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LIBERIA

FY 2010 Implementation Plan

U.S. Government Working Document

The Feed the Future (FTF) FY 2010 implementation plans are working documents outlining U.S. government planning for the first year of the Global Hunger and Food Security Initiative. These plans represent a transition towards the development of multiyear strategies and are targeted at investments that lay the foundation for a new country-level and coordinated approach with a diversity of partners. Multiyear strategies are under development that will span development and diplomatic actions across multiple USG agencies.

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

ACC	Agriculture Coordination Committee
ADWG	Agriculture Donor Working Group
AfB	African Development Bank
AFL	Armed Forces of Liberia
AIDP	Agriculture and Infrastructure Development Program
AgClir	Agricultural Climate legal and institutional reform
ARC	African Rice Center
BPHS	Basic Package of Health Services
BNF	Bureau of National Fisheries
AIDP	Agriculture and Infrastructure Development Project
CARI	Central Agriculture Research Institute
CAADP	Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Program
CDA	County Development Agenda
CDC	Centers for Disease Control
CFSNS	Comprehensive Food Security and Nutrition Survey
CI	Conservation International
COTR	Contract Officer's Technical Representative
DCA	Development Credit Authority
DCM	Deputy Chief of Mission
DLI	Development Leadership Initiative
DOD	Department of Defense
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EG	Economic Growth
ENA	Essential Nutrition Actions
ETOA	Environmental Threats and Opportunity Assessment
EU	European Union
FaaB	Farming as a Business
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FANTA 2	Food and Nutrition Technical Assistance
FDA	Forestry Development Agency
FORECAST	Focus on Results: Enhancing Capacity across Sectors in Transition Countries
FAF	Foreign Assistance Framework
FAPS	Food and Agriculture Policy and Strategy
FAS	Foreign Agriculture Service
FED	Food and Enterprise Development Program
FFP	Food for Peace
FOB	Freight on Board
FSN	Foreign Service National
FSNS	Food Security and Nutrition Strategy
FTF	Feed the Future
FY	Fiscal Year
GAM	Global Acute Malnutrition
GDA	Global Development Alliance
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GFSR	Global Food Security Response
GOL	Government of Liberia
GPS	Global Positioning System
ICT	Information Communication Technology

IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFC	International Finance Corporation
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
LASIP	Liberia Agriculture Sector Investment Program
LCIP	Liberia Community Infrastructure Program
LIAP	Liberia Integrated Assistance Program
LPG	Loan Portfolio Guarantee
LPMC	Liberia Produce Marketing Company
LRDC	Liberia Reconstruction Development Committee
LRTF	Liberia Reconstruction Trust Fund
LRCFP	Land Reform and Community Forestry Program
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MCA	Millennium Challenge Account
MOA	Ministry of Agriculture
MOCI	Ministry of Commerce and Industry
MOE	Ministry of Education
MPW	Ministry of Public Works
MOF	Ministry of Finance
MOHSW	Ministry of Health and Social Welfare
MPW	Ministry of Public Works
MYAP	Multi-year Assistance Program
NEC	New Embassy Compound
NERICA	New Rice for Africa
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
PASA	Participating Agency Service Agreement
PCV	Peace Corps Volunteer
PM2A	Prevent Malnutrition among Children under 2 Approach
PRC	People's Republic of China
PRS	Poverty Reduction Strategy
PTA	Parent Teachers' Association
RTTI	Rural Teachers' Training Institute
SAKSS	Strategic Analysis and Knowledge Support System
SAM	Severe acute malnutrition
SBU	Sensitive but unclassified
SPS	Sanitary Phytosanitary
SME	Small and Medium Scale Enterprises
STCP	Sustainable Tree Crops Program
TASMOA	Technical Assistance to the Ministry of Agriculture
TCN	Third Country National
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Children's' Fund
UNMIL	United Nations Military
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USFS	United States Forest Service
USG	United States Government
USPSC	United States Personal Service Contractor
WARDA	West Africa Rice Development Association (ARC-Africa Rice Center)
WFP	World Food Program
WHO	World Health Organization

I. INTRODUCTION

The Liberian people have struggled to rebuild their livelihoods in the aftermath of a bloody civil war and decades of autocratic mismanagement and neglect. Despite an abundance of natural resources and a relatively small population of 3.4 million in a country the size of Tennessee, Liberia is caught in a vicious cycle of poverty and conflict. From the start of the war in 1989 until 2003, the country's Gross Domestic Product per capita fell an unprecedented 76%. Some of the consequences of this decline are that approximately 75% of the population does not have access to potable water and varying estimates indicate that between 64% - 80% of Liberia's population lives on less than US \$1 per day. A report from 2008, "Progress toward the Millennium Development Goals," indicates that lingering effects of the prolonged civil crisis have diminished hopes for positive outcomes in 2015. Table I below indicates that MDG Goal 1 targets are unlikely to be met based on current trends.

Liberia is one of the most food insecure countries in Africa, a tragic irony considering the abundant sources of water and lush vegetation. In 2007, Liberia produced only about 40% of its staple food requirement (i.e. rice). Since December 2007, rice prices have increased 60%. Conversely, real incomes have

declined. Only 9% of the country's rural population is food secure. Liberia's high levels of poverty and unemployment will not decline without a sustainable increase in agriculture and agribusinesses. The Government of Liberia (GOL) views agriculture as the key to sustainable economic development and growth as well as to increased food security and nutrition. Without increasing agricultural growth now, it will be impossible to achieve the rates of agricultural and non-agricultural sector growth required to meet MDG1 objectives by 2015, estimated at 26% and 54% respectively. Food crops (rice, cassava and horticultural crops) and cash-export crops (rubber, coffee and cocoa) exhibit the highest levels of contribution to agricultural incomes. An additional 1% growth per year sustained until 2015 in either the food or cash crop sector would generate an incremental income of \$24 million and \$13 million respectively. The corresponding decline in the overall rate of poverty would be 5% to 5.72% respectively compared to projected rates at current trends. Under the leadership of President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, key GOL policy and strategy documents designed to remove Liberia from the political instability and conflict of the past 25 years have been developed. Significant among these are the "Lift Liberia" Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS), the Food and Agriculture Policy and Strategy (FAPS), the National Food Security and Nutrition Strategy (FSNS), and the Liberia

Table I: Goal 1 – Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger

Target	Indicators	Current Level	Achieved by 2015	State of Supportive environment
1: Halve between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people living on less than US\$ 1 day.	Proportion of population receiving <1\$ per person day (%)	63.8 (2007)	unlikely	Improving
2: Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people living in extreme hunger.	Prevalence of underweight (moderately or severely) children under five years of age (%)	18.8 (2007)	Likely	Improving
	Proportion of population below minimum level of dietary energy consumption (%)	46 (2003)	Unlikely	Improving

Source: UNDP, 2008.

Agriculture Sector Investment Program (LASIP).

Formulated in 2007, the PRS—a medium-term, multi-sector, comprehensive framework—articulates Liberia’s national development goals of shared, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth and development; food and nutrition security; increased employment and income; and measurable poverty reduction. The four Pillars of the PRS supporting this goal are (1) consolidating peace and security, (2) revitalizing the economy, (3) strengthening governance and the rule of law, and (4) rehabilitating infrastructure and delivering basic services. The Pillars are the essential building blocks for realizing GOL aims of economic growth, poverty reduction, and progress toward achieving the MDGs. Within the economic growth Pillar, agriculture is recognized as the primary entry point for interventions and the paramount engine of growth.

Within the overall context of PRS, FAPS provides the roadmap for revitalizing and strengthening the agriculture sector. FAPS strategic objectives are improved food security and nutrition, increased competitiveness and linkages to markets, and enhanced human and institutional capacity.

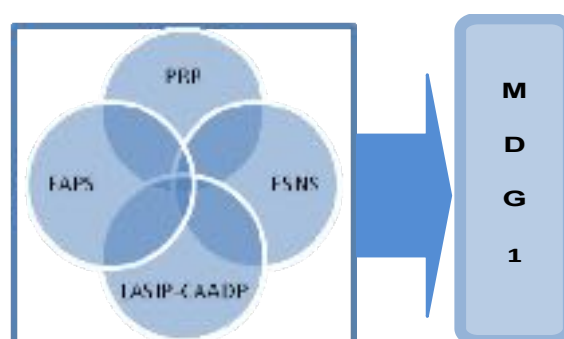
The objective of improved security and nutrition is further examined in the FSNS. The FSNS identifies the commitments the GOL will undertake and the activities that it will put in motion to substantially reduce food insecurity and improve nutrition. While seeking to address the food security and nutritional needs of all Liberians, the FSNS prioritizes the needs of food insecure and nutritionally vulnerable groups and pays particular attention to the needs of women. FSNS considers and addresses four dimensions of food security: food availability, access to food, utilization of food, and vulnerability.

LASIP, developed in partial fulfillment of requirements under the Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Program (CAADP), is designed to transform Liberian agriculture and thereby maximize agriculture’s contribution to the national development goal. LASIP identifies

priority investment areas for the development of specific investment projects. Such projects are to align with national as well as with CAADP objectives. CAADP, a continental effort, is an integrated strategic framework developed by African leaders to restore agricultural growth, develop rural economies, and enhance food security in Africa.

USAID, through ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States), World Bank and FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization) provided financial support and technical assistance toward the development of LASIP. Liberia signed the CAADP compact in October 2009. The Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) is committed to the CAADP process and to moving the LASIP agenda forward. The relationship between these platforms is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Relationship between GOL Platforms and MDG I



Collectively, the successful implementation of actions embodied in these platforms will enable Liberia to make progress towards the achievement of the MDGs—particularly Goal 1, the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger. A key target is the expansion of agricultural production by about 3.6% per annum through 2011 and 6% per annum by 2015 to sustain food and nutrition security, increase employment and income, and reduce poverty.

Although positive, Liberia’s growth rate for agriculture is less than the 6% targeted under CAADP. The projected performance is also less than required to achieve the first Millennium

Development Goal of cutting the national poverty rate of 1990 by half by 2015 or even by 2025. Achieving the MDG objective of reducing poverty by 50% in 2015 would require cutting the national poverty rate to about 31% from the 2007 rate of 84%. Such a reduction necessitates a higher agricultural growth rate than achievable under current targets established by PRS or, for that matter, under CAADP growth targets. In the agricultural and the non-agricultural sectors, however, with improved pro-poor growth, the 1990 poverty level can be reduced by one third in 2025 with a GDP growth rate of 9.1%. In doing so, the country would also successfully halve its 2007 poverty rate by 2025.

USAID/Liberia's Feed the Future (FTF) Implementation Plan for FY 2010 is ambitious and aims to catalyze broad-based economic growth achieving MDG goal 1 before 2025. The FTF objectives of improving economic performance of the agricultural sector improving nutritional status, and improving capacity of vulnerable households to meet their food needs are both starting points for and objectives of the actions proposed in this Implementation Plan. In a pragmatic way, the plan builds upon the accomplishments of the Mission's current projects and fosters synergies with the GOL, other international donors, civil society and the private sector. Initiative funds will enable the USG and its partners to lead a process that will set a standard for strategic, market-driven, and coordinated support that addresses the root causes of hunger and poverty in Liberia. Liberia's FTF is anchored by the whole of government approach, which engages USDA, Peace Corps, Office of Defense Cooperation (ODC), Department of Justice, and USAID mission teams (e.g. Public Affairs Office; Education Team; Democracy & Governance Team), and encompasses the Post's Diplomatic Strategy.

FY 2010 marks the beginning of the Mission's Food and Enterprise Development (FED) Program, a five-year activity which will serve as the primary implementation mechanism for Initiative-funded activities. Along with FED, a mutually reinforcing PL 480 Title II Multi-Year

Assistance Program (MYAP) focused on food security will also begin in FY 2010.

The success of this Implementation Plan also requires that the GOL break free from a 'business as usual' approach to agricultural development and its impact on nutrition. The Government is encouraged to and should take a proactive stance to address issues such as corruption, policy reform, and insufficient public investment.

2. FY 2010 OBJECTIVES

2.1. CONSULTATIVE PROCESS

During the development of Liberia's PRS, FAPS, and County Development Agendas (CDAs), the GOL conducted a series of consultative workshops throughout the country to ensure broad participation. This consultative process was long and expensive, but necessary to ensure public, private and civil society ownership of the goals and strategies. The comprehensive consultative process that is a hallmark of other national strategies was also used for the development of LASIP. Four Thematic Working Groups, each based on one of the four CAADP Pillars, were convened and tasked with providing input into LASIP. Working group participants brought significant experience and expertise to the process and represented a wide-array of GOL and private sector stakeholders.

Representatives from the Ministries of Agriculture; Public Works; Commerce and Industry; Lands, Mines, and Energy; Health and Social Welfare and from Liberia's Land Commission and Environmental Protection Agency were involved. Via several workshops, Thematic Working Groups reviewed and discussed numerous issues and key documents such as PRS, FAPS, FSNS as well as "Liberia and the CAADP: A Stocktaking Report of 2009, Comprehensive Assessment of the Agriculture Sector of Liberia and the National Medium Term Investment Program of 2006". They developed recommendations which were

reviewed by other thematic groups and subsequently formulated into a draft LASIP. Representatives in a draft validation workshop examined and accepted the draft document.

The MOA recognizes the importance of broad and deliberate public engagement on CAADP. Consequently, it has approached the donor community to sponsor further workshops and media programs. As part of the outreach process the MOA has enacted a media campaign to inform the general public on CAADP. At the GOL's request, donors, including USAID, are using their program contractors and grantees as a means to explain and engage farmers and other stakeholders about CAADP.

2.2. STATUS OF CAADP IN LIBERIA

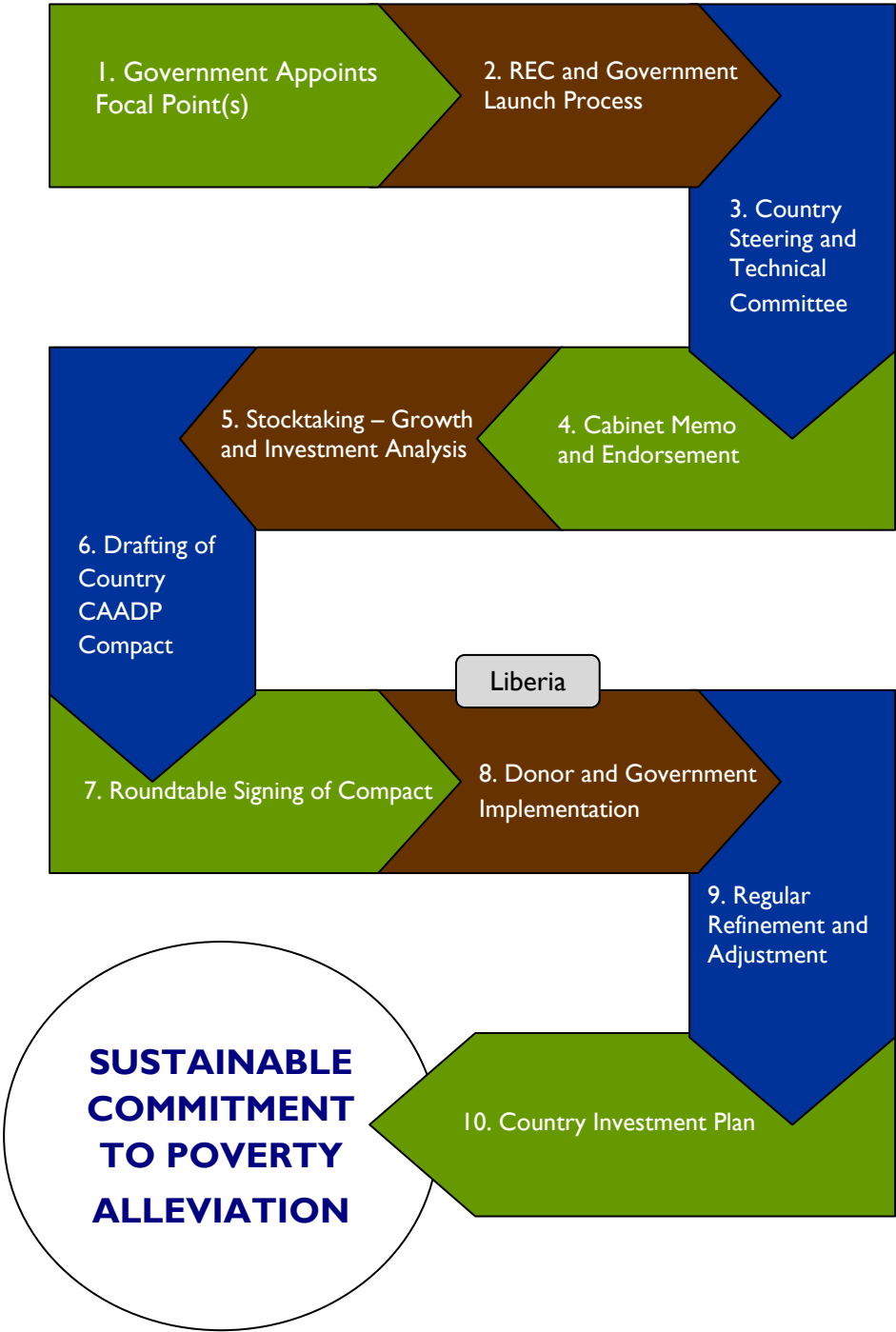
Since the arrival of Dr. Florence Chenoweth as the new Minister of Agriculture in September 2009, consultation and progress on CAADP have greatly accelerated. To support the Minister's desire to move the CAADP process forward, USAID sponsored a MOA senior advisor to attend the CAADP donors and partners meeting in Addis Ababa this past September. On October 15-16, the GOL hosted a roundtable on the implementation of CAADP that culminated with the endorsement on a compact on October 16, 2009.

The CAADP process in Liberia is fairly advanced. The MOA, with support provided by

USAID and the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), conducted analytical studies that provided foundational input into LASIP. The development of the LASIP investment framework is generally complete. There are four major umbrella investment programs: (1) land and water development, (2) food and nutrition security, (3) competitive value chains and market linkages, and (4) institutional development. Liberia is currently in the process of elaborating more detailed investment plans. MOA is leading the Government and donor community in a dialogue on steps to refine operational plans and projects. USAID will be supporting the MOA and other ministries involved (e.g., Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MOCI), Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (MOHSW), and Ministry of Education (MOE)) in this effort.

The post-compact roadmap requires further attention. There is need to strengthen the Agriculture Donor Working Group (ADWG) to map donor support and finalize a Joint Donor and Government Investment Plan. The Minister of Agriculture chairs the ADWG and USAID is engaging with the Minister to actively address these needs. MOA and USAID look forward toward collaborating in a national-level technical review of investment plans followed by the CAADP technical review and subsequently by the high-level business meeting of GOL and donors.

Figure 2: The CAADP Process



2.3. LIBERIAN CAPACITY BUILDING

The USAID Mission contends that the effectiveness and sustainability of achievements obtained under this Implementation Plan must be firmly based upon building local technical and managerial capacity. For post-conflict Liberia, the need to strengthen local capacity is especially acute due to decades of conflict and misrule. The Mission's approach is to partner with other development partners and leverage technical and financial resources from the private sector to rebuild Liberia's human resources. Focal skill areas supported in the Mission's plan include agricultural extension, agricultural sciences, and civil engineering.

As part of the Mission's strategy for FTF, investments for capacity building will not be limited to the public sector but include support for the private sector and civil society. For example, the Mission's accomplishments through its five-year Liberia Community Infrastructure Program (LCIP) included strengthening the skills of Liberian contractors to bid, design and supervise civil works projects. Starting in FY10, the Mission's Economic Growth Team and Education Team are

collaborating to establish 'Centers of Excellence' for higher education and vocational training with the intent of improving the competitiveness of the Liberian workforce.

2.4. INVESTMENT ALIGNMENT

Table 2 highlights the priorities of the GOL as reflected in the LASIP, the FTF, and the USAID Mission. LASIP priorities are from MOA's recent articulation of the four major umbrella investment programs. Mission priorities are outlined above and further detailed below in this Implementation Plan.

The Mission's investment areas can be summarized in three core pillars:

- Improved economic performance of the agriculture sector
- Improved nutritional status
- Improved capacity of vulnerable households to meet their food needs.

The details and respective activities for each of these core pillars are explained in Section 3 of this implementation plan.

Table 2: Priorities for LASIP, FTF and USAID

Liberia Agriculture Sector Investment Plan (LASIP)	Global Hunger & Food Security Initiative Priorities	USAID Liberia major investment Program Areas/Elements
Priority 1: Land & Water Development	I.R. 1 Improved Economic Performance of the Agriculture Sector	4.8 Environment
SPI.1 Land policy reform & capacity building		4.8.1 Environment-Natural resources & biodiversity
SPI.2 Enhanced land husbandry		4.8.1 Environment-Natural resources & biodiversity
SPI.3 Expansion of irrigable land		4.5.2 Agriculture-Agriculture Sector Capacity
SPI.4 Improved wet and degraded land management		4.8.1 Environment-Natural resources & biodiversity
Priority 2: Food and Nutrition Strategy	I.R. 2 Improved Nutritional Status	4.5 Agriculture
SP2.1 Food Crop Production and productivity enhancement	I.R. 2.1 Improved Agriculture Productivity	4.5.2 Agriculture-Agriculture Sector Capacity
SP2.2 Improved nutrition status	I.R.2. 3 Increased Private Investment in Agricultural & Nutrition-related activities/ I.R. 4 Improved Nutrition-Related Behaviors, such as consumption of Nutritious foods	3.3 Social and Economic Services/Protection for Vulnerable populations

Liberia Agriculture Sector Investment Plan (LASIP)	Global Hunger & Food Security Initiative Priorities	USAID Liberia major investment Program Areas/Elements
SP2.3 Smallholder tree crops & agro-forestry development		
SP2.4 Sustainable fisheries sub-sector		
SP2.5 Livestock development & Promotion		
SP2.6 Special women and youth initiative	I.R.2.5 Improved utilization of Maternal& Child Health and Nutrition Services	4.5.2 Agriculture-Agriculture Sector Capacity
Priority 3: Competitive Value Chains & Market Linkages	I.R. 3 Improved Capacity of Vulnerable Households to Meet their Food Needs	4.5 Agriculture/4.4 Infrastructure
SP3.1 Rehabilitation and expansion of rural roads		4.4.3 Infrastructure-Transport Services
SP3.2 Rural agriculture infrastructure & energy		4.4.1 Infrastructure-Modern Energy Services
SP3.3 Rural financial services		4.6.1 Private Sector Competitiveness-Business Enabling Environment
SP3.4 Labor saving intermediate devices & technologies		4.6.1 Private Sector Competitiveness-Business Enabling Environment
SP3.4 Market & enterprise development	I.R.2 Improved Access to Well-functioning markets	4.7.3 Economic Opportunity-Strengthen Microenterprise Productivity
Priority 4: Institutional development	I.R.1 Improved Economic Performance of the Agriculture Sector	4.5 Agriculture
SP4.1 Rebuilding the Ministry of Agriculture		4.5.1 Agriculture-Agriculture Enabling Environment
SP4.2 Rebuilding agricultural research		4.5.1 Agriculture-Agriculture Enabling Environment
SP4.3 Enhancing technology dissemination and adoption		4.5.2 Agriculture-Agriculture Sector Capacity
SP4.4 Renewing education and Training		4.5.2 Agriculture-Agriculture Sector Capacity
SP4.5 Farm-based organizations		4.5.2 Agriculture-Agriculture Sector Capacity
SP4.6 Coordination and management	I.R.2. 6 Improving efficiency of humanitarian assistance & Social Safety Nets	4.5.2 Agriculture-Agriculture Sector Capacity

3. TARGET GROUPS BY LOCATION AND INCOME

In June 2009, a USAID-funded Food and Nutrition Technical Assistance team completed an analysis of Liberia's food security status and noted the following:

"The longstanding nature of food insecurity in Liberia manifests itself as chronic malnutrition as measured by a 39% prevalence of stunting of children under five. Liberia is now emerging from years of a serious food crisis of multi-

factorial causation. Underweight and wasting rates compiled by UNICEF are 19% and 7.5% respectively. Global acute malnutrition (GAM) and severe acute malnutrition (SAM) rates have stabilized in recent years. Approximately 40 percent of the population (1.3 million people) has food consumption levels that fall below the threshold to meet minimum energy requirements. Relying overwhelmingly on one resource-based export crop, rubber, the Liberian economy is highly vulnerable to international price fluctuations. Rubber plantations are in decline, which will negatively impact export earnings in the future. Approximately seven out of every ten Liberian

households rely on agriculture as their major livelihood strategy; nearly half (49%) of all Liberian households actually produced crops in 2005. More than two-thirds of cultivating households planted rice and cassava. Only one-fifth of farming households planted any vegetables, and other crops, such as corn (or maize), plantains, or sweet potatoes featured on only approximately ten percent of farms. Nevertheless, domestic rice production, Liberia's most important food crop, declined to approximately one-third the level of production experienced prior to the war in the mid-1980s. Tangentially, cassava production, Liberia's second most important crop and an essential "less preferred" staple that also provides households with a green vegetable in the form of the leaves, has increased over the past two decades. The most recent food production trends indicate that Liberia continues to heavily

depend on imports, which provide approximately forty percent of the aggregate cereal requirement for Liberia. National rice production currently meets only one-quarter of food consumption needs."

The GOL, FAO, WFP, UNICEF, and several Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) conducted two food security surveys – in 2006 and again in 2008 – in part to identify the geographic distribution of food security, food insecurity, and vulnerability throughout Liberia. The Joint Comprehensive Food Security and Nutrition Survey (CFSNS), conducted in 2006, created a food security profile consisting of food consumption and food access scores. Approximately half of all households were classified as having poor or borderline food consumption, with the worst food consumption scores found in River Gee, Grand Gedeh, and Lofa Counties.

Table 3: Household Food Insecurity by Geographic Region – 2006 and 2008

Type of Household Geographic Location	Highly Chronic Food Insecure Households		Highly Vulnerable and Transitory Food Insecure		Moderately Vulnerable and Transitory Food Insecure		Food Secure Households	
	CFSNS (2006)	LFSNS (2008)	CFSNS (2006)	LFSNS (2008)	CFSNS (2006)	LFSNS (2008)	CFSNS (2006)	LFSNS (2008)
National	11%	13%	40%	36%	41%	40%	9%	12%
Region/County								
North Central Interior Region	8%	23%	45%	50%	42%	20%	5%	7%
Bong	8%		42%		42%		8%	
Nimba	9%		47%		41%		3%	
Northwest Interior Region	18%	8%	48%	48%	29%	39%	5%	5%
Bomi	13%		54%		31%		3%	
Gbarpolu	18%		42%		34%		7%	
Lofa	28%		48%		21%		3%	
Central Coast	4%	40%	35%	30%	53%	20%	8%	10%
Grand Bassa	2%		35%		57%		6%	
River Cess	6%		35%		50%		9%	
Northwest Coastal	5%	7%	26%	27%	50%	46%	19%	20%
Cape Mount	2%		16%		57%		26%	
Margibi	5%		28%		49%		19%	
Montserrado	10%		35%		43%		13%	
Greater	3%	8%	10%	15%	20%	29%	66%	48%

Type of Household Geographic Location	Highly Chronic Food Insecure Households		Highly Vulnerable and Transitory Food Insecure		Moderately Vulnerable and Transitory Food Insecure		Food Secure Households	
	CFSNS (2006)	LFSNS (2008)	CFSNS (2006)	LFSNS (2008)	CFSNS (2006)	LFSNS (2008)	CFSNS (2006)	LFSNS (2008)
Monrovia								
Southeast A Interior Region	15%	23%	46%	50%	35%	22%	4%	5%
Grand Gedeh	10%		39%		44%		7%	
River Gee	20%		52%		26%		1%	
Southeast B Coastal Region	9%	11%	48%	45%	36%	36%	7%	8%
Grand Kru	14%		58%		26%		2%	
Maryland	6%		41%		44%		9%	
Sinoe	8%		44%		39%		10%	

The CFSNS classified nearly half of all Liberian households as having very weak food access – 21% of the sample exhibited low production and low purchasing power – or weak access to food – 26% of the sample were characterized by medium production levels combined with low purchasing power. Only 9% of the total rural population was food secure in 2006, and 11% was food insecure. The other 80% of the population was classified as highly vulnerable or moderately vulnerable, defined as insufficient

food access and/or food consumption. Households residing in Lofa, Bomi, and Grand Kru exhibited the worst food access profiles.

The aggregate food consumption and food access scores indicated the highest degree of food insecurity and vulnerability in Lofa County followed by the Southeastern counties of River Gee and Grand Kru. Gbarpolu and Bomi were also relatively food insecure. Nimba and Sinoe households were vulnerable to food insecurity.

To ensure maximum impact, FY 10 FTF resources will focus primarily on the ‘agricultural breadbasket counties’ of Bong, Nimba, Lofa and Grand Bassa. These counties are also home for the greatest number of Liberians living outside of Monrovia and are an economic critical mass, capable of forming a regional development corridor within Liberia. This corridor will attract new investment and create demands for services that local and international entrepreneurs will strive to fill.

Within these counties are chronically food-deficit zones in which people live on less than \$0.50 per day. USAID’s Food for Peace program will reach out to create ‘safety net programs’ for the poorest of the poor. The FTF activities, through a value chain approach, will develop ways to organize and link the ultra poor with economic opportunities.

Map 1: Liberia Counties



4. CORE INVESTMENT AREAS

4.1. RELATIONSHIP TO USG STRATEGY

The Mission's draft of the Country Development Cooperation Strategy is consistent with the objectives of the FTF and the LASIP. It also addresses the GOL identified priority challenges further discussed below. The Mission's strategy focuses on lifting Liberia to the next tier of development (i.e., from a rebuilding country to a developing country and beyond). The strategy addresses availability, accessibility, and utilization of food; and it considers issues of vulnerability—all inter-related underlying causes of poverty and hunger.

As a result of analytical work under taken to develop Liberia's CAADP compact and LASIP, the GOL has identified these priority challenges:

4.2. LIBERIAN PRIORITIES

4.2.1. Commercialize Staple Food Value Chains

Many factors have prevented yields from increasing and constrained economic growth such as a weak incentive environment (i.e. distortions in market prices), lack of access to credit and affordable high quality inputs, and minimal improvement in production practices. Commercializing food value chains would ensure consistent supply and reduce hunger. Priorities for GOL's are food crops, fisheries, livestock, and tree crops.

4.2.2. Update agricultural research and technology dissemination systems.

A return to pre-war versions of the MOA, Central Agriculture Research Institute (CARI), and other key public agricultural institutions is futile and unnecessary. But outdated agricultural research and technology dissemination systems should adopt people-centered participatory methods. Steps proposed include defining research programs

that are more directly linked to farmers' needs, innovating systems to use local expertise, and greater participation of the private sector in providing services on a demand-driven basis.

4.2.3. Mainstream women and youth.

Liberian women remain marginalized despite advances in the legislative and public policy arenas. Agriculture development must focus on women by supporting their participation in value chains, addressing gender issues in policies, and changing the mindset of men with regard to the role of women. The country's poorly skilled and under-educated workforce severely limits the growth and competitiveness of the private sector.

A large and underemployed youth population (many of them ex-combatants) is a basis for concern. Unless Liberian youth are engaged in productive activities, their unmet frustrations may serve as a justification for a return to conflict and crime. Furthermore, failure to engage the youth represents a wasted opportunity to use this valuable human resource.

4.2.4. Improve Land Management and Water Control.

Weak land management and water control must be improved. Liberia's rich and abundant natural resources cannot be sustained without an appropriate policy, legal, and investment environment. Disputes regarding property rights (e.g. land access and security of tenure) are common and can serve as a contributing factor to a return of civil conflict.

4.3. CORE AREA I: IMPROVED ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE OF THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR

4.3.1. Increased Agricultural Productivity

Current/Potential USG/ Cooperating Partners: GOL/MoA Central Agricultural Research Institute (CARI), West Africa Rice Center, Ecobank, USDA, US Peace

Corps, International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD).

Rice, cassava and horticultural crops are the staples of the Liberian diet and the key to national food security. Consequently, these are the focal crops for the Mission's Implementation Plan. The fulfillment of Liberia's agricultural potential is hindered by farmers' severely limited access to genetically-improved planting materials; lack of technologies that reduce pre- and post-harvest losses; limited technical assistance; limited farm-to-market roads; and inadequate seasonal and long-term credit financing. All these limitations hamper the fulfillment of Liberia's agricultural potential. Overall, Liberia's FTF implementation plan is comprised of development programs that involve a value chain approach to boost agricultural sector performance.

The Mission's approach to this core investment area is based on the premise that a value chain approach in agriculture is essential, meaning bottlenecks in production, processing, marketing and policy must all be addressed. The war destroyed and distorted market linkages, displaced communities, and left farms unattended for years. The massive influx of relief assistance during Liberia's post-war period helped prevent a return to conflict but it also (unintentionally) created dependency and disincentives to entrepreneurship. Currently, Liberia spends 30% of its foreign exchange earnings on the importation of rice. However, data indicates that the country has sufficient lowlands for the cultivation of lowland rice to meet a majority of its staple food needs. Most of the fresh vegetables marketed in Monrovia come from Guinea, and eggs are imported from India. This dependency on imported food and relief aid is untenable and does not serve to improve Liberia's food security profile.

FY10 FTF investments will be in the following areas.

Agricultural research

- Support the Ministry of Agriculture's Central Agricultural Research Institute

(MOA-CARI) to fully implement a national certified seed rice program. (initiated by USAID using FY09 GFSR funds). Improved cultivars from the West Africa Rice Development Association (previously WARDA-West Africa Rice Center; currently ARC-Africa Rice Center) were imported in 2009 and will be multiplied and distributed to thousands of farmers over the course of the next two years. WARDA has been extremely resourceful throughout the design and implementation of the seed rice program. CARI, which is one of two national agricultural research institutes in Liberia, has only one resident scientist whose work is primarily administrative. Consequently, FY 2010 funds will also support developing a strategic plan for CARI, renovating laboratory infrastructure and rebuilding technical capacity to meet the contemporary needs of Liberia's agricultural community. Partnerships with regional and international agricultural research institutes (such as the International Institute for Tropical Agriculture and the US Land Grant Universities) will be facilitated.

- Strengthen MOA capacity to collect, analyze, store and disseminate agricultural information. Liberia is a 'data poor' country where basic soil and hydrological surveys do not exist or were lost or destroyed during the war.
- Support agricultural research and technologies that reduce post-harvest losses, rapidly multiply high-quality planting materials, and produce low-cost organic and inorganic fertilizers.

Agricultural Extension and Other Support Services

- Rebuild agricultural extension capabilities within four critical 'breadbasket' counties (i.e. Lofa, Nimba, Bong, Grand Bassa). This process will involve working with county MOA extension staff, agricultural input suppliers, and farmer associations to update training curriculum and methodologies, and equipping trainers with essential tools and supplies.

- The Mission will invest in rehabilitating the University of Liberia's School of Engineering and Cuttington University's School of Agriculture. These academic institutions, among other local organizations, will become centers of excellence for training the next generation of agronomists, agricultural economists, and agricultural engineers needed for sustainable development.
- The Mission will launch a Farmer-to-Farmer program which will serve to build technical and managerial capacity within public institutions and emerging agribusinesses.
- USAID's upcoming energy sector project will increase the affordability and access of electricity in rural areas by utilizing renewable energy technologies. The micro and small hydroelectricity systems will power agro processing SMEs such as grain mills and oil expellers.
- Provide business development services to develop other value chains in high potential subsectors such as fisheries, livestock and non-timber forest products.

Agricultural Financing

- Facilitate the creation of Global Development Alliances in the areas of food processing, packaging, grading and other services.
- The Mission has established a Development Credit Authority (DCA) loan portfolio guarantee program (LPG) with Ecobank, a pan-African banking group. The LPG will assist qualified Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (SMEs) supported under this Implementation Plan to access credit.

4.3.2. Enhanced Women's Empowerment

An essential component of each of the core investment areas is the role played by women. In July 2009, the Mission conducted a gender assessment of all its assistance programs. Three key recommendations which are germane and will be integral to the Mission's GFHSI Implementation Plan are:

- Take care not to establish or perpetuate gender stereotypes. The types of work that women do, (i.e. which crops or which work) vary among the counties of Liberia. There is little that is absolutely taboo or unchangeable. Activities should ensure that women are involved in a range of roles within the agricultural sector. Apart from activities that require physical strength, women have the ability to receive the same training as men.
- Women critically need extension services, small capital/microfinance, and access to land. A critical point for those lending technical assistance or managing land programs is to be sure not to introduce a gender bias that was not there before, i.e. not enabling or facilitating men to get their names on registration papers or deeds.
- Expand women's roles in agricultural value chains. Insofar as USAID's partners focus on agribusiness or processing, it is important for equity and economic growth, that women benefit fully and effectively from technical assistance and access to equipment. If USAID and its partners work with farmer groups, cooperatives and communities, it will be important to ensure that women are included and participate fully.

4.3.3. Reduced Trade and Transportation Barriers

Current/Potential USG/

Cooperating Partners: Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MOCI), Ministry of Finance (MOF), World Bank, European Union (EU), possibly the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC).

Rural Infrastructure

The woeful state of Liberia's rural infrastructure serves as a major constraint to agricultural development. The cost to develop Liberia's roads, bridges, dams, etc., far exceeds the combined resources currently available by the donor community. Consequently, donor aid must be coordinated to avoid costly duplication and focused to ensure that projects with the

greatest economic impact are given priority. Most of all, they must be targeted on building local managerial capacity so that the GOL and the local private sector will be able to maintain and further invest in infrastructure.

The Mission will use its funds to rehabilitate infrastructure (e.g. farm-to-market roads, small bridges, small dams, small-scale irrigation infrastructure, drying floors, grain storage) that support agricultural-related value chains. Improved infrastructure will not only improve market access, but also serve to reduce pre- and post-harvest losses. The Mission will rebuild secondary and tertiary roads that intersect with the primary North-South and East-West roads that are currently being repaved by the World Bank-administered Liberia Reconstruction Trust Fund (LRTF).

Another program not funded by the Initiative will increase agro-processing businesses' access to electricity generated through renewable energy technologies. Additionally, the Mission's Food for Peace (FFP) program will continue to use food-for-work and commodity monetization for rebuilding rural infrastructure.

The Mission's support under the Initiative will:

- Enable the GOL to develop a methodology for selecting roads and bridges for rehabilitation/construction based on optimum economic (not political) considerations.
- Link farm- to- market roads to main transport corridors (e.g. Monrovia to Ganta highway).
- Strengthen public and private sector capacities to design, construct and maintain infrastructure.
- Establish infrastructure maintenance systems that involve participation of the GOL, private sector and local communities.

FY 2010 FTF funds will be used to support the training of Ministry of Public Works (MPW) staff to supervise contractors hired to construct and maintain rural infrastructure. The MPW fully endorses USAID's tactic to use the

University of Liberia, School of Engineering as a training center for its staff.

Trade Policy

The GOL recognizes that some of the high cost of cross-border trade is a result of non-tariff barriers, rent-seeking behavior, fraud, and lack of information. This affects Liberia's competitiveness, driving potential entrepreneurs from the market, and discouraging returning Liberian investors, as well as limiting growth among current agricultural SMEs. The GOL proposal to the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) for a Threshold Program will complement and coordinate with ongoing GOL trade reforms. This joint effort is aimed at increasing trade freedom by implementing reductions in tariff rates and removing unnecessary non-tariff measures.

The Mission's Implementation Plan will complement these efforts by supporting joint strategic planning between the MOA, Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Commerce and Industry. FTF funds will also be used, through the FORECAST participant training mechanism, to strengthen institutional capacity within the MOCI and MOA on trade policy reforms and administration. This support should contribute to improved regional trade and an improved competitive profile for Liberian agricultural products.

4.3.4. Enabling Environment for Agriculture

Current/Potential USG/

Cooperating Partners: MOA, MOCI, MOF, International Finance Corporation (IFC).

FY 2010 FTF funds will be used to help the GOL formulate appropriate policies and build institutional capacities that stimulate the growth of the agricultural private sector. Liberia has made tremendous strides as evidenced by its presence in the top 10 reformers for 2010, per the World Bank/IFC 'Doing Business' report. However, there remain critical decisions which the GOL must address to scale up agricultural productivity. For example, Liberia's imported

rice is the lowest priced in the West Africa region. Liberian farmers have a greater incentive to sell excess rice to neighboring countries than in the domestic market. Promoting increased production without addressing market incentives will not help Liberia achieve its goal of poverty reduction.

Because of the importance of rice in the Liberian diet, changes in its availability or prices can result in political turmoil. Liberia's 'rice riot' during the late 1970s still influences current policy regarding rice. USAID's recent analysis of the Liberian rice value chain noted that, "[T]he Ministry of Commerce insists there are no price controls on the import of rice and allows international markets to determine the price. Nonetheless, they enforce a maximum margin of \$1 on FOB price per 50 kg sack of the most common variety and considered the staple rice consumed in Liberia, known as 'butter rice'."

Liberia has the potential to produce more rice and reduce valuable foreign exchange spent on the importation of its staple food. The GOL's short-term benefit of keeping rice prices low must be tempered with the goal of creating greater market incentives for local food production. In addition to rice sector reforms, there is an absence of comprehensive policy strategies for other important agricultural sub-sectors.

The Mission proposes technical assistance in the following areas:

- Redefine the role of the Liberia Produce Marketing Company (LPMC).
- Develop 'master plans' for the cocoa, coffee, and oil palm sub-sectors.
- Reform policies that create and foster non-competitive markets.
- Expand the use of Information Communication Technology (ICT) to improve the efficiency (by reducing rent seeking opportunities') and reduce the cost of doing business.
- Strengthen GOL's ability to analyze and negotiate agricultural concessions.

- Strengthen the MOA's institutional capacity to fulfill responsibilities under CAADP.

4.4. CORE AREA 2: IMPROVED NUTRITIONAL STATUS

Current/Potential USG/

Cooperating Partners: MOA, MOHSW, WFP, UNICEF.

4.4.1. Undernutrition: Prevention and Treatment

The Food for Peace Multi-Year Action Program (MYAP) will complement FTF activities to improve nutrition. A key objective of the Food for Peace-funded MYAP is to reduce chronic malnutrition among children under five. While an array of evidence-based activities will be used to achieve this objective, adopting and applying the 'preventing malnutrition among children under two' approach (PM2A) is pivotal. This approach is a food-assisted approach to reduce the prevalence of child malnutrition by targeting a package of preventive health and nutrition interventions to all pregnant and lactating women and children under age two. Participants in targeted food insecure, high-risk areas receive a conditional food ration based on program participation, to prevent the onset of malnutrition before it occurs. While the approach emphasizes prevention, other MYAP interventions will serve the same population, bringing improvements to their household food and livelihood security, and ensuring long-term benefits from prevention.

Through its support to UNICEF, USAID advances Essential Nutrition Actions (ENA). The ENA framework is the operational framework that facilitates better management of high impact nutrition interventions at all levels, from national guidelines and advocacy to better nutrition practices at health facilities and at the community level. ENA promotes seven behaviors which have proven effective in improving child survival. These include exclusive breastfeeding; complementary feeding; control of iron, vitamin A and iodine deficiencies; women's nutrition; and feeding of the sick child. ENA uses all opportunities

(contacts at health-facility, community-level, and behavior-change channels) to deliver the whole package of actions. USAID's Health Office will continue its support of UNICEF and ENA. In addition, through the Basic Package of Health Services, which is under the direction of the MOHSW and supported by USAID, Community Health volunteers will be prepared to deliver ENA and other nutrition-related messages to their clients.

4.5. CORE AREA 3: IMPROVED CAPACITY OF VULNERABLE HOUSEHOLDS TO MEET THEIR FOOD NEEDS

Current/Potential USG/ Cooperating Partners: MOA, MOHSW, WFP, UNICEF).

4.5.1. Food Crops Production and Productivity

The Food for Peace Multi-Year Action Program (MYAP) will complement FTF activities to improve the economic performance of the agricultural sector by targeting vulnerable rural households and communities in Liberia, with the goal of improving the food security of this segment of the population. The program will increase agricultural production and productivity among this group by promoting cash crop integration in order to provide food for consumption as well as for sale to generate income. Training will be provided in post-harvest losses to increase the amount of product that can be safely consumed or marketed. A farmer-to-farmer approach to the dissemination of improved agricultural technologies and practices will be utilized, focusing on vulnerable farm households. Strengthening market linkages for vulnerable farm households will be a priority activity of the MYAP.

4.5.2. Maternal and Child Health

USAID/Liberia will support UNICEF in implementing breast feeding and adequate complementary feeding for children less than two years by creating an environment that will enable mothers and other care givers to

practice optimal infant and young child feeding practices. The funds will support integrating the essential nutrition approach (ENA) into the Basic Package of Health Services (BPHS) by promoting breast feeding and child feeding through:

- Strengthening awareness and routine distribution of Vitamin A in health facilities and communities.
- Providing iron/folate supplements for pregnant women and children.
- Scaling up treatment of acute malnutrition for sick and malnourished children at facility and community levels.
- Providing linkages between nutrition and child survival in community-based behavior change information.
- Promoting nutrition and food policies that improve availability, access, and demand for foods with Vitamin A. Infants and young children in Liberia with sufficient intake of Vitamin A will have lower episodes of diarrhea; iron deficiency anemia, improved growth rates, improved appetite for food, and increased resistance to infections.

4.5.3. Social Safety Nets The Mission's social assistance activities are implemented primarily via the MYAP. The MYAP will provide for the most vulnerable people using food for work projects to improve basic infrastructure and services. Examples include construction/rehabilitation of roads, small bridges, latrines, wells, and rehabilitation of other small structures within communities. The program will conduct food-security-related disaster risk reduction activities to minimize the vulnerability to, and adverse impacts of, specific hazards and conditions that affect a group or community's food availability, access, utilization and/or exposure to food insecurity (vulnerability).

4.6. BUILDING ON EARLIER INVESTMENTS

FY 2010 FTF funds will build upon work accomplished by projects funded with FY09 resources. Those projects were funded under three objective areas as specified under the

Global Food Security Response (GFSR): Increased Agriculture Productivity, Reduced Agricultural Trade and Transport Barriers, and Sound Market-based Principles for Agriculture.

4.6.1. Increased Agricultural Productivity

Under the Technical Assistance to the Ministry of Agriculture (TASMOA) project, which was extended using FY09 Global Food Security Response (GFSR) funds, the Mission supported the design and establishment of the first certified seed rice program in almost thirty years. Most rice seed has either been imported from Sierra Leone or has been replanted by farmers for many years. The yields from these old cultivars are poor, and made worse by lack of fertilizer, high iron toxicity in lowland soils; and average 15%-20% pre-harvest losses due to birds and rodents.

The TASMOA project, working with WARDA and CARI, supervised the importation of nearly 50 metric tons of the NERICA ('new rice for Africa') cultivar and other improved lowland and upland varieties. The World Bank and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), working through the UN Food and Agricultural Organization (UNFAO), have become co-financiers of the rice seed program.

FY 2009 GFSR funds enabled the Mission to expand agricultural production and marketing programs managed by several farmers' associations in 9 of Liberia's 15 counties. Rice and vegetable yields among participating farmers in October-November 2009 were on average nearly double that of neighboring non-contact farmers. The production and marketing techniques provided through the Mission's Liberia Community Infrastructure Program (LCIP) will enable farmers to maintain these achievements. The "Made in Liberia" marketing program initiated under LCIP has opened new domestic and international markets for Liberian agricultural products.

4.6.2. Reduced Agricultural Trade and Transport Barriers

Through the Liberia Community and Infrastructure Program (LCIP), USAID has been able to rehabilitate nearly 100 kilometers of secondary and tertiary roads. Roads have facilitated the growth of agribusinesses and the expansion of services (e.g. cell phone coverage) in rural areas. USAID's cooperation with the public and the private sectors laid a foundation for an expanded rural infrastructure program, supported by other donors who have contributed to the Liberia Reconstruction Trust Fund. The timely and focused use of FY 2009 GFSR support for rural infrastructure enabled USAID to improve farmers' access to markets to a degree unmatched by any other development agency in Liberia.

4.6.3. Sound Market-Based Principles for Agriculture

In February 2009, the TASMOA project was instrumental in assisting the MOA coordinate response to a caterpillar outbreak. The project's technical team embedded in the Ministry worked with various donors, GOL ministries and media to quell rumors and address actual problems arising from the sudden pest infestation. This infestation would have posed a serious threat to food security, not because the pests were devastating crops, but because panic (due to misinformation) would have kept thousands of farmers from preparing their fields for the upcoming rainy season. As a consequence of this incident, the MOA, with support from USAID and other donors, is working to strengthen an early warning system as part of a major institutional reform.

4.7. LINK TO FOREIGN ASSISTANCE FRAMEWORK

USAID Liberia's programs operate within the US Foreign Assistance Framework (FAF) for 'rebuilding countries', with the end goal being the state of a "Stable environment for good governance, increased availability of essential social services, and initial progress to create

policies and institutions upon which future progress will rest.” The core investment area, Improved Economic Performance of the Agriculture Sector, links directly to the objective of Economic Growth by targeting activities to “Assist in the construction or reconstruction of key internal infrastructure and market mechanisms to stabilize the economy.” The core investment areas of Improved Nutritional Status and Improved Capacity of Vulnerable Households to Meet their Food Needs fall within the Framework’s Investing in People objective through the emphasis on actions to “Start or restart the delivery of critical social services, including health and educational facilities and begin building or rebuilding institutional capacity.”

The core investment area, Improved Economic Performance of the Agriculture Sector, is linked to three Program Areas and within these Program Areas, FTF activities fall with the following Program Elements and Sub-Elements:

- **INFRASTRUCTURE:**
 - 4.4.3 Transport Services,
 - 4.4.3.1 Basic Transport Infrastructure Financing
- **AGRICULTURE:**
 - 4.5.1 Agricultural Enabling Environment,
 - 4.5.1.1 Agricultural Resource Policy,
 - 4.5.1.2 Investments to Promote Enhanced Food Policy,
 - 4.5.1.4 Public Investment Policy,
 - 4.5.2 Agricultural Sector Capacity,
 - 4.5.2.1 Research and Technology Dissemination,
 - 4.5.2.4 Agribusiness and Producer Organizations,
 - 4.5.2.5 Markets and Trade Capacity,
 - 4.5.2.6 Emerging Agricultural threats,
 - 4.5.2.7 Agricultural Safety Nets and Livelihood Services
- **PRIVATE SECTOR COMPETITIVENESS:**
 - 4.6.1 Business Enabling Environment,
 - 4.6.1.4 Competitiveness; 4.6.2 Private Sector Capacity,
 - 4.6.2.1 Business Management, Marketing and Governance Practices,
 - 4.6.2.2 Sector Supply and Value Chains,
 - 4.6.2.3 Research and Technology Development and Application;
 - 4.6.3 Workforce Development,
 - 4.6.3.2 Partnership Development,
 - 4.6.3.3 Workforce Readiness,
 - 4.6.3.4 Technical/Vocational Training for Employment

The core investment areas of ‘Improved Nutritional Status and Improved Capacity of Vulnerable Households to Meet their Food Needs’ are linked to Program Area 3.1 Health Program Element 3.1.6 Maternal and Child Health and 3.1.9 Nutrition and Program Area 3.3 Social and Economic Services and Protection for Vulnerable Populations, Program Element 3.3.3 Social Assistance. They are cross-linked with Program Area 4.5 Agriculture: Program Element 4.5.1 Agricultural Enabling Environment and Program Element 4.5.2 Agricultural Sector Capacity

USAID Liberia will use its FTF and non-FTF budget allocations to support these core investment areas. As well, USAID Liberia will leverage financial and technical support from other donors to buttress the FTF agenda and activities.

5. FY 2010 RESULTS/ INDICATORS/ TARGETS

5.1. IMPROVED ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE OF THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR

- Increase availability of genetically improved planting materials for at least 20,000 farmers through the continuation of a certified rice seed bank program established by USAID.
- Establish a cost-share program with GOL/MOA to strengthen county-level extension services.
- Double the average number hectares under irrigated rice production.

- Reduce post-harvest losses in rice by at least 15% (from the current level of 25%-30%) in target counties.
- Double the average yield per hectare in rice (i.e. 0.9 T/ha to 1.8-2.5T/ha).
- Double the average % of rice crop available for marketing (i.e. 18% to 36%).
- Increased production, processing and sales of horticultural crops.
- Create a donor forum to support GOL policy reforms that promote free market practices in the agricultural sector.
- Support FTF agribusinesses (e.g. rice mills and oil expellers) by providing electricity generated from renewable technologies funded by the Mission's new energy program.
- Establish within target counties a GOL-managed agricultural data collection, monitoring and evaluation system.
- Work with County Administrations to identify small bridges, small dams, and other infrastructure projects that would enhance agricultural marketing.
- Support the training of public service staff and private sector contractors in the construction and maintenance of rural roads.
- Work with Ministry of Transport to develop policies and practices to reduce corruption, which inhibits and increases the cost of commerce by road.
- In concert with a Development Credit Authority (DCA) loan guarantee program, increase lending by local banks (in target counties) to agribusiness-related SMEs.
- Introduce Information and Communication Technology systems that reduce transaction costs and raise productivity in the public and private sectors.
- Expand access and quality of business development services to agribusiness SMEs.
- Assist the MOA with policy reforms in the rice sector.

5.2. IMPROVED CAPACITY OF VULNERABLE HOUSEHOLDS TO MEET THEIR FOOD NEEDS

- Increase % of smallholder households with access to cash savings and/or credit

(through community associations or formal financial institutions).

- Increase % of households that have adopted at least three FaaB (Farming as a Business) practices.
- Increase % of smallholders diversifying crops cultivated.
- Increase % of women participating in farmer training groups.
- Increase % of smallholders trained in post-harvest handling and pest management practices.
- Increase % of small holders trained in food preservation techniques and practices.
- Increase the number of community infrastructures rehabilitated (roads and bridges, water and sanitation facilities, clinics, schools, market, lowlands, etc).
- Increase the number of smallholders linked to market linkages.

5.3. IMPROVED NUTRITIONAL STATUS

- Increase % of children age 0-5 months who were exclusively breastfed during the last 24 hours.
- Increase % of local civil society organizations with strengthened capacity to implement sustainable interventions in their communities.
- Increase the number of households observed carrying out four or more ENA (Essential Nutrition Actions) actions at time of visit.
- Increase the number of people in target areas with access to improved drinking water supply as a result of USG assistance.
- Increase the number of people in target areas with access to improved sanitation facilities as a result of USG assistance.

6. KEY ISSUES AND ANALYTICAL ACTIVITIES LOOKING TOWARD FY 2011

6.1. KEY ISSUES

- Women's participation in and benefits from economic development activities is less than their role and contribution to such activities warrants.
- Liberia's poor infrastructure is a major impediment to agricultural development. The value of infrastructure to be repaired and built far exceeds current donor commitments.
- The global financial crisis has had a major impact on Liberia's foreign exchange earnings due to the decline of export commodities such as rubber, iron ore and timber. Liberia's ability to meet CAADP's requirement of 10% of the national budget to be devoted to agriculture is questionable.
- Despite increases in foreign assistance in the agriculture sector, donor coordination remains weak.
- The impact of Liberia's land tenure systems on agriculture and food security is not well-understood.
- Mechanization or draft power in Liberian agriculture is rarely used and is one factor constraining agriculture production and contributing to agriculture as a laborious and unattractive activity.
- MOA's extension services are non-existent for most farmers. Non-government organizations are providing technical assistance that the GOL and private sector cannot supply.
- The availability of improved, disease-free planting materials is a widespread problem affecting not only small holders but also larger commercially-oriented farmers.
- The GOL's current rice policy, which meets needs of urban consumers, is a disincentive to local rice production.
- Nutritional status is linked to the interrelated factors of prevalence of

poverty in the country, the low productivity of the agriculture sector, and limited financial and physical access to health services, thus requiring a comprehensive approach which has been lacking.

- Data on the content of carbon and other greenhouse gasses in agricultural soils and methodologies for increasing soil productivity are inadequate. This constrains understanding of the situation as well as effective planning to prepare for and address related challenges.
- GOL capacity to adapt agricultural systems to changing climate patterns is extremely limited.

6.2. DATA AND ANALYSES

Liberia shares in a perennial sub-Saharan Africa problem: the lack and low dissemination of high-quality data. This is exacerbated in Liberia by the virtual collapse of institutions during the civil conflict including the statistical services. However, there is progress in providing reliable data and analyses for planning, policy, and decision-making purposes.

Gender: Two recent documents provide high-quality data and analysis of the status of women in Liberia. USAID's 2009 Gender Assessment in Liberia informs USAID strategies to ensure the integration of women's and girls' needs into USAID plans, programs, and projects. The assessment seeks to build an understanding of how to improve results of post-conflict interventions through better understanding of gender-related roles, responsibilities, and relations. The IFAD/WB/FAO 2007 Comprehensive Assessment of the Agriculture Sector in Liberia provides results of the cross-cutting concern: a gender assessment of the agriculture sector. Focusing on women, the assessment reviews gender issues in Liberia's agriculture and rural sector and examines how to improve women's participation and contribution to rural development.

Baseline studies of women and men's role and contribution to specific value chains, the variations among women and men's role and contribution by geographic region, and the

impact of different land tenure arrangements on women and men's role and contribution have yet to be carried-out. In collaboration with the Ministry of Gender and Development and the MOA, USAID expects to commission these analytical baselines in FY 2010.

Completion of these analytical pieces will increase USAID understanding of how to better engage women in rural economic growth and, specifically, of how to increase women's participation in FTF Implementation Plan interventions. The application of this understanding in USAID's programming and specifically in the GHFS Implementation Plan will result in increasing women's engagement in rural economic growth.

Poverty: The Liberian Institute of Statistics and Geo-spatial Information Services (LISGIS) is supported by multiple donors including USAID. The PRS brings together data and analysis on poverty, based primarily on LISGIS data reported in the Participatory Poverty Assessment 2008, the Core Welfare Indicators Questionnaire Survey 2007, and Liberia's Demographic and Health Survey 2007. Available data provide initial estimates of the dimensions of poverty in Liberia in 2007. With USAID and other donor assistance, LISGIS completed the 2008 Population and Housing Census, the first national census since 1984. This will further support generation of reliable poverty-focused data and analysis.

Malnutrition: On a national level, through both surveys and assessments, there is a significant amount of good quality data, available on malnutrition and the food security situation in Liberia. Most significantly, GOL along with various UN agencies (FAO, WFP, United Nations Military (UNMIL), UNICEF and World Health Organization (WHO)) have conducted two Food Security Surveys, in 2006 and 2008. There are plans to update these surveys annually, which will provide malnutrition and food security data.

In preparation for the submission of new food aid proposals, USAID funded the Food and Nutrition Technical Assistance project to

conduct the Liberia Food Security Country Framework in 2009 which is an extensive document compiling much of the existing information.

Some analysis has been done on the impact of agriculture projects on nutritional status and on best practices in integrating agriculture and nutrition in project design, but not specifically in Liberia. Further analysis is appropriate.

Land Tenure Systems: Under current and planned USAID Liberia programs, support for land tenure and property rights concerns and challenges will be provided in order to reduce the threat of a return to violent conflict and to help encourage investment in land and natural resources. The enabling environment for domestic and foreign investment can be greatly improved by addressing land tenure. With clearer access to and ownership of land and resources, farmers are more likely to make agricultural investments that lead to higher incomes and increased food security. Under the existing Land Rights and Community Forestry Program (LRCFP), important lessons are available on engaging rural farming communities in improved land management, enhanced local governance capacity and more effective land and resource conflict mitigation. The efforts of this program are also informing national-level dialogue through the work of the newly created Land Commission and will influence decision-making on how to best address these challenges across Liberia.

A new Rule of Law Program will work with the Judicial System and local courts in rural farming counties to help resolve and clear current land cases off the court dockets. This effort will demonstrate to farmers and other rural entrepreneurs that they can invest in their land with better assurance that their land ownership and access rights will be respected. USAID's investments in the land sector will also complement a proposed new Threshold Program with the Millennium Challenge Corporation, which will seek to increase the quality of land administration and land records management in the country with the aim of

further increasing the confidence and trust in the security of land and land-based resource investments.

Climate Change and Natural Resources Management: Data in these categories are particularly weak. Land cover baselines are being re-established by the Forest Development Authority (FDA) allowing for on-going change detection and related environmental monitoring. The 2008 census was just released by LISGIS, which can show potential pressures levied on environmental resources when plotted on maps. Other Liberian partner agencies such as Conservation International (CI) are conducting spatial assessments of key land resources and associated changes. The Environmental Threats and Opportunities Assessment of 2008 (ETOA) data collection process involved documenting key findings specific to environmental threats and opportunities in protected areas. Through field trips, Global Positioning System (GPS) coordinate data were combined with high resolution photos. The coordinate data, along with attribute information describing the environmental threat/opportunity, and the photo images can be integrated with other environmental data such as those produced by the FDA or CI to validate events identified through direct observation. This process can explain certain environmental changes. The Bureau of National Fisheries (BNF) Director reports that fisheries catch data collected by the BNF does not have national coverage and the data is often inaccurate and cannot be analyzed and interpreted into useful management tools."

USAID and the US Forest Service ways are discussing ways to further examine the issue of climate change data quality and availability in order to inventory useable data and identify data needs, including data on greenhouse gases (carbon and others) stored in agricultural soils. The results of this assessment would be useful for both GOL and USAID. The analyses would include an assessment of current carbon/greenhouse gas emissions and sources, as well as sinks.

Growth and Trade Environment:

USAID/Liberia will undertake a set of key assessments and analyses in early 2010, which will contribute to fine-tuning program design and the knowledge base as the FTF is developed. In-depth analyses of the agribusiness/trade enabling environment will be commissioned to investigate the various constraints to starting and running a profitable agribusiness and to examine the overall constraints to trade. The AgCLIR (Agricultural Climate Legal & Institution Reform) diagnostic, successfully implemented in other West African countries, will be used to accomplish these analyses. The AgCLIR diagnostic focuses on the systemic limitations that inhibit productivity improvement and limit profitability and on the overall constraints to trade, such as export delays, input monopolies, overregulation, inappropriate taxation.

Results of these assessments and analyses, in particular the AgCLIR diagnostic, will be shared with GOL, particularly MOA and Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MOCI), and other stakeholders through various media including a planned GOL/ Stakeholder Workshop. Such knowledge, applied in practice, will contribute to increasing agricultural productivity and improving nutrition, linking small farmers to markets, encouraging private sector growth, and increasing agricultural trade.

Additional Content – Focused Areas: In addition to analytical work identified above, there are a range of studies that would contribute significantly to, and provide critical information for the Implementation Plan. USAID will work collaboratively with GOL, local, and possibly regional, institutions of higher education, to determine the way forward in implementing these studies overtime. Results will be disseminated through a variety of media such as a GOL-led seminar series. Potential areas include:

- Analysis of elements of a successful decentralized, participatory, pluralistic (public/private/civil society), accountable agricultural extension system for application to pilot counties in Liberia.

- Review and assessment of secondary, certificate, and diploma-level agricultural education in Liberia.
- Assessment of the role, feasibility, and requirements of intermediate agricultural mechanization in Liberia's small-scale commercial agriculture.
- Baseline: Farmer practices/technologies in selected value chains. Identifies farmer current practices and use of technologies in selected value chains. (Focus on upland/lowland rice, cassava, selected tree crops, selected vegetables.) Analyzes what farmers currently do, with what, in the value chain.
- Baseline: Inventory of recommended improved practices/ technologies currently available for application to selected value chains (focus on upland/lowland rice, cassava, selected tree crops, selected vegetables). A written description of improved practices/ technologies recommended for selected value chains.
- Baseline: Gap analysis in selected value chains: Comparison between farmer and improved practices/technologies and actionable recommendations for decreasing gaps between the two.
- Baseline: Farmer attitudes and perceptions related to irrigated, swamp-rice cultivation: identification, building on the positive, addressing the negative.
- Baseline: Youth attitudes and perceptions related to agricultural livelihoods: identification, building on the positive, addressing the negative.
- Best Practice Studies in Post-Conflict and/or Regional Countries related to agricultural market information systems; donor coordination; M&E systems, including impact evaluations; and establishing and strengthening producer/marketing groups and associations.

7. PARTNERSHIP PLAN

7.1. USG INTERAGENCY CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

Currently, USAID, the Department of Justice, Department of Defense, US Forest Service (USFS), Centers for Disease Control (CDC), and the US Peace Corps have representatives implementing active programs in Liberia.

Over the past two years, the USDA, through the Food for Progress program, has provided \$13 million in commodities for monetization. The proceeds from commodity sales funded various agricultural programs that have improved the production and marketing of cocoa and rice. USDA also provides training opportunities for Liberian agricultural professionals through the Borlaug Fellows program. During the FY 2009 Food for Peace Program solicitation cycle, USDA and USAID/ Liberia cooperated in the review of submissions. Recently, USDA/Foreign Agriculture Service (FAS) offered to provide, at their expense, short term technical assistance to USAID and MOA. USAID anticipates making greater use of USDA expertise in cooperative development, marketing, and sanitary phytosanitary (SPS) training in upcoming programs. The USDA does not have a presence in Liberia, but the Mission is in frequent contact with the regional office in Lagos, Nigeria.

Before Liberia's conflict, the US Peace Corps had one of its largest programs in Liberia. It is anticipated that by 2011, a full-fledged Peace Corp program will be re-instated in Liberia. The current Response Corp limits volunteers to six-month tours and has focused only on education programs. The Mission continues to advocate for a robust contingent of agricultural volunteers as the time nears for the Peace Corps to scale up its presence.

In September 2009, the GOL submitted a Threshold Program proposal to the MCC. Liberia's proposal for a Millennium Challenge Corporation Threshold program targets the Heritage Foundation's index of trade freedom.

Liberia scored 53.8 out of 100 in 2009 while compact-eligible countries must meet or exceed a score of 68. Proposed threshold activities will complement and coordinate with ongoing GOL trade reforms aimed at increasing trade freedom. This low cost, high impact program will focus on implementing reductions in tariff rates and removing unnecessary non-tariff measures. If this proposal is funded, the project would not likely come online until after the FY10 FTF Implementation Plan. Nonetheless, it would be a valuable addition toward making progress in LASIP's goal for improved trade and investment.

The US Embassy Country Team serves as the primary focal point for USG coordination. As part of FTF, Post has recently developed a whole of government diplomatic strategy. To ensure coordination of diplomatic and development efforts, Post has created the FTF Development Group, which will have monthly meetings and include representatives the Embassy, USAID, the Peace Corps; and the Office of Security Cooperation (AFRICOM).

While food security is a long-standing priority for the Mission, regular coordination will ensure more creative and effective use of existing resources. The FTF Development Group will explore how existing State, Peace Corps and military programs and skill sets can be used to amplify the FTF's development goals. The group will design strategies for media and commercial outreach, ensure public diplomacy programs support food security goals, and coordinate among US agencies serving in Liberia.

During the civil war, Liberians fled to the relative safety of urban areas, where agricultural skills enervated and an entire generation became accustomed to city life and imported food. While the aim is not necessarily to return urbanites to rural living, the Development Group aims to create positive attitudes toward agriculture as a business and as a respected livelihood through a rigorous communications strategy. The Group agrees that a comprehensive media and public outreach campaign is an important means by which existing diplomatic resources can be deployed

to buttress the FTF development agenda, which is itself a reflection of the GOL's CAADP and LASIP.

The USG Mission in Liberia must reinforce the value of agriculture to a developing economy. Second, to overcome the defeatist conviction that roads are too derelict and agricultural skills too long forgotten, we must draw media and public attention to every infrastructure project, technical assistance program or micro credit scheme, and explain plainly and carefully how each project draws Liberia one step closer to a revitalized agriculture sector. We will also highlight "success stories," particularly those that feature Liberians who have overcome obstacles to profit from agricultural endeavors as well as those endeavors that demonstrate successful public-private partnerships. For example, USAID supports Liberia's rice seed bank program which engages the MOA, CARL, and the private sector in producing high-quality seed rice to supply the growing market for certified seed. Finally, efforts to influence urban citizens' preference for imported rice through a "Made in Liberia" campaign will be conducted, building on improvements made in rice varieties and marketing strategies introduced through USAID agriculture value-chain projects.

The Mission will reinforce these messages through the Ambassador's speeches, editorials in local newspapers, and ribbon-cutting events. The Development Group will create a food security fact sheet that outlines Embassy-wide diplomatic and development efforts and provides talking points on the value of agricultural revitalization for Liberia's economic growth and political stability. Mission personnel will be encouraged to use these talking points in conversations with varied public and private sector contacts. In addition, Post will introduce food security themes into existing public diplomacy programs, such as speakers' programs at American Corners, the International Visitors' Leadership Program, and the Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship Program.

The Ambassador will introduce these themes during an upcoming event to inaugurate a USAID-funded, WFP School Feeding program.

Thanks to an unexpected bumper rice crop this year, USAID will support WFP activities to purchase rice from Liberian farmers and distribute it to schools throughout the country. This \$3.5 million project is made possible due to the FY09 (carryover) supplemental issued by Congress for Global Financial Crisis mitigation.

The ribbon-cutting, to be held in March 2010, offers an opportunity to communicate multiple messages we wish to share with the Liberian public: donors' coordinated support for GOL agriculture initiatives, the potential for domestic rice production, and the link between proper nutrition and children's physical and intellectual development.

Despite Liberia's agrarian roots, few school children or teenagers entering the work force have experience with agriculture or livestock cultivation, and fewer still perceive farming as a viable profession. Through the 1980s, all public schools required students to take a vocational class in farming. Students spent one afternoon per week cultivating a school-owned vegetable garden, learning the basic principles of agriculture and sharing equally the produce they cultivated. Few schools still offer this practical curriculum, although Post proposes other small-scale mechanisms on this model that would reintroduce youth to farming.

Liberia's 24 Peace Corps Volunteers (PCVs) work primarily in the education sector as teachers at the Rural Teacher Training Institutes (RTTI), advocates of Parent Teacher Associations in local schools, or trainers of public health professionals. Parent Teachers Associations (PTA) organizers assist PTAs in creating vegetable gardens at the local schools to enhance school lunch programs and ensure the effective delivery of food to children.

Nutrition instructors teach health care professionals the importance and intricacies of nutrition. Teacher-trainers support the efforts of the RTTIs to grow their own food, and plan to incorporate agriculture into the teacher training curriculum, with the hope that teachers will impart useful knowledge to students once they return to classrooms throughout the country. Post will also explore the possibility of reviving 4-H in Liberia. The Ministry of Youth

and Sports, which has a modest national volunteer service program, may be a viable partner in this effort, and we will encourage them to pursue 4-H's international youth exchange program. Finally, the Public Affairs Section will use its educational advisory services to encourage more young people to pursue careers in sustainable agriculture.

The Ambassador sponsors a Self-Help Fund, including other small grants. Of 13 self-help projects in 2010, seven are related to agriculture or food security. Post will launch an "adopt a self-help project" campaign to ensure that each funded organization or community is paired with an Embassy officer who provides guidance and oversight during the year-long project, and assures continued sustainability and success in 2011 and beyond. For example, one project supports 50 women who are starting a poultry farm. The officer who supports this project might help the women identify appropriate markets to sell their goods, design a cost-effective mechanism for getting goods to market, and help them time the chickens' lifecycle to coincide with seasonal demand.

Where Embassy human resources alone are insufficient, other small grant programs may enable Post to support grassroots organizations that would complement USAID's endeavors.

For example, Post's food security Development Committee will develop a grant request to the Office of Global Women's Issues in response to its request for proposals. We plan to identify a worthy local organization that could use funds to encourage women's economic empowerment through agriculture.

The military also plays an important role in food security efforts. Both AFRICOM and the United National Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) recognize that food security programs for soldiers and ex-combatants advance military reform, improve soldiers' morale, and reinforce peacekeeping efforts. At Camp Ware near Monrovia, US military and contractors, who serve as mentors to military personnel, are helping the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) clear land and plant crops. USAID provides technical training, seeds and tools. If the project is

successful, the Office of Security Cooperation may provide similar resources to other AFL military bases.

UNMIL's Bangladesh unit trains ex-combatants as farmers in Bong County, and the farmers grow enough rice and vegetables for their families. However, the Bangladeshi battalion does not have any trained farmers or agronomists, so their efforts have modest results. The new US military observer at UNMIL will work with the UN to scale and professionalize this operation, so it can be adopted successfully as a viable profession for ex-combatants in other counties. USAID has also provided this group with technical training and tools to increase their irrigated rice and vegetables production.

7.2. CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION WITH GOVERNMENT

USAID maintains a superb relationship with the Ministry of Agriculture. The new Minister of Agriculture, Dr. Florence Chenoweth, has made it a top priority to have periodic donor coordination meetings. The Agricultural Coordination Committee (ACC) serves the role as a forum for coordination and discussion primarily among NGOs and the GOL. In FY 2010, USAID will work closely with the MOA to increase their capacity to both lead and manage donor coordination and ACC meetings and events.

Taking the 'whole government approach' within the Liberian context, the Liberia Reconstruction Development Committee (LRDC) brings together representatives from all GOL ministries and donors to discuss progress and impediments toward the achievement of Poverty Reduction Strategy goals. The LRDC structure is composed of four working committees (WC) and formed around the four pillars of Liberia's reconstruction and development strategy. The four LRDC WCs are the Security Committee, Economic Revitalization, Governance and Rule of Law, and Infrastructure and Basic Services. To ensure

government leadership, each WC is chaired by a GOL Minister in the respective pillar:

- Security (Chair: Defense Minister)
- Economic Revitalization (Chair: Finance Minister)
- Governance and the Rule of Law (Chair: Planning Minister)
- Infrastructure & Basic Services (Chair: Public Works Minister)

USAID and the Economic Office of the US Embassy usually attend the working group meetings. The Ambassador attends the LRSC Steering Committee meeting which is chaired by President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf. The LRDC and the associated working groups will serve as additional coordination platforms for the implementation of the FTF.

7.3. MULTILATERAL AND BILATERAL DONOR CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

Donor support for agricultural development in Liberia is substantial, as evidenced by the following:

World Bank: During the 2008 food crisis, the World Bank provided \$10 million to support food assistance, cash for work, and agricultural productivity programs. The World Bank has also committed \$37 million for the Agriculture and Infrastructure Development Project (AIDP). The project goal is to support the Government of Liberia's efforts in reestablishing basic infrastructure and reviving agricultural activities. USAID Liberia is working with the World Bank to support a certified rice seed development program under AIDP.

In addition to financing numerous infrastructure activities, the World Bank is administering the Liberia Reconstruction Trust Fund, a multi-donor fund focused on major infrastructure projects. To date, the Fund has received approximately US\$21 million, including US\$3 million from the World Bank, with an additional \$100 million of commitments by donors.

African Development Bank: The AfDB has committed \$17 million for a program that aims to improve the livelihoods and living conditions of rural communities through restoration and development of agricultural production. The program will support rural communities, especially in under-served counties such as: Grand Cape Mount, Grand Bassa, Rural Montserrado, Grand Gedeh, River Gee, Grand Kru and Maryland.

Italian Global Food Trust Fund: The Italian government provided \$1.5 million from the Global Trust Fund for Food Security and Food Safety during last year's food crisis. The project will be implemented in Nimba, Maryland, and Grand Kru counties. It will target smallholder farmers and processors and will also support county-level associations and Ministry of Agriculture extension staff in the concerned counties.

People's Republic of China: The PRC provides agricultural technical assistance in hybrid rice cultivation at Cuttington University, Liberia's largest private school of higher education, and the Booker T. Washington vocational education institute. The PRC is also building an agricultural technology and training facility at the Central for Agricultural Research Institute (CARI).

International Fund for Agriculture: IFAD contributed \$10 million of the \$27 million agricultural development program jointly administered with the African Development Bank.

Donor coordination in Liberia's agricultural sector has been, until recently, ad hoc. With the advent of the CAADP, the MOA has resolved to formalize coordination through a Donors' Agriculture Sector Working Group. USAID has served as the convener of the Working Group and leads efforts to use this body as an effective forum to engage the MOA on critical policy and investment decisions.

7.4. CIVIL SOCIETY AND PRIVATE SECTOR CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

The Liberia Chamber of Commerce, Liberia Business Association, Firestone, Buchanan Renewables, Ecobank, NBDI bank, Accelor Mittal, and numerous community-level farmer associations are among the stakeholders extensively consulted during the formulation of this plan. Through many of the Mission's current economic growth activities, such as the Sustainable Tree Crop Program (STCP), there are established partnerships with Liberian and International businesses. For example, three years ago USAID established a Global Development Alliance (GDA) with Firestone to expand support for smallholder rubber farmers, and is discussion with Buchanan Renewables on a Global Climate Change mitigation program. USAID, with Accelor Mittal, worked toward establishing Liberia's first Corporate Responsibility Council. The GHSL activities are linked to the private sector for market access and expertise. Most producer associations in Liberia are in the tree crop sector, i.e. rubber, cocoa, and oil palm. As part of the FY 2010 plan, USAID will facilitate the development of producer associations in rice and horticulture, and strengthen links between producers, and agro processors.

USAID will leverage capital from the Liberian banking sector to further the aims of the FTF. Due to a lack of emphasis on credit/risk analysis, banks became unduly risk averse to lending to Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (SMEs), particularly to those in the agricultural sector with new and innovative techniques. Unfortunately, the current Global Financial Crisis is exacerbating matters for the already vulnerable Liberian banking sector. To address these market imperfections, USAID/Liberia plans to implement Development Credit Authority loan portfolio guarantees with Ecobank and International Bank to spur on lending to SMEs with a focus on those linked to the agricultural value chain (farmers, input suppliers, processors, packers, and exporters etc.). The guarantees will help collateral-deficient SMEs access needed financing as well

as enable the guaranteed party, the banks, to obtain a better understanding of the true risks and rewards in this sector.

Civil Society plays an integral role in the FTF design and implementation. The development programs are based upon several consultations by USAID and the GOL through the PRS, CDA and CAADP processes.

USAID/Liberia, through the Democracy and Governance Team, will launch a new activity in FY 2010 to strengthen civil society organizations. This new program seeks to support capacity building as needed for civil society organizations that facilitate the achievement of results in USAID/Liberia's key technical sectors of democracy and governance, health, education, economic growth and natural resource management. Details of the needs in each sector are described below. Additionally, USAID/Liberia intends to implement a program of support to the media in Liberia to increase investigative journalism capacity, and broaden the reach of news and information through radio, print and other innovative methods. At the end of this five year program the intended results include the following.

- Organizational capacity of civil society organizations in the seven target counties, Bong, Nimba, Lofa, Grand Bassa, Montserrado, River Gee, and Grand Gedeh, has been measurably increased resulting in increased input in public policy.
- Through national surveys, fewer citizens feel "excluded" from political processes and decision making that affects their lives (as measured by independent surveys not part of this program).
- All Liberians in seven targeted focus counties have access to better quality daily news and information.
- Liberian media has the capacity to conduct sound, analytic, corroborated investigative stories on corruption, government policy making and performance.

FTF activities will be linked to this civil society program

8. FY 2010 CAPACITY-BUILDING PLAN

The Mission's approach to capacity building is to partner with other development partners and leverage technical and financial resources from the private sector to rebuild Liberia's human resources.

USAID/Liberia has been at the forefront of establishing a partnership with the People's Republic of China in their efforts for Liberian agricultural development. China's investment in infrastructure, mining, and agriculture in Liberia is estimated at approximately \$20 million per year. Agricultural training has been jointly identified as an area of cooperation for USAID and the PRC. The Mission, in conjunction with the MOA, is working to bring the PRC on board as cooperating sponsor to Liberia's CAADP compact.

Global Development Alliances (GDA) provides opportunities to involve the private sector in creative and beneficial ways to achieve development results and to build local capacity through on-the-job training, mentoring, and coaching. USAID Liberia has an established GDA with the Firestone rubber company among other large agricultural companies. In FY 2010, the Mission intends to expand its alliances with international companies like Wal-Mart and Cisco Systems.

Under the linked TASMOA program, USAID has completed a range of capacity development assessments for MOA and for other institutions. For MOA these include assessments of the Departments of Technical Services, Administration, Planning and Development, Regional Development Research and Extension, Financial Management, and Human Resources Management. Assessments of the Cooperative Development Agency, CARI, and Non-Governmental Organizations have also been carried out.

Within the overarching context of national development goals and IP core investment areas, USAID capacity building focuses on five

interrelated groups of men and women: Staff of supporting institutions, primarily MOA, MOCI and MOHSW; rural and farm households; small and medium enterprise (SME) entrepreneurs; post-secondary agriculture and engineering students and faculty; and actors in the local private sector.

The Mission will use various mechanisms to provide tailored capacity development programs for MOA, MOCI, MOHSW and other supporting institutions' staff. USAID will work in close collaboration with Ministries to further specify the areas for capacity-development intervention. Training will likely be delivered in the following areas:

- Processes and procedures of monitoring and evaluation;
- data collection, processing, and reporting;
- institutional decentralization;
- extension agent role and responsibility;
- farmer participatory approaches such as farmer field school, farmer to farmer extension approaches, and learning circles;
- increasing women's participation in value chain activities, in production, processing, and SMEs;
- trade policy reforms and administration; and,
- adaptive nutrition and health research.

The Mission will also provide capacity-development opportunities for farmers and SME entrepreneurs through its newly established Farmer-to-Farmer program, for example, building farmers' technical capacity to produce and process lowland rice and building farmers' capacity to organize and manage producer groups and associations. The capacity of SME entrepreneurs to build and successfully manage their businesses will be emphasized.

In FY 2010, USAID's Excellence in Higher Education for Liberian Development program will begin. Capacity development for agricultural and engineering students and faculty at Cuttington University and University of Liberia will be accomplished under this program. Other private sector capacity development activities such as strengthening

agricultural input/supply systems are to be considered.

USAID will apply a range of capacity-building tools, potentially including:

- Short and long-term classroom and/or field-based local, national, and regional training;
- farmer field schools;
- local, national, and regional exposure visits;
- on-the-job training;
- coaching and mentoring;
- internships;
- job shadowing;
- seminar series; and
- research assistantships.

9. MANAGEMENT PLAN

9.1. WHOLE OF GOVERNMENT COORDINATION STRUCTURE

Currently, USAID, the Department of Justice, Department of Defense, US Forest Service (USDA), Centers for Disease Control (CDC), and the US Peace Corps have representatives implementing active programs in Liberia. The US Embassy Country Team serves as the primary focal point for USG coordination.

In addition to the coordination with USDA, MCC and Peace Corps, the USAID Economic Growth (EG) team will continue to foster cooperation with the DOD. In 2009, the DOD and the Armed Forces of Liberia, led by engineers under LCIP, successfully installed a bridge in one of the most rural areas of Liberia. The work served as joint training exercise and has become a model for civilian-military cooperation in the country.

9.2. REVIEW AND EVALUATION SCHEDULE

USAID is the largest donor in the agricultural sector and is committed to cooperation with other development partners to execute LASIP. At the behest of the Minister of Agriculture, USAID and FAO will form the nucleus of a

donors' forum that will serve to improve coordination and synergies. This forum can also serve to review progress on LASIP activities and to recommend measures to overcome bottlenecks, improve performance, and replicate valuable lessons learned. As a component of the CAADP process in Liberia, an innovative Strategic Analysis and Knowledge Support System (SAKSS) will be established. Among the roles SAKSS is to perform is that of monitoring and evaluation of the agriculture/food security aspects of national strategies. USAID will engage with SAKSS to support its development and implementation.

USAID will seek synergies with the FSNS management and M&E systems. Opportunities for collaboration and mutual support are significant. A Food Security and Nutrition Technical Committee (chaired by the MOA) have been established under the FSNS to promote inter-sectoral coordination. Also under the FSNS, an autonomous Secretariat housed by the MOA is tasked with food security and nutrition monitoring. Their focus is on food availability, although they consider food utilization and context as well. Data sources include line ministries' M&E systems; a household surveillance system; and a market surveillance system. Needs for technical assistance to put in place the skills, mechanisms, and material resources necessary for the Technical Committee and its Secretariat to function effectively and to enable the food security and nutrition monitoring activities to be carried-out will be examined. In addition, USAID will participate in a Food Security and Nutrition Stakeholders' Forum which has consultative purposes only and meets once a year to assess progress on the implementation of the national FSNS.

In FY 2009, the Mission's capacity to provide greater supervision and monitoring of activities was enhanced by the addition of two new members of staff, i.e. Agricultural/Enterprise Development Advisor and Food for Peace Officer.

9.3. STAFFING REQUIREMENTS

The rapid growth and size of the Mission's Economic Growth Team's portfolio requires additional staff to manage the workload. In FY 2010, the EG Team will add on three new members of staff: a US Personal Services Contractor (USPSC) Food for Peace Officer, USPSC Agricultural/Enterprise Development Advisor and a Development Leadership Initiative (DLI) direct hire. The Foreign Service National (FSN) Agricultural Development Specialist will remain employed by USAID, but will be deployed to the Ministry of Agriculture. The Mission will also hire a firm to provide additional program monitoring and evaluation support. USAID/Liberia currently has severe space constraints in the New Embassy Compound (NEC). The Mission's Contract and Program Offices are also expected to grow in the number of staff. Therefore, support for the Implementation Plan will be sufficient assuming space becomes available.

The Staffing/Management Structure of the new team will be divided into four sub-groups: Agriculture and Food Security; Enabling Environment for Private Sector Development; Natural Resource Management and Global Climate Change; and, Monitoring & Evaluation and Program Analysis.

9.4. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

USAID/Liberia will supplement the efforts of technical and program offices in monitoring and evaluation through contracting the design and implementation of a comprehensive performance monitoring system. The system will include measurement, planning, monitoring and evaluation, and reporting systems for achievement of objectives in the Operational Plan (OP), Performance Plan and Report (PPR), Performance Management Plan (PMP), and activities under FTF. The systems will build upon existing strategic structures, program activities, and new initiatives. The revised monitoring and evaluation system will enable

USAID/Liberia to fulfill its performance monitoring, evaluation, reporting, and dissemination requirements as mandated in the Automated Directives System (ADS) and other

Agency guidance. M&E efforts will use the latest technological information gathering tools and will be performing certain Data Quality Assessments (DQAs) annually.