSMEs applying for the loan in Nimba, Bong, Bassa, Margibi and Montserrado counties before they can receive their loan in March.

Activity 2.3.1 Establish Five Enterprise Service Centers

Task 2.3.1.1 Train Business Service Providers

In January 2015, USAID FED received proposals for the Business Development Support Service Providers (BDSSPs).

During the reporting period, the Master Business Service Provider, in accordance with their SOW, developed the training guide/modules that the Business Service Providers (BSPs) will use when they train micro-entrepreneurs and farmers and provide development support services to businesses and farmers. The BSPs can distribute the simple guides as extension materials (LEDGER).

In February, the MBSP conducted two sets of Business Development Skills Training sessions in Kakata City, Margibi County and Gbarnga, Bong County. The Business Development Service Provider, Top Consulting, had a total of 24 members (17 male and 7 female) participate in the training in Kakata where they learned various business development skills. Top Consulting is the pre-designated Business Development Service Provider for Montserrado and Margibi counties.

While in Gbarnga, the Master Business Service Provider (MBSP) taught three of the pre-selected Business Development Service Providers (BDSSPs) various business skills. The Community Youth Network Program (CYNP) Grand Bassa County designee, the Liberia Initiatives for Development Services (LIDS) Bong County designee and Liberia Entrepreneurial and Asset Development (LEAD) Nimba County designee participated in the training.

Task 2.3.1.2 Hire Business Service Providers to Deliver Business Development Services

In February 2015, USAID FED pre-selected five LNGOs that will be trained by the Master Business Service Provider. The LNGOs are:

- Liberia Initiatives for Development Services,
- Jacob F. Tomei Enterprise Center
- LEAD, INC
- Community Youth Network Program
- Top Consultants

The training sessions took place from February 16 -20 for Montserrado and Margibi LNGOs. Training will be conducted in Kakata City, Margibi County from February 23-27 , Grand Bassa, Bong and Nimba, will assemble in Gbarnga City, Bong County From March 2-6 , Lofa LOGO will meet in Foyah City, Lofa County for their training.

In February 2015, a total of 36 personnel (22 male, 16 female) from the three Business Development Support Service providers benefited from the business development skills. The following is a breakdown of BDSS personnel who participated in the training:

- LIDS, Bong designee, a total of 12 personnel (8 male, 4 female)

- LEAD Nimba County designee, a total of 12 personnel (8 male and 4 female)
- CYNP, Grand Bassa designee, a total of 12 personnel (6 male and 6 female)

During the month of March, the Master Business Service Provider will train the last Business Development Support Service Provider (BDSSP), Jacob F. Tomei Enterprise Center in Foyah City, Lofa County.

A total of 60 participants from these BSPs participated in the five day training (*Table 36*):

Table 36: BSP Training Breakdown

Name of BSP	Responsible County(ies)	Participants		Total
		Male	Female	
Community Youth Network Program	Grand Bassa	6	6	12
Liberia Initiatives for Development Services	Bong	8	4	12
Liberia Entrepreneurial and Asset Development	Nimba	8	4	12
Top Consulting Inc.	Monerrado/Margibi	17	7	24
TOTAL	4 LNGOs	39	21	60

Activity 2.4.2 Women Business Incubation

In February, the Women Enterprise Development STTA has been hired and will arrive in Liberia in March.

Component Three: Build Local Technical and Managerial Human Resource Capability

Activity 3.1.1 NDA curriculum rolled out in the first semester of AY 2014-2015

Task 3.1.1.2 Distribute posters and flyers, host talk shows on radios and engage high schools to kick start the NDA promotional campaign geared towards the enhancement of double enrollment in the program during FY 2014/2015.

During the reporting period, a total of 600 copies of the NDA posters (300) and flyers (300) were printed for distribution to the community colleges and BWI.

The posters and flyers are intended to be used to kick start promotional campaign activities at the various community colleges and BWI, with the goal of increasing the enrollment of students in the National Diploma in Agriculture (NDA) program during academic year 2015.

Activity 3.1.2 Practical exercises incorporated in the lesson plans

Task 3.1.2.1 FED technical staff to carryout reconnaissance of potential field/facility demonstration sites

USAID FED technical staff, Sr. Vocational Education Officer and Vocational Agriculture Education Specialist, traveled to the field from February 9-14 and conducted reconnaissance visits to successful farming sites in Nimba, Lofa, Grand Bassa and Margibi counties.

The objective of the reconnaissance visit was to identify potential demonstration sites for the Centers of Excellence (CoE) agriculture students to carry out practical exercises incorporated in the lesson plans to support the NDA program.

USAID FED VAEOs, Extension Officers and staffs from each CoE visited a total of 17 demonstration sites in USAID FED-supported areas in four counties.



Figure 11: Cabbage farm in Margibi County.

Activity 3.1.4 Development of internship programs with industry players and finalization of MoUs

Task 3.1.4.2 Provide TA to CoEs and industry players for the organization of the internship program to include development of selection criteria and setting up vetting committees towards the recruitment of interns

Upon completion and finalization of Task 3.1.2.3 “Negotiate with farm/facilities owners and finalize Memoranda of Understanding (MoU)” with private farm owners, as well as during the commencement of classes at the institutions in March 2015, USAID FED technical assistants will launch this task and begin to engage industrial players at the various Center of Excellence locations for the possible recruitment process of internship students.

Activity 3.2.2 Instructors trained on effective delivery of the NDA

Task 3.2.2.1 Recruit an expert to conduct capacity needs assessment for identification of skills required for instructors to deliver the NDA

USAID FED hired Jallah Kennedy, Agri-business Capacity Consultant and mobilized him to the field beginning January 21, 2015 to commence his task of conducting capacity needs assessment of faculty members of USAID FED four partner institutions in preparation for the roll out of the NDA program. Mr. Kennedy begun his assessment at the Booker Washington Institute (BWI) and continued to Grand Bassa Community College where he concluded Phase I of his assessment and proceeded to Nimba County Community College and Lofa County Community College where he completed Phase 2 respectively.

The assessment sought to determine and identify relevant skills needed by instructors and top management at each of the four CoEs and uncover capacity gaps that must be addressed in order to effectively deliver the quality of instruction anticipated for the NDA program.

The Consultant has presented his final report. The report has been reviewed and endorsed by FED to complete the assignment.

Task 3.2.3.3 Finalize travel arrangements/itineraries with selected institutions and CoE representatives and commence exposure visit.

On February 15, a USAID FED delegation headed by Florence Tawalah Training and Administrative Coordinator along with Richard Sherman Sr. Vocational Agriculture Educational Officer traveled on a study tour to the following institutions in Ghana:

- Animal Health & Production College (AHPC)
- Kwadaso Agriculture College
- Adidome Farm Institute

Twelve members (11 males and 1 female) of the four CoEs participated in this study tour. The general objective of the tour was to:

- Study the achievements of the Ghanaian institutions
- Identify profitable enterprises for establishment in Liberia.
- Form partnerships with our Ghanaian counterparts providing the platform for teaching staff to learn from each other, improve the quality of their curriculum and teaching methods, and learn new techniques for the development of farm enterprises and promote sustainable income generation.
- Develop action plans, budgets and deliverable timelines for implementation.



Figure 12: CoE Study Tour participants in Ghana

The USAID FED Ghanaian Consultant, Mr. Patrick Ofori, organized and facilitated the meetings in all of the locations visited. Upon return from daily visits, evening sessions were also organized and conducted with the consultant, where each group analyzed their daily activities and rehearsed group presentations.

All three selected vocational institutes were visited as per schedule, and all relevant people for the study at each institution were met. Expectations and objectives were met by the group of instructors, business managers and the administrators who prepared their observations and lessons learned, and made a formal presentation to USAID FED.

The learning facilities, including the library and laboratory of the institutions were also explored by the USAID FED study tour team, where they had the opportunity to ask questions related to the operations of the facilities, farm enterprises, as well as strategies put in place in sustaining these facilities. The USAID FED study tour team inquiries were addressed by their Ghanaian counterparts as they took notes. The USAID FED study tour team also participated in the classroom lectures, where students who had just returned from their first internship assignment were using projector for their class presentations. Instructors at the institutions also used projectors to present lessons or teach the students. Below is a summary of the lessons learned:

- Teachers that serve the institutes for three years are qualified and usually sent for advanced studies (internally and externally). During the study period, they are required to return every vacation to teach.
- The Farm Institute also produces planting materials such as citrus, vegetables, pineapple, cassava cuttings and cacao for sale and uses of tri-cycles to transport farm tools, implements and produces.
- Agro-business courses (business plan and project proposal writing) are included in the curriculum to provide students with some of the requisite entrepreneurial skills for enterprise development. In order to help students develop business skills and take advantage of entrepreneurship, business courses are integrated into the curriculum to help students gain knowledge in Business Planning and Management.
- The colleges visited in Ghana use a standardized curriculum for delivery of both the certificate and diploma programs developed by the university affiliated Cape Coast University, in collaboration with the Technical Vocational Institutes and Ministry of Food and Agriculture.
- Instructional delivery methods in the colleges visited has been shifted from using black boards and chalk to modernized white boards and projectors for lesson presentation to students with availability of text books or handouts to students during presentations.
- Syllabi and lesson plans are developed from the curriculum, and harmonized and aligned with the courses taught by the instructors.
- Certificate training in general Agriculture Science is more of a demand-driven approach for youth development and immediate employment. Students enrolling in the diploma program in Agriculture Science are required to complete two years of theory and one year of practical exercises (three years total) to become eligible for graduation. The Ghanaian program has the first year being theory based, while the second year the students participate in an internship program, and finally in the final year they study in the classroom again before graduation.

- A combination of Business and Agriculture (Agri-business) can be harnessed to develop sustainable enterprises that lead to successful and rewarding livelihoods.
- Graduating students are given specific projects in their areas of study to be carried out individually with supervision from the assigned instructor before graduating.
- Facilities such as the library, science laboratory and soil science laboratory exist at all three colleges with well qualified staff, and heavy use by college students.

Activity 3.3.1 Establishment of standardize Agricultural Science Labs and training of instructors and technicians

Task 3.3.1.4 Organize workshop for Instructors and technicians to receive training on the effective use of the equipment, management and maintenance of the laboratories.

Over the past few months, USAID FED has had some challenges in getting the science lab renovation/construction works started due to delays in getting all of the CoEs to sign off on the A&E Design for the Science Labs. This meant that the RFP was not advertised until late December, and the procurement for construction services will take three months from start to finish due to the size of the procurement and the certain delays in the bidding process.

Fortunately, an evaluation process as well as revisions to the Bill of Quantities (BoQs) for each CoE lab has been completed. Currently, scopes of works and subcontracts are being drafted for selected firms to commence construction works.

After renovation of the science laboratories, expected to commence by March 15, Short Term Technical Assistance (STTA) will be recruited to conduct training for instructors and technicians on how to effectively manage and maintain the laboratory facilities at the four Centers of Excellence. Construction is expected to be completed by end of May 2015.

Activity 3.4.1 Develop and implement 3-yr strategic plan including priority enterprises to be established at the CoEs

Task 3.4.1.4 Support the establishment of two to three feasible enterprises with business and marketing plans

During February, USAID FED delivered irrigation pressure pumps to GBCC and BWI. The irrigation pumps are to be used for the vegetable farms at both institutions to boost growth and production while the green houses are being procured.

Notwithstanding, the four Centers of Excellence representatives have returned from the study tour to agriculture institutions in Ghana, and have identified additional enterprises based upon observations and lesson learned. The representatives are expected to develop implementation/action plans including budgets and timelines indicating additional agribusiness enterprises to be developed with the assistance of FED at their institutions in Liberia. The plans are expected to be submitted no later than March 20, 2015 for USAID review and approval for implementation.

Component Four: Cross-Cutting Activities

Task 4.1: Communications/Knowledge Management

USAID FED Media Stories

USAID FED was in two media reports during the month of February 2015.

- USAID Food Security Initiative Yielding Results
- National Association of Village Savings and Loan Association (NAPEX) annual awards

Task 4.2: Environmental Compliance

During February the Environment Compliance Specialist provided training to upland farmers on environmental best practices. The objectives of the training were the following:

- To explain USAID-FED requirements for environmental management and how they apply
- Educate upland farmers about environmental best practices in upland farming
- Discuss the impacts of harmful farming practices on the environment

All FED interventions must operate within the project environmental compliance framework, most importantly the Initial Environmental Examination (IEE) and the Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (EMMP). In order to understand the importance of USAID FED environmental requirements, the rice team along with the Environmental Assistant held environmental best practice training for upland farmers in Bong, Nimba, and Lofa counties.

The training, which included extension staff, covered the specific environmental compliance criteria that apply for upland farming activities. The training also covered environmental risks associated with harmful farming practices upland. This is intended to help farmers understand environmental best practices in upland rice farming. The training brought together 280 Lead Farmers as well as extension and M&E staff. The training was in response to FEDs environmental compliance objectives for FY15 and was held in Lofa, Bong, and Nimba counties.

Field extension staffs were included in these trainings to further understand USAID FED environmental management, how to apply marked significant achievement in environmental monitoring as well as verification of the implementation of the EMMP across the four counties. This training will help farmers conduct their activities in a manner that complies with USAID FED and EPA regulations. This will also enhance environmental compliance across the rice value chain.

Table 37: Environmental compliance training participant breakdown

County	# of Male		# of Female	
	No	%	No	%
Bong	100	(92%)	9	(8%)
Nimba	86	(78%)	24	(22%)
Lofa	51	(84%)	10	(16%)
Total	237	(85%)	43	(15%)

Task 4.3: Monitoring & Evaluation

Rapid Rural Assessment:

The RRA presentation findings on actively planted (rice), abandoned and virgin lowland swamps in FED's four counties of operation (Lofa, Grand Bassa, Nimba and Bong) will be shared with MoA as soon as approved by USAID. Presentation will be delivered during the Agriculture Coordination Committee (ACC) meeting in March.

Data Quality Assessment:

The Liberia Monitoring and Evaluation Program (L-MEP) continued the Data Quality Assessment (DQA) in Montserrado and Lofa counties. Initial results of the findings of the DQA will be presented by the end of March 2015.

Task 4.4: Market Development Fund Management

MDF Disbursement

During the month of February, the Market Development Fund (MDF) expended USD \$666,219.78 on 22 MDF activities across FED's three components.

MDF Commitments

During February 2015, FED activities have increased substantially for the 2015 agricultural season in Liberia. The MDF technical committee reviewed and approved three activities, all under CLIN01, which total USD \$287,675.58.

Liberian Local Non-Governmental Organization (LNGO)

The following lists of Liberian LNGOs were awarded fixed-price purchase awards during February of FY2015 under USAID FED.

- Rights and Rice
- EDUCARE
- Green Coast Agricultural Program
- Community Youth Network Program
- Liberia Integrated Professional Agriculture Services
- Gborkwado
- Technocrats United for Reconstruction and Development
- Rural Agriculture Alternatives
- Agriculture Relief Services
- Human Development Foundation

Fiscal Year 2015 MDF Expended as of February 28, 2015

Estimated FY15 MDF Budget for all three CLINs is USD \$9,123,529.96 and as of February 28, 2015 USD \$1,964,097.03 (21%) has been expended.