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USAID FOOD AND ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT (FED) PROGRAM FOR LIBERIA

BI-WEEKLY REPORT: NOVEMBER 1 – 15



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COVER PHOTO: FED and partners measure random rice plots at the Fuamah Cooperative farm near Bong Mines at the November 14th event attended by the US Ambassador to Liberia.

DISCLAIMER

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Highlights for November 1–15, 2013

- FED farmers and staff focused time and energy on harvesting rice and making estimated yield measurements in Bong, Nimba and Lofa counties.
- FED partnered with the Fuamah Cooperative in Bong County and provided guests like US Ambassador Deborah Malac firsthand experience of the rice harvest and the methodology behind Urea Deep Placement (UDP) pilot fertilization.
- FED assisted in mobilizing another 21,000 LD in loans from local MFI Liberia Entrepreneurial & Asset Development (LEAD) for its vegetable farmers in Nimba county.
- Recruitment for FY14 farmers is progressing in all counties across all value chains.

Component 1: Increase agricultural productivity and profitability

Rice Value Chain

FED began harvesting rice at five lowland farms in Bong County that are testing the varieties of fertilization UDP vs broadcasting.



Farmer at Baila lowland site harvesting



Preparing rice for weighing at Baila.

PUA Vegetables

FED's PUA team conducted MOU orientation meetings with 16 new clusters representing 294 farmers in Montserrado, Margibi, and Nimba Counties. MOUs will be signed and all materials for the first 90 day season will be completed by November 30.

Component 2 Stimulate Private sector growth and investment

Farming as a Business

In the first two weeks of November, 200 farmers (25 from each of the eight groups) received training in Farming as a Business in Grand Bassa county. The training has been ongoing for the past six weeks reaching

over 600 farmers. Each group has agreed upon and developed a business plan to guide their investments in farming throughout the FY14 planting season.

Access to Finance

Representatives from LEAD traveled with FED representatives to Bong and Nimba Counties to evaluate FED farming groups in need of short term financing for expansion of their vegetable production activities. In Nimba, four groups were evaluated and two will be given loans totaling \$750,000 LD (\$9,375 USD): Menlehkoyee Farmer Group for \$250,000 LD (\$3,125 USD) and Zoata Farmers Association for \$500,000 LD (\$6,250 USD).

Component 3 Build Local Technical and Managerial Human Resource Capability

Infrastructure Activities and Information Resources

Following Items were delivered to Nimba Community County College:

- 11 office chairs/desks
- 22 chairs
- 16 overhead fans
- 4 cabinets
- 5 metal filing cabinets
- 2 Pcs 12,000 BTU
- 5 Pcs 24,000 BTU

FED also completed the development and signing of the Final Soil Analytical and Teaching Lab for three community colleges: NCCC, GBCC, and BWI. Verification of proposed facilities to host the Soil Lab has been completed and work on the specification of Laboratory Equipment to be procured in the US has begun.

Cross-cutting Tasks

Nutrition

FED staff met with the PCI/LAUNCH Country Representative to discuss possible collaboration on the development of extension material and ENA nutrition training for FED and MoA extension officers.

Communications

FED organized an event at the Fuamah Cooperative farm in Bong Mines, Bong county. US Ambassador Deborah Malac, USAID Deputy Mission Director, government dignitaries, the press and FED staff attended the event on November 14, 2013.

After the ceremony all guests marched down the field to the six UDP plots where the ambassador assisted with choosing random plots to carry out the measuring of the harvest. FED staff measured the Urea Deep Placement plot against the Urea Broadcast plot. The UDP plots yielded up to 7.4 MT per hectare while the broadcast method yielded an estimated 6.1 MT per hectare.