

## ANNEX 7

## LPMC 2006 cocoa price circular

## THE LIBERIAN PRODUCE MARKETING CORPORATION

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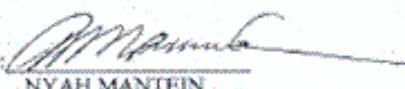

COCOA PRICE CIRCULAR

THE MANAGEMENT OF THE LIBERIAN PRODUCE MARKETING CORPORATION (LPMC) IS PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE THE OFFICIAL MINIMUM PRICES OF THE RESPECTIVE GRADES OF COCOA BEANS EFFECTIVE MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2006 AS FOLLOWS:

<u>PRODUCE GRADE</u>	USS/KILOGRAM <u>FARMGATE</u>	USS/KILOGRAM <u>MONROVIA</u>
FAQ	0.65	0.80
SUB-GRADE	0.32	0.43

NOTE THAT:

1. BUYING COMMISSION OF 10% APPLIED TO THE NET FARMGATE VALUE FOR LICENSED PRIVATE BUYING AGENTS AND COOPERATIVES IS INCLUDED IN THE PRICE FOR MONROVIA.
2. ALL INSTITUTIONS OR INDIVIDUALS ENGAGED IN THE BUYING AND SELLING OF COCOA WITHIN THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA ARE ADVISED TO DISPLAY A COPY OF THIS PRICE CIRCULAR AS WELL AS THE STANDARD BASIC AGREEMENT (SBA) FOR LOCAL BUYERS AT ALL BUYING AND STORAGE SITES. THIS WILL ENSURE TRANSPARANCY AND LEGITIMACY OF THE OPERATIONS OF THE INSTITUTIONS OR INDIVIDUALS CONCERNED.
3. MONROVIA PRICES QUOTED ABOVE INCLUDE INLAND FREIGHTS AND DEDUCTIONS BASED ON LPMC'S APPROVED GRADING CHART.
4. ALL ABOVE PRICES ARE BASED ON PREVAILING WORLD MARKET PRICES OBTAINABLE FOR LIBERIAN COCOA BEANS AND ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGES ACCORDINGLY.

SIGNED:   
NYAH MANTEIN  
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APPROVED:   
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## **V. INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITIES AND RENEWAL STRATEGIES FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN LIBERIA**

**By**

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**Liberia 2007**



## ACRONYMS

ACDB	Agricultural Cooperative Development Bank
AIDS	Acquired immune deficiency syndrome
BCADP	Bong County Agricultural Development Project
BOB	Bureau of the Budget
BWI	Booker Washington Institute
CAC	County Agricultural Coordinator
CARI	Central Agricultural Research Institute
CBO	Community-based Organization
CDA	Cooperative Development Authority
CDT	County Development Team
CGIAR	Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
CIPs	County information packs
CST	County Support Team
CD	Capacity development
CFA	Core functional analysis
CMP	Change management programme
DDC	District Development Committee
DEC	Decadal computations of crop water requirements, irrigation water requirements, rainfall, and effective rainfall.
DRDE	Department of Regional Development and Extension (in MOA)
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN
FARA	Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa
FDA	Forestry Development Authority
FFS	Farmer field schools
FOD	Farmer organization development
FY	Financial year
GDP	Gross domestic product
GOL	Government of Liberia
GRG	Governance Reform Commission
GTZ	German Technical Cooperation
HIV	Human immunodeficiency virus
ICT	Information and communication technology
IITA	International Institute of Tropical Agriculture
i PRS	Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy
<i>Kuu Liberian</i>	Local cooperative labour groups involved in planting, plantation rehabilitation, house construction, savings clubs or trading associations
LCADP	Lofa County Agricultural Development Project
LCCC	Liberia Cocoa and Coffee Corporation
LD&HS	Liberian Demographic and Health Survey
LEC	Liberia Electricity Corporation
LIPA	Liberian Institute for Public Administration
LOD	Local organization development
LPMC	Liberia Produce Marketing Corporation
LRDA	Liberia Rubber Development Authority
LRDU	Liberia Rubber Development Unit
LWSC	Liberia Water and Sewer Corporation

MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MIA	Ministry of Internal Affairs
MPEA	Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs
MOA	Ministry of Agriculture
MOF	Ministry of Finance
MOH	Ministry of Health
NARDA	New African Agricultural Research and Development Agency
NEPAD	New Programme for African Development
NIMAC	National Information Management Centre
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NI	Neuchatel Initiative
NIC	National Investment Commission
NCRDP	Nimba County Rural Development Project
NPC	National Palm Corporation
NSA	Non-state actor
OD	Organization development
PDA	Participatory development approaches
PEA	Participatory extension approaches
PJB	Provisional Joint Board for Parastatals
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PSIP	Public Sector Investment Programme
Ramsar Sites	International union for the conservation of nature designated protected sites according to the Ramsar convention
RPO	Rural Producer Organization
SME	Small and medium-sized enterprises
SPI	Statement of Policy Intent
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
SWOT	Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities & threats
TNA	Training needs assessment
ToT	Transfer of technology
UL	University of Liberia
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VAMs	Vulnerability assessment maps
WARDA	West African Rice Development Association
WB	World Bank

## **V. INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITIES AND RENEWAL STRATEGIES FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN LIBERIA**

### **1. INSTITUTIONAL BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT FOR DEVELOPMENT**

#### **1.1 Current institutional milieu and challenges**

The institutional situation in Liberia is in flux with both public and non-public organizations seeking to shape a viable transition from an environment of overwhelming dependence on emergency relief towards engagement with the challenges of reconstruction and longer-term development. Capacity development of a public sector decimated during the protracted 15-year war is one of the most formidable challenges facing GOL, national stakeholders and donor partners over the coming decade. How effectively GOL and its development partners respond to this challenge will centrally determine outcomes for national economic and social progress in improving livelihoods and employment over coming years and decades.

The Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) is endeavouring to rebuild threshold management and staff capacities while in the shorter-term seeking to be relevant and action-oriented in reclaiming its pre-war role as the lead public sector actor in agricultural and rural development. In effect it is struggling to balance responsiveness to the acute short-term demands and needs of rural communities to emerge from poverty with the clear long-term need to develop enduring capacities in policy, planning, coordination and oversight of implementation of programmes and projects. NGOs also have to respond to the “flux of change”, with those whose remit is primarily for relief and emergency work now needing to re-orient their activities or be replaced by others that are more oriented towards long-term development processes and programmes.

One of the major challenges facing MOA is the need to lead new partnerships with the range of national stakeholders and non-state actors through continual processes of dialogue on national development priorities and subsequent joint planning and programme development at national and county levels. Such pluralistic partnerships are crucial to ensure harmonization of planning and implementation strategies and optimal deployment and utilization of scarce expertise and limited financial resources in support of renewed development of mostly impoverished rural communities.

The array of challenges confronting MOA and partners becomes even more formidable in a national context where the tradition and legacy of Government in Liberia, even under the conditions prevailing in pre-war decades, have been highly centralized in cultures of predominant hierarchy, autocracy and weak participation in development processes by rural communities and wider civil society. Understanding of and insight into the evolution and nature of Liberian Government administration and structures over recent decades, especially at local government level, is therefore essential in the context of considering and proposing institutional development approaches based on decentralization and emancipated participation of rural civil society in local planning and development.

## 1.2. Local government systems and structures

### 1.2.1 Brief recent history and evolution

In 1943, legal provisions structured the country into three political subdivisions, namely Western Province, Central Province and Eastern Province, which were further divided into ten subdivisions. In 1964, Provinces were abolished and the three Provincial areas were transformed into the counties of Lofa, Nimba, Bong and Grand Gedeh, which in addition to the five commonwealth districts brought the total to nine. The title of Provincial Commissioner was changed to County Superintendent, partly reflecting the changed scope of responsibility and control in counties. By the end of 1980 there were 13 counties and, with the creation of two more in 1999, the current total is 15.

The Liberian state is characterized by centralization of power with the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) as the *de facto presidium* at the top of a local government system that is organized and operated in a very hierarchical mode. The structure is composed of both rural and urban semi-autonomous entities that are functionally and financially dependent on central government. The rural entities of local government include counties, statutory districts, administrative county districts, chiefdoms and clans, while urban entities include city corporations, municipalities, cities and townships.

In total, the country has 15 counties, 32 statutory districts, 119 county districts, 215 chiefdoms, 476 clans, 126 cities and 237 townships. Some local government divisions, in particular cities and districts, were established without following the technical procedures that had been laid down, and some counties and districts have not been properly demarcated. Local government institutions are effectively subjugated, and the system does not yet provide for local revenue generation or effective participation in planning or development processes by communities. Elected local leaders have not been functionally and administratively accountable to their constituencies, but rather to Presidential appointees, and by extension to the President.

Under the existing highly centralized structures, local government financial resources and operations are dictated by the budget of MIA. Local government or county inputs into the formulation and execution of county budgets are severely limited, as budget planning takes place at national level. The implications include exclusion of locally determined priorities in programmes/projects and a consequent lack of local community ownership of initiatives or activities. A recent capacity development study recommended the establishment by GOL of a local grant development fund incorporated in a participatory budgetary process to finance local economic development<sup>4</sup>.

### 1.2.2 Decentralization in Liberia

Liberia's traditional system of local government poses some major problems in the context of moving towards a modern, democratic form of governance.

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<sup>4</sup> Liberia Local Government Capacity Assessment Study. (2005) Mitullah, W, Poe, M and L. Haines. UNDP/GRC. Liberia.

- The entire structure is heavily centralized, with most local government positions, such as county superintendents, district and township commissioners, appointed by the President or appointees/representatives of the President.
- The lack of clarity on the functions and administrative roles of, for example, district and township commissioners on the one hand, and county and statutory district superintendents on the other hand, leads to confusion and conflict.
- Local government is not free to raise revenue or generate any resources for its local needs and plans.
- There has been no provision for local community emancipation or empowerment through participation in local planning and development processes.

Democratizing local authorities now requires two critical steps:

- restructuring the state system to give the people greater authority to manage their own affairs at the local level;
- making local authorities and other institutions of local self-governance more representative, participatory, accountable to the local population, and more autonomous from the central government.

A team of consultants working with the Governance Reform Commission (GRC) has recommended a decentralization policy framework. The team stated that:

*“decentralization, in as far as it puts emphasis on community organization and participation at the lowest level, will provide the political and administrative framework and structures to meet the challenges of post war reconstruction and development of the country”.*

The paper further states that decentralization will:

*“provide the rural communities with the autonomy, flexibility and opportunity for popular participation in the process of planning and implementation of development programmes”.*

Box 1 provides the steps and principles that should be upheld during derivation of a decentralization policy framework.

**Box 1. Steps and principles for developing a decentralization policy framework**

The steps include:

- defining the forms of decentralization, basic principles, pillars, systems, institutional roles and responsibilities of actors;
- obtaining consensus and ownership of policy initiatives by stakeholders;
- formulating a GOL decentralization policy framework that is based on the principles of devolution, popular participation, partnership, non-subordination and subsidiarity.

Source: Wagaba Francis X.K. 2005. Developing a Decentralization Policy Framework for the Republic of Liberia: Draft Discussion Paper. Monrovia: Governance Reform Commission

The UNDP facilitates County Support Teams (CSTs) that seek to ensure a coherent and consolidated UN approach to addressing county challenges, provide support to government through the County Superintendents, and build capacity of local government institutions as they assume increased responsibility for security, reconstruction and development. Capacity

development by CSTs is focused on enhancing the skills and performance of local government officials (Superintendents, Mayors, Development Superintendents, project planning staff, county officials, District Commissioners, Chiefs and traditional leaders) and providing training in support of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), notably in HIV/AIDS awareness raising and training.

To assist counties in obtaining the latest available data in areas related to the Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy (iPRS) pillars, the CSTs are putting together County Information Packs (CIPs) to support and strengthen the emerging capacities of local authorities for programme and project planning. The CSTs meet monthly with the County Superintendent and the Assistant Superintendent for Development in all counties to discuss and plan countywide activities with key ministries, NGOs and CBOs.

Currently the focus is on cluster approaches in areas such as human rights, food security, early recovery and the rule of law. The CSTs are seeking to facilitate transition from emergency conditions to recovery and more normative development processes, and as such are providing interim orientation in the transition towards the participatory planning and local level decision-making processes that would eventually characterize decentralization of line ministries and their local service provision functions to county levels.

Problem areas that need to be addressed under forthcoming decentralization processes include the lack of clarity on roles and responsibilities of key actors such as County Superintendents and their assistants appointed by MIA, centralized budgeting and financial administration, poor functional linkages between County Assistant Superintendents for Development and DDCs, and MOA and MOH county-level management and staff still reporting centrally to their head offices in Monrovia.

In early 2007 the GRC, with the support of the UN Capacity Development Fund, embarked on a national process of studies and workshops (ongoing) to shape a new policy and legal framework for decentralization with the ultimate objective of drafting a new Local Governance Act to provide an enabling legal framework for national decentralization policy and accompanying strategic guidelines and measures for implementation across all levels of local government. The initial outputs from this process will be available by mid-2007 and should provide the basis for the legislation needed to bring coherent national policies and enabling measures into effect across all government ministries and departments.

### ***1.2.3 The District Development Committee (DDC) approach***

Various participatory development frameworks are being tested on the ground, with the District Development Committee (DDC) framework being the most elaborate and operational in all counties since 2006. Although the framework is still at an embryonic stage, it has the potential to enhance the engagement of local communities in local economic development, and provide a link to resources within and outside districts.

The DDC approach (Box 2) was first launched in 2004 and relaunched in July 2005 and is now operational in most of the 73 districts. Although the approach is still at a fledgling stage, it has the potential to improve the involvement and engagement of local communities in local economic development (LED) and in turn shape their own development. Furthermore, it provides a link between local communities and various development agents operating at the local, regional and national levels.

**Box 2. District Development Committees (DDC)**

The DDC is a fourteen-member elected institution composed of the District Commissioner/Superintendent (ex-officio), Chairperson, representatives of chiefs, representatives of all women's groups, representatives of youth groups (two persons: one male, one female), representatives of elders (two persons: one male, one female), representatives of CBOs (two persons: one male, one female), and representatives of sectors, namely agriculture, education, health, water and sanitation (four persons: minimum two females). The DDCs are local level development and coordinating mechanisms in the districts. They provide an entry point to local economic development (LED).

Overall, the DDCs will take on planning, coordination and monitoring roles. Specifically, their terms of reference (TORs) include sensitizing and mobilizing communities and using participatory approaches in designing projects, and evaluation and formulation of development strategies in collaboration with NGOs and UN agencies.

At a stakeholders' workshop held to discuss the preliminary findings of the Wagaba study (see Box 1 above), it was suggested that the County Assistant Superintendent for Development be part of the DDC as an ex-officio and a liaison development officer between the county administration and the people. Wagaba listed the DDC framework as one of the first phase activities in the development of devolved local government structures. The MOA County Agricultural Coordinators (CACs) will need to ensure active involvement in these processes at the appropriate local level as key agricultural sector representatives alongside their development partners (NGOs, CBOs, NSAs).

Currently the UNDP Community Based Recovery Programme (2004–2007) is providing support (US\$9.0 million) through DDCs for community participation in planning and programme development for local rehabilitation projects in water and sanitation, education and rural roads and bridges. Chairpersons of DDCs are currently receiving basic orientation and training in participatory approaches to community-level planning and development; the New African Research and Development Agency (NARDA), a local NGO, is providing this initial training for UNDP.

### **1.3 Ministry of Agriculture – functions, structure and capacity development**

#### ***1.3.1 Mandate and mission***

The Commission for Government Reform (CGR) is currently engaged in a process of revising the mandates of all GOL ministries. The MOA's core general areas of responsibility will most probably continue to consist of agriculture, both smallholder and commercial, plantation crops, fisheries on-farm woodlands. In June 2006, GOL produced a Statement of Policy Intent (SPI), which outlines the role of agriculture in Liberian society:

- a generator of employment through facilitating processes of rural resettlement and stabilization (especially through the provision of opportunities/livelihoods for ex-combatants);
- a source of income and prosperity in rural areas;
- an important engine of growth in wider economic development.

Agriculture's contribution to the economy is sufficiently important for its recovery to be crucial to GOL's declared goal of changing from a low-income developing country to a middle-income, medium human development country by 2015.

### 1.3.2 *Interim policy and development strategy*

The SPI defines five main *principles* of MOA policy.

- That the Ministry's policies and measures, while focusing on smallholders and previously neglected areas, should have a wide geographical coverage, in the interests of equity, justice and national cohesion.
- Priority should be given to policies and measures that would have an “immediate” impact on food production, household food security, and local business development. The urgent need to achieve “quick wins” in these areas is increasingly accepted and supported by the donor community.
- Policy and decision-making processes should be participatory and mobilize local knowledge.
- The formulation of policy and strategy should be sensitive to the need to empower women, and to provide incentives and training for young people to pursue careers in agricultural and rural development.
- Governance, including regulatory oversight, should be decentralized.

In *operational* terms, the MOA Planning Directorate articulates the focal goal of the Ministry as contributing to post-conflict recovery and reconstruction through the following specific thrusts:

- resettling displaced farm families;
- providing employment for unemployed and underemployed persons, particularly the war-affected;
- developing Liberia’s rural areas, to reduce poverty and increase food security;
- pursuing agricultural development in a way that is sustainable in terms of managing and conserving the national natural resource base.

### 1.3.3 *MOA structure and staffing*

At the end of the war, MOA emerged with its old structure still largely intact. This structure consisted of four departments, Planning, Technical Services, Administration and Extension. The Central Agricultural Research Institute, CARI, came under Extension. Technical Services was responsible for quarantine, and a number of activities that are somewhat distinct from field agriculture, such as aquaculture, and fuel and tree crops; however, it also held responsibilities for land and water resources, and animal resources. Senior staff in MOA state that there was a significant amount of interdepartmental conflict arising from unclear or overlapping roles/areas of jurisdiction, and the resultant competition for resources.

The MOA has decided that its current structure should comprise four departments: Planning and Development, Extension and Community Empowerment, Technical Services, and Administration. A Deputy Minister, who would be supported by an Assistant Minister, would head each department. The GRC states that the general GOL policy is to have permanent, technically qualified staff in all positions at or below head of department level. Ministers and departmental directors are currently working on the organogram of MOA and constituent departments.

A major challenge is how to decentralize the current skewed staff deployment in MOA, where, out of a total of 327 staff, only 84 are outstationed with 243 based in Head Office in

Monrovia<sup>5</sup>. Under decentralization, this 75:25 ratio probably needs to be reversed to a situation where three out of four staff are directly deployed in counties/districts. The MOA envisages an eventual total staff complement of circa 250 – about a quarter of the estimated total of 1 000 that MOA had before the war. The MOA is currently conducting a systematic exercise to reassess all staff on its books to remove ghostworkers and poor performers and to provide renewed opportunities for those with relevant skills and potential.

### 1.3.4 Department of Planning and Development

Three divisions are currently proposed, each headed by a director: Planning and Policy, Coordination, Monitoring and Evaluation, and Statistics. The Planning and Policy division takes the lead in policy formulation and in liaison and planning with national stakeholders on sector-wide development. One of its key current challenges is the integration, harmonization and coordination of the activities of the estimated 600 NSAs/NGOs (UNDP estimates) involved in food security/rural development into mainstream national agricultural development plans and how to ensure that resources are not overly concentrated in the Monrovia headquarters of some of these organizations, in line with the impending need for decentralization across state and non-state actors. To do this effectively, the division will need to conduct a services analysis exercise in collaboration with the Department of Extension and Community Empowerment to obtain the knowledge and insights necessary to fulfil its role in the provision of oversight and guidance in planning of services and training for farmers.

#### Box 3. Key steps in a services analysis exercise

- Workshop(s) on planning and partnerships with MOA and stakeholders in programme and project implementation.
- Implementing partners complete questionnaires on agricultural service provision.
- MOA and consultants conduct an exercise to identify the outputs, i.e. the deliverables (products or services) that are provided currently for farmer client(s) by providers (MOA and other partners).
- Conduct a costing exercise to obtain estimates of the actual costs of each output. The results constitute a key input into core functions analysis (CFA) exercises in MOA – a specific review of functions, roles and relationships.
- MOA establishes Service Coordination Teams at national and county levels.
- Service Coordination Teams undertake capability assessments of service providers.
- Outcomes of capability assessments feed into the MOA planning process at national and county levels where all actors harmonize and coordinate their plans and activities.
- All service providers monitor their programmes and conduct evaluations with MOA and Service Coordination Teams.

At county and district levels, the Planning department needs to link closely with CBOs (circa 800; UNDP estimate) and the National Information Management Centre (NIMAC) to strengthen its knowledge base and management of the array of actors active in agriculture and community development. The strategy and research division focuses on two key activities: the groundwork for the identification of viable agricultural development initiatives, and knowledge management in the wider sense of knowing what is going on across the agriculture sector and maintaining institutional memory.

<sup>5</sup> Personnel Listing, Civil Service Agency GOL/MOA. Fiscal Year 2006/2007.

The Monitoring and Evaluation division may pose some problems, however. Monitoring is really part of management; it has to be able to feed information back to management promptly, so that timely responses are made to both problems and opportunities – and it has to be action-oriented. Despite the long-hallowed practice of linking it with evaluation as ‘M&E’, the separation of monitoring from management will greatly weaken the latter, especially under pressurized operating conditions where “fast track” assessment of progress will have primary importance. By contrast, evaluation answers the question “has what we did given good value for the money and other resources we committed, and would we do it differently another time?” – it is about *impact*. Evaluation needs to be independent of both planners and managers so that its output will be of optimal use in framing future policy and plans.

### **1.3.5 Department of Regional Development and Extension**

This will have two divisions: Extension and Community Empowerment. See the organogram (February 2007) below. The most important task is to clarify roles, responsibilities and relationships through renewed job descriptions across the divisions and to have flexible programme approaches in the five areas of field service provision within the divisions. The Department of Extension and Community Empowerment is a proposed title to replace the Department of Regional Development and Extension and has to receive legislative approval – a process that takes time.

### **1.3.6 Department of Technical Services**

This comprises five divisions: National Agricultural Quarantine, Fisheries, Plant Resources, Animal Resources, and Agricultural Engineering. Each of these divisions is headed by a Director, but under the new paradigm shift, if approved through legislative enactment, it is proposed that a technical coordinator will supervise and coordinate the above-mentioned divisions.

### **1.3.7 Department of Administration**

This comprises Human Resource Management, Financial Management, Information Management Services, and Asset Management.

### **1.3.8 Review and reform of parastatals.**

There are six parastatals:

- The Liberia Produce Marketing Corporation (LPMC) was mandated to procure farm products from farmers’ cooperatives and farmers in general, and to package them for subsequent export to buyers. It was also charged with the responsibilities of providing farm advisory services at all levels. However, it went beyond its mandate by involving itself in production, to the disadvantage of the small farmers. Along the way, it failed to reimburse farmers for their products to the tune of an estimated US\$3.5 million.
- The Liberia Cocoa and Coffee Corporation (LCCC) was set up to build the capacity of cocoa and coffee growers with the provision of farm advisory services such as nursery development, farm layout and planting operations.
- The National Palm Corporation (NPC) was charged with the responsibility of overseeing and managing government-owned oil-palm holdings. The NPC failed to survive not only because of the civil crisis, but primarily due to poor management.

- The Liberia Rubber Development Authority (LRDA), formerly the Liberia Rubber Development Unit (LRDU), was established to build the capacity of smallholder rubber producers with farm sizes within the range of 2–5 acres with improved seedlings, extension services and marketing.
- The Cooperatives Development Authority (CDA) was set up to build awareness of the cooperative movement and the benefits to the economy, and to assist in the organization and development of cooperatives, in registering and certificating cooperatives and advocating on their behalf.
- The Agricultural Cooperative Development Bank (ACDB) was set up as a farmers' bank with the provision of loan services but failed to accomplish its set objectives to improve farmers' livelihoods. Lending procedures were cumbersome and in most instances limited the chances of farmers obtaining loans. Rather than providing loans to needy farmers, it targeted "high level" farmers who, in the end, failed to pay back borrowed loans. Government's own indebtedness to the bank through borrowing an estimated US\$3 million paralyzed the normal functions of the bank.

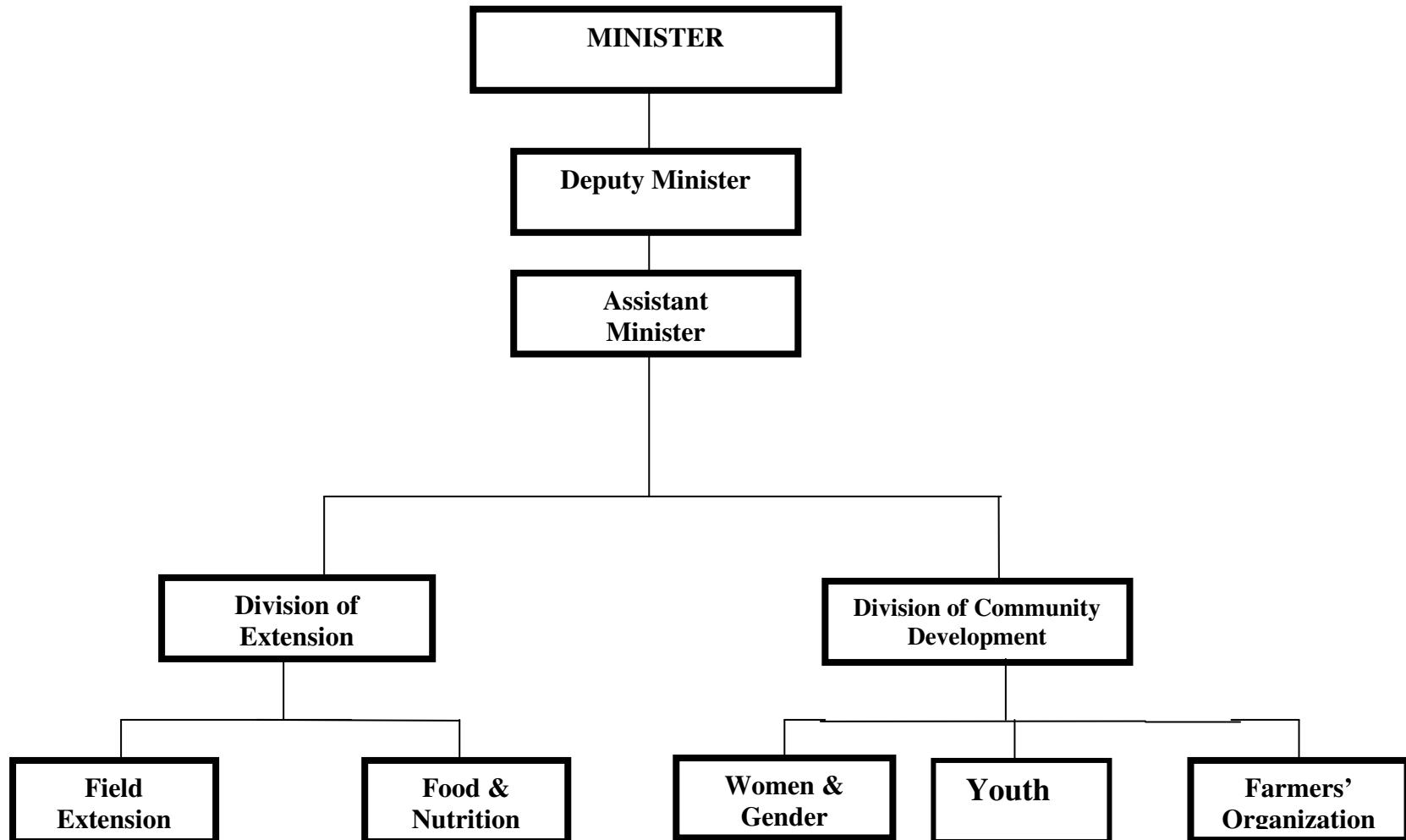
In addition to the above six parastatals are the Lofa County Agricultural Development Project (LCADP), the Bong County Agricultural Development Project (BCADP) and the Nimba County Rural Development Project (NCRDP). These were projects funded by the World Bank for a ten-year period. The objectives of these ADPs were to boost the production of cocoa, coffee and rice, targeting small farmers as the main beneficiaries. To a large extent the projects succeeded but could not continue beyond 1985 due to GOL's inability to repay its debts.

Participants observed that there is a need to indicate the performance levels of the abovementioned institutions, while also defining their legislative mandates within the context of sector development. Discussion of the way forward or future of these institutions could be considered to be premature because a Provisional Board has been set up by GOL to determine their future.

The GOL has created a Provisional Joint Board (PJB) comprising the directors of the parastatals, which is currently chaired by the Minister of Agriculture, and has a senior representative of the Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs among its members, together with representatives of the private sector. It is currently engaged in reviewing the future of the above bodies. There are a number of criteria that should govern the decision as to whether a particular parastatal should continue to receive support. The key one relates to the extent to which the private sector is likely to provide the same goods/services comparatively better in terms of quality and cost – but also in line with strategic long-term national goals for economic and social development of rural areas and communities.

The MOA is currently considering legislation to rationalize some of the functions and structures of these entities, including options to create a new Liberian Agri-Export Development Board replacing entities such as LPMC and LRDA. Also under consideration is a comprehensive study of rural finance and microfinance for agricultural and agri-enterprise development to review in detail the potential roles and contributions of existing commercial banks (Ecobank/LBDI) in credit provision, and the merits and demerits of a renewed entity for strategic long-term finance of agricultural and rural development, e.g. a Liberian Agricultural Development Bank to possibly replace ACDB.

## DEPARTMENT OF REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND EXTENSION



### 1.3.9 GOL budgetary process

The budgetary system is a dual one, with a development budget and a recurrent one. The latter does contain capital items, relating to GOL's permanent need for buildings and equipment. The annual budget cycle is initiated by requests for proposed budgets from the Bureau of the Budget (BOB); these are subject to certain guidelines, which may be ministry specific but are usually general. The current guidelines for FY06/07 are: that the economic and fiscal situation demands continuing austerity; that the costs of leasing premises are still too high, and actually increasing; that personnel costs remain too high and should be trimmed. On the last issue, there has been an across-the-board 73 percent increase in salaries, which nevertheless remain far below a living wage (estimates put salary levels at between 15 percent and 25 percent of the living costs of a typical household). The guidance also covers the format in which the proposals should be submitted.

As part of its contribution to the capacity-building aspect of recovery, the Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs (MPEA) provides a detailed set of guidelines for the preparation of these estimates. They advocate a number of standards for budgetary practice, which include the need for consistency between declared policy and budget; that individual budget initiatives should be clearly focused and time-bound; that each proposal must specify content, objectives, strategy, and where, when, and how the activity is to be implemented. Within each ministry, the Minister and heads of departments respond to BOB's request by meeting to discuss the work plan, and to develop the budget proposal for submission to BOB. When this has been done, a date for the particular ministry's budget hearing is set, wherein the Ministry defends its proposals at the Ministry of Finance (MOF). The MOF and BOB will rule on the level of the total budget; it is then left to the individual ministries to allocate the reduced amount. For example, in FY05/06, MOA proposed US\$6 million, but actually received US\$3.06 million. This is the highest amount for 9 years; often, during the war, it was less than \$0.5 million. The GOL will have to seriously consider its ongoing and future investment in and commitment to agriculture in the context of the "Maputo Declaration" that recommends a 10 percent of allocation of annual budgetary spending to agricultural development by African governments.

#### Box 4. Development implications of the GOL budgetary process

Some features of the budgetary process have important implications for the management of future development initiatives and could lead to problems, especially if they are not recognized in advance.

- There is a deadline for the submission of estimates; where counterpart funds are needed, it is important that the Ministry is in the position to include these in its estimates for the next financial year. If this is not done, it will normally be impossible to make any of the counterpart expenditure during the following financial year.
- The current form of the project performance report appears to place too much emphasis on expenditure as a measure of progress. It would be good if either the form of the report itself could be modified or it could be supplemented with appropriate indicators/measures of progress in achieving milestones/results.
- The otherwise excellent MPEA guidelines for the preparation of budget estimates should be supplemented with more appropriate advice on the scheduling of expenditure on development initiatives – poor practice in this area is widely recognized as contributing to the uncertainty of government expenditure.
- There should be provision for expenditure to run over at the end of the financial year, and most countries' budgeting systems do now permit this. Similar points apply to start-of-year expenditure.
- Similarly, caution should be exercised in applying the time-bound criterion. In both cases, because the time scales of projects and programmes in development are difficult to forecast accurately, the dates of actual payments are often uncertain; either of these measures could "punish" initiatives that had suffered relatively minor delays.
- It is important that donors/lenders do not press for earmarking of counterpart funds, as this can only increase the pressures elsewhere in the public sector budget.

## 1.4 Development implications of the GOL budgetary process

Some features of the budgetary process have important implications for the management of future development initiatives and could create problems, especially if they are not recognized in advance.

- There is a deadline for the submission of estimates; where counterpart funds are needed, it is important that the Ministry is in the position to include these in its estimates for the next financial year. If this is not done, it will normally be impossible to make any of the counterpart expenditure during the following financial year.
- The current form of the Project Performance Report appears to place too much emphasis on expenditure as a measure of progress. It would be good if either the form of the report itself could be modified, or it could be supplemented with appropriate measures of physical progress (see below).
- The otherwise excellent guidelines for the preparation of budget estimates should be supplemented with more appropriate advice on the scheduling of expenditure on development initiatives – poor practice in this area is widely recognized as contributing to the uncertainty of Government expenditure.
- There should be provision for expenditure to run over at the end of the year. Ministries make quarterly requests for allocations; for the first quarter they are made against estimates, but for the other quarters, they are made against the prescribed project performance report. The lowest level of control on expenditure is, at present, in the Minister's office (as in virtually all ministries): the development budget is not allocated to counties but is managed centrally by the Minister, supported by a Comptroller and a small staff, who are currently part of the Administration Department – with the advice of the heads of departments. Two explanations are given for this: (i) that it is a relic of former practices (when the budget formed part of a patronage system), and (ii) that it is part of the “multiple levels of control” in place. In so far as the latter explanation is correct, this arrangement is probably inevitable at present; however, as the volume and complexity of activity picks up, it will become unmanageable. There is a need for MOA to start thinking about how it will prepare for and integrate with the forthcoming decentralization process (see 2.2 above), specifically in proposing measures for programme, administrative and financial decentralization to county levels.

### 1.4.1 Major recommendations for action by MOA, stakeholders and partners

*“There is another reason why a national capacity-development programme is urgent. Over the last two years, a wide variety of capacity-development initiatives have been initiated – public sector reforms, civil service reorganization, institutional support and management reviews, amongst others. These initiatives need to be anchored to a coherent and coordinated framework. In the absence of strong and coordinated support for capacity development, the efficacy of ongoing and planned reform initiatives would be unsustainable in the long term.”*

*... National Human Development Report, Liberia, 2006.*

The need for a coherent institutional capacity development framework and accompanying programme for MOA and partners is very apparent and all recommendations are put forward in that context for the cogent reasons outlined in the recent human development report mentioned above and in line with the *UNDP 10 Default Principles for Capacity Development* (2004).

#### **A. Broad, strategic long-term recommendations**

1. Renew and develop MOA systems and capacities for improved performance in sectoral policy and strategy formulation, programme development, implementation and evaluation in a decentralized paradigm for rural development.
2. Design, plan and implement a Ministry-wide Management and Institutional Performance Programme in the six major areas outlined in the investment proposal below and based on the institutional analysis and conclusions highlighted in this report.
3. Form interdepartmental and interdivisional task teams in MOA (and where necessary with partners) to address key cross-cutting issues/focal assignment areas with group purpose and cohesion; build ministry team spirit and facilitate optimal collaboration and synergies among management and staff across the ministry.

#### **B. Short- to medium-term recommendations**

4. Convene a National Workshop involving major NGOs operating in the agricultural sector on the theme of *Planning for New Partnerships in Agricultural Development* to address issues of registration, programme and project activities, MOA's role in planning and coordination of the agricultural sector, impending decentralization, mandates and capabilities of actors, and funding issues. Principal donors of participating NGOs should also be invited and the workshop should be the first in a continual process of engagement to improve the contributions of MOA and its partners to overall sectoral planning and development. The process should also lead gradually into a service analysis exercise by MOA with partners.
5. The Planning and Development Department with the Department of Administration in MOA should establish a *Joint Task Team* with NIMAC/UNDP to explore options to develop a modern computerized knowledge management system in MOA. This should include the renewal of central filing/registry capacities, the development of information database(s) on partners and consultants, a design for a farm enterprise and management information system and MOA documentation facilities.
6. Given the apparent MOA commitment to devolve programme decision-making on headquarters allocated county budgets to the CAC and staff from 1 July 2008, it is recommended to set up a *Task Team on Decentralization* comprising headquarters and county staff to plan and prepare for this process and to liaise with Assistant County Superintendents and DDC Chairpersons for integration with local government planning processes.
7. Plan and select participants (MOA, farmers, agribusiness, NGOs) for study tours to African or other countries where the ministries of agriculture and partners have substantive experience of implementing institutional change for improved performance in facilitating and assuring service provision to various categories of farmers under pluralistic, decentralized paradigms.
8. Facilitate stakeholder participation processes in counties where new farmer training or programme activities are getting underway (e.g. FAO-supported farmer field schools under the National Food Security Programme) with an early focus on

counties/districts where capabilities/resources/logistics permit such exercises – which should be comprehensively analyzed and documented.

9. Set up a *Task Team on Farmer Training and Organization Development* comprising MOA management/staff from planning, technical and extension departments/divisions, farmer organization leaders/members, NGOs and universities/colleges. The team would, among other TOR, examine the possibility of setting up a National Farmer Organization Development Council to lead commercially oriented initiatives and training in the three major agricultural producing counties (Lofa, Nimba and Bong) replacing the CDA.
10. Conduct a training needs assessment across MOA, review job descriptions and develop a comprehensive *Management and Staff Training and Development Plan* for MOA with the full participation of all divisions and staff categories and a budget for implementation. The plan should provide centrally for orientation of management and staff towards the new role of MOA (especially under decentralization at county level) and their responsibilities under the new paradigm for agricultural development and service provision to farmers.
11. Conduct *National Stakeholder Consultations on the Proposed Reforms of Parastatals* including the studies planned to inform the process with respect to (i) the study of rural finance/microfinance ahead of decision-making on the possible abolition of ACDB, and (ii) a national strategic study on agri-enterprise development and diversification to explore potentials/feasibilities for the production of fruit crops, spices, beans and other alternative enterprises before setting up a possible *Liberian Agri-Export Development Board* to replace LPMC and LRDA.
12. Build *Programme and Project Planning and Development Capability in MOA* - preferably across divisions through inter-disciplinary teams. The MOA needs to strengthen its skills in programme and project identification, design, planning and implementation to provide (i) guidance, training and support to MOA county management and staff, and (ii) oversight to processes involving management and implementation of agricultural programmes or projects by NGOs or private actors.
13. MOA should develop closer and more systematic collaboration with UNDP programmes, especially at county level where, through the CSTs, UNDP is the leading agency in institutional capacity development, especially through its district and community development initiatives. There is considerable scope for co-learning in meeting the challenges of decentralization together in coming years.

## CAAS-Lib – Institutional investment proposal 1

<b>Name of programme</b>	<b>Institutional Renewal and Capacity Development for Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) and Stakeholder Partners</b>
<b>Institutional responsibility</b>	Government of Liberia/MOA/Stakeholder partners
<b>Aim(s) of activity</b>	Renew and develop MOA systems and capacities for improved performance in sectoral policy and strategy formulation, programme development, implementation and evaluation in a decentralised paradigm for rural development.
<b>Description of main activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refocus and reorganize MOA functions and organizational systems and structures in line with the new paradigm for public sector roles in agricultural development, stakeholder involvement and decentralized services coordination and provision to farmers.</li> <li>• Reorientation and training of management and staff in their emerging roles and responsibilities.</li> <li>• Strengthening MOA oversight and coordination capabilities in sector-wide planning and coordination of agricultural programmes and service provision.</li> <li>• Developing an updated financial management and administration system in conjunction with the modernization processes of MOF.</li> <li>• Strengthening of MOA capacities in knowledge management to inform policy, programme and services development across departments, including system-wide programme/project evaluation and staff performance management.</li> <li>• Operationalizing decentralization of MOA personnel, planning processes, programme budgeting and financial administration to counties.</li> </ul>
<b>Expected result(s)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A streamlined MOA (total staff complement circa 250) with clearly established functions and responsibilities in discharging its mandate to lead and facilitate the development of the agricultural sector.</li> <li>• MOA and multi-stakeholder partners cooperate through agreed platforms/fora in shaping national agricultural policy, programme planning and services provision to farmers.</li> <li>• MOA management and staff capacities developed to high standards of performance supported by comprehensive monitoring and evaluation systems.</li> <li>• MOA has a state-of-the-art knowledge management system at central and county levels with local agricultural knowledge/information centres geared to the specific needs of various farmer groups.</li> <li>• MOA fully decentralized to all counties with county teams integrated into planning processes with local government institutions.</li> </ul>
<b>Impact on food security, poverty reduction &amp; economic development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MOA will be better positioned to develop coherent policy and strategy for the sector and provide leadership, oversight and coordination for all actors involved in programme implementation and service provision.</li> <li>• Decentralization and integration of MOA activities into county development systems will help to ensure that programmes and services are relevant and responsive to the local demands and needs of farmers and that training and services are provided cost effectively to farmers (subsidiarity).</li> <li>• Integrated and farmer-centred planning with all actors will lead to the emergence of self-reliant farmer groups and organizations contributing optimally to local food security and producing surpluses for income generating agri-enterprises that will lift the income base and livelihoods of rural communities.</li> </ul>
<b>Period of execution</b>	2008–2012
<b>Estimated cost</b>	US\$6 million

## 2. THE AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH SYSTEM

### 2.1 Introduction

Until fairly recently, Liberia has been the classic “failed state”, with many national institutions destroyed or neglected to the point of non-functionality. The country’s human development indicators (UNDP, 2003) reflect the miserable conditions that resulted from the decades of conflict and the collapse of governance institutions and structures. Almost an entire generation missed out on formal primary education because of the war (only 35 percent received primary education in 2001/2002). The gross domestic product (GDP) is estimated at US\$438 million, which equates to a per capita income of US\$151. Unemployment in the formal sector is estimated at 85 percent. Daily expenditure on food by the poor in 2000 constituted more than two-thirds of household income, making the country one of the most food insecure in the region. Seventy-six percent of the population live below the poverty line with the poor primarily living in rural areas (86 percent). Twenty-six percent of the population have access to safe drinking water and 45 percent to sanitation facilities.

The agricultural sector has long played a significant role in the Liberian economy. It accounted for about 37 percent of the GDP prior to the beginning of the civil war in 1987. The sector’s contribution to the GDP picked up after the war and currently stands at 53 percent (MOA, 2006; NEPAD-FAO, 2006). The increased reliance on agriculture is largely attributed to the collapse of iron ore mining, which was the largest contributor to the GDP by 1987. Now, nearly 70% of the economically active population of Liberia is engaged in agricultural sector with the majority engaged in the subsistence farming of rice and cassava (MOA Liberia, 2006; NEPAD-FAO, 2006). However, despite the devastation caused by the war, the cash crop sub-sector remains lucrative and employment opportunities are available, notably on rubber plantations.

The market plays a key role in food security in Liberia. According to the Liberian Demographic and Health Survey (MP&EA, 1999/2000), it accounts for 51 percent of the supply of household food, compared with 48 percent from own produce. In urban areas, 95 percent of households depend on food from markets as their main source of food. However, large numbers of rural dwellers have moved to urban centres since 1990, reducing food production in rural areas and increasing food shortages in urban areas.

The average cereal production of Liberia is 188 tonnes, which is 0.21 percent of the total production of sub-Saharan Africa (87 715 tonnes). The percentage change in cereal production since 1979–81 is 26 percent for Liberia and 54 percent for sub-Saharan Africa. The equivalent figure for the world is 32 percent. The average crop yield for Liberia is 6 840 kg/ha while for sub-Saharan Africa it is 7 694 kg/ha. The world average is 12 985 kg/ha. Average yields of cereals, roots and tubers, and pulses have been flat since the 1960s. Net cereal imports and food aid as a percentage of total cereal consumption from 1961 to 1998 was 56 percent. These figures suggest that improved food security depends in large part on improved agricultural productivity, research and extension. The focus in this analysis is on what the research system can do to improve the situation.

### 2.2 Agricultural research in the GOL recovery and development strategy

The GOL’s vision for the agricultural sector is a holistic one, focusing on the transformation of smallholder agriculture into a sustainable, diversified, income-generating, modernized and

competitive sector, well integrated into the domestic and international markets. To realize this vision, MOA has defined three short- and medium-term strategic objectives for the sector:

- supporting the transition from relief to recovery and development;
- ensuring food security;
- building capacity.

Strategic long term objectives include:

- food and nutrition security;
- productivity enhancement and employment generation;
- sustainable development of natural resources;
- strengthening institutional and human resources;
- rehabilitating and expanding the rural productive infrastructure and roads to facilitate cost-effective movement of inputs and produce in order to enhance competitiveness of domestic production.

The national agricultural research system (comprising public, private and civil society sectors) has a critical role to play in the pursuit of these objectives. The following sections highlight the challenges and opportunities facing public, private and civil society agricultural research in Liberia.

### **2.3 Public sector research: The Central Agricultural Research Institute (CARI)**

The Central Agricultural Research Institute (CARI) was established on 18 August 1980 as a semi-autonomous organ of MOA. It evolved from the Central Agricultural Experimental Station (CAES), which was established between 1951 and 1953. This change gave the institute relative autonomy and flexibility to operate with minimum interference from the line ministry (of Agriculture). This status allowed it to develop rapidly into a reputable centre of excellence in applied and adaptive research in West Africa before the war. However, the civil war devastated CARI. The physical infrastructure was destroyed through the looting of offices, laboratories, residences and research fields. The entire germplasm collection (the germplasm bank, including the rice germplasm bank) was lost and most of the research staff moved to other organizations. Currently, most of the buildings and other infrastructure of the institute are occupied by the UN military personnel.

CARI was established with the mandate of carrying out adaptive and applied research. A number of committees were put in place to facilitate the smooth functioning of CARI in delivering its mandate. The biggest challenge facing the institute is how to revitalize itself to achieve its mission and mandate. This not only requires building the necessary capacity (human, financial and infrastructural) to conduct effective research but also developing appropriate, effective and efficient organizational and management structures. The task is daunting but achievable. Given its admirable past record, the institute has critical residual institutional memory, networks, partnerships and physical facilities that it can easily tap into to facilitate its quick rejuvenation. These include past relationships with the University of Liberia, CGIAR centres such as WARDA and IITA and rejuvenated regional and continental agricultural programmes and networks such as CORAF, FARA and NEPAD. However, a newly reconstituted CARI will have to face the changing paradigms in agricultural research management and organization, especially the realization that it is only one among many other actors that can play a crucial role in national agricultural development.

Even before the war, research organization and management in Liberia could not be said to be efficient and cost effective. The Minister of Agriculture had responsibility over the overall coordination of the national agricultural research programme. He served as Chairman of the Agricultural Research Committee. The Agricultural Research Committee was a policy-making body established as an independent committee to decide and approve policies for applied and adaptive research in agriculture. The technical committee provided broad direction for the research program at the institute level. The chairman of this committee, the Deputy Minister for Technical Affairs, acted as the link between the Agricultural Research Committee and the institute. This committee examined the various proposals for research in agriculture. The Advisory Committee provided advisory services to the Research Committee.

Within CARI, research was organized in seven technical departments under the research coordinator. These were:

- Crop Sciences and Propagation;
- Land and Water Resources Management;
- Animal Science and Production;
- Plant Protection;
- Food Technology;
- Engineering and Appropriate technology;
- Fisheries.

Despite this elaborate organizational structure, the system did not function efficiently. The agricultural research committee seldom met. The few times the technical committee met, technical matters were hardly discussed. Moreover, technical committee members showed little interest in research matters. In the absence of a functioning agricultural research committee, the technical committee had assumed its role but only in administrative and peripheral matters instead of the technical issues of planning and formulating meaningful research programmes. As a consequence, research policy formulation, which normally should be at three levels, existed only at the research institute level. These types of organizational and management inefficiencies must be addressed during the current restructuring programme (Liberian Medium Term Reconstruction and Development Plan, 2001).

Public sector research in Liberia is not limited to CARI. Other public agencies that conduct sub-sector research include the Forest Development Authority (FDA), the Liberia Rubber Research Institute (LRRI), and the Department of Fisheries. These agencies have had little if any interaction in the past. There is a need for greater collaboration, cooperation and coordination between these agencies, CARI, universities, extension systems, private and civil society sector actors, and users of research results. This would build on the synergies and complementarities that already exist among them.

## 2.4 Research by universities and institutions of higher learning

There are no clearly defined and well-thought-out programmes for agricultural research at some of Liberia's well-known agricultural institutions such as the Booker Washington Institute (BWI), the University of Liberia and Cuttington University. These universities mainly serve as training centres for undergraduate students. The University of Liberia offers a Bachelor of Science degree in general agriculture, general forestry, wood science technology, agronomy and related science and community development courses. Extension is offered as a support course. Currently, the university does not offer any postgraduate training in

agriculture. In the past, university staff used to undertake collaborative research with international agricultural research centres such as the IRRI, WARDA and IITA. There is no such external collaboration currently. Cuttinton University has recently launched a research project in aquaculture (tilapia breeding) and adaptive trials for New Rice for Africa (NERICA), whilst the Booker Washington Institute (BWI) is currently engaged in adaptive trials with a couple of rice varieties.

The major problem facing university research is the lack of qualified and experienced staff due in part to inadequate remuneration and favourable incentives. Table 1 gives an overview of the research capacity in the two universities and one institute of higher learning in Liberia.

**Table 1. Research capacity in learning institutions**

Name of Institute	Number of graduates/year		Existing staff			Involvement in research	Area of focus	External partners supporting research and related activities
	Undergraduate	Postgraduate	Ph.D.	M.Sc.	B.Sc.			
Cuttinton University	1 400	-	4	20	18	Limited form of research	Adaptive research in New Rice for Africa (NERICA), breeding of tilapia species, pig breeding	AZUR – Association of Researchers of Social Sciences & Agronomy
University of Liberia	14 000	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Not currently	-	N/A
Booker Washington Institute (BWI)	250	150		3	6	Limited	Rice	Chinese Govt.

Source: Independent Consultant

As mentioned, there is limited interaction between CARI and the institutions of higher learning at present. Possible mechanisms for collaboration include:

- collaborative agreements, such as memoranda of understanding (MOUs) to undertake research and extension;
- joint staff appointments;
- staff secondments (i.e. between research and extension, universities and research);
- joint research projects;
- innovative sharing or joint use of existing physical facilities;
- competitive research grant systems that put a premium on inter-organizational collaboration or partnerships.

## 2.5 Private sector research

For the most part, the private sector is not involved in agricultural research. It tends to be heavily concentrated in the rubber sub-sector and is mostly involved in plantation expansion or rehabilitation. Table 2 presents an overview of private sector activities.

**Table 2. Private sector involvement in research**

Name of company	Country coverage	Focus enterprise	Priority activities	Involvement in research
Liberian Agriculture Company	Grand Bassa County with considerable capacity to absorb existing smallholder products within its surroundings and other parts of the country	Rubber (latex production in various forms and shapes). Extension of existing holdings and provision of extension service.	Some form of research, or better still-adaptive research of clones to local conditions from Ivory Coast., and expansion of plantation	Germplasm multiplication
Firestone Plantations Company	Margibi County, largest rubber plantations company in Liberia, with considerable capacity to absorb existing smallholder products within its surroundings and other parts of the country	Rubber (latex production in various forms and shapes). Plantation rehabilitation and replanting	Plantation rehabilitation and replanting	In the past was involved in adaptive and applied research in rubber (Firestone Botanical Research Institute). No intention to resume this activity
Weala Rubber Company	Margibi County	Rubber (latex production in various forms and shapes)	Rubber (latex production)	Not currently

Source: Independent Consultant

## 2.6 International agricultural research Centres (IARCs)

Before the war, CARI had useful linkages with research organizations within and outside Liberia. These included useful partnerships with the University of Liberia and with WARDA. Outside Liberia, it had working relationships with many international research institutes such as IRRI, IITA, ARVDC, CIMMYT, CIAT, IRAT, ICRAR and ILRI. Most of the germplasm used in CARI's crop science programme was obtained from these IARCs. It also had working relationships with foreign universities and other scientific institutions such as the International Foundation for Science (IFS) of Sweden, and the International Research Development Center (IDRC) of Canada. Although many of these relationships were destabilized by the war, opportunities to revive them – and indeed to expand such partnerships – abound. Developing working relationships with the IARCs could be particularly helpful in the following areas:

- germplasm acquisition and testing;
- training of technicians and research staff;

- collaborative research projects;
- development and implementation of a research and development (R&D) strategy, results-based planning, and monitoring and evaluation;
- building and strengthening of regional and global networks.

## 2.7 Non-governmental organizations (NGOs)

The New African Research and Development Agency (NARDA) is a consortium of Liberian NGOs formed in 1987. Prior to 1990, there were only four major international NGOs operating in Liberia (Partners for Productivity, Plan International, SOS Children Village and Experiment in International Living). Currently there are more than 34 local NGOs in the country, working (with line ministries) in four sectors: agriculture and food production, business development, education, and sanitation. NARDA coordinates the activities of NGOs, which operate through county networks. Major NGO activities are currently concentrated in the following areas:

- the soybean programme;
- agricultural relief services for cassava, swamp rice and vegetables (okra, peppers, bitter ball) for consumption;
- supply of seeds and farm equipment.

NGO research activity has included socio-economic research such as developing vulnerability assessment maps (VAMs), conducting food security assessment studies, and developing participatory forestry management methodologies.

While not all the NGOs listed are currently involved directly in agricultural research, during the survey many of them reiterated the importance of agricultural research, observing that without the existence of research little progress can be made in agricultural development in Liberia. They also stressed the importance of research for food security, urging that research efforts should be geared towards specific crops that satisfy the needs of the population (e.g. rice and cassava). For a detailed discussion of institutional arrangements that facilitate or constrain the operation of NGOs please refer to the review of institutions.

## 2.8 Donor interest in agricultural research

The major donors in the Liberian agricultural sector include the United Nations, the United States (USAID), China, the European Union, Germany (GTZ) and the World Bank. Currently, there is limited donor commitment to agricultural research, although previously USAID provided tremendous support to agricultural research – particularly to CARI – in terms of human resource development and basic inputs. USAID currently provides seeds and equipment under an assistance program for poor countries following conflict.

## 2.9 Linkages between research and extension

Lack of closer collaboration between research and extension has long been a cause of great concern. There are no clear organizational frameworks or institutional mechanisms (e.g. competitive grant systems) to encourage interagency or interorganizational partnerships and linkages. For instance, there is no formal mechanism for bringing together researchers, extension agents, producers, processors, policy-makers and the private sector. The only opportunity for interaction at the moment is World Food Day. Some of the measures that can

be taken in the short term to address this situation include locating some extension staff in CARI offices, and joint planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programmes and projects. It is also necessary to incorporate research collaboration with Cuttington University alongside research performed at CARI. For more on extension, see the review of extension.

**Table 3. An overview of key NGOs engaged in research in Liberia.**

Name	Focus county	Focus enterprise	Primary activities	Involvement in research and research-related activities
Catholic Relief Services (CRS)	Bong, Lofa, Nimba, Sinoe, Maryland & Grand Kruru	Seed multiplication: vegetable & rice seeds, cassava	Input distribution: seeds and tools, marketing & training towards fulfilment of resettlement programme	Not currently
World VisionLiberia	G/Cape Mt., Montserrado, Bomi and Maryland	Cassava, rice, groundnuts, pig farming, small ruminants & food preservation	Rehabilitation, germ plasm multiplication & distribution, agribusiness	Not currently. In the past, germplasm collection and seed multiplication (rice and cassava) and vegetable seed selection
Mercy Corps	Margibi, Montserrado,	Food crops	Cowpea multiplication	Not currently
Concern Worldwide	G/Bassa	Cassava, rice, goat breeding		Not currently
Catalyst	Nimba	Food crops, rehabilitation of tree crop plantations, fish pond development, training	Transforming ex-com into productive elements of society, fish pond development, tree crop rehabilitation	Not currently
Pulukpeh Multi-purpose Cooperative Society	Bong	Rice, oil-palm, seedling raising	Oil-palm production and marketing	Not currently
Professional Agricultural Consultancy & Expertise Services of Liberia (PACESL)	Gbarpolu, Montserrado, G/Bassa	Local hand tools and related implement fabrication, swamp development, vegetable production	Local hand tools and related implement fabrication, training and extension	Not currently
Sustainable Development Promoters (SDP)	Bong, Nimba, G/Gedeh	Micro-credit, goat breeding, crop production, seed & tool distribution	Micro-credit, rice seed multiplication	Not currently
Integrated Rural Development Organization (IRDO)	Nimba, Bong, Margibi, Montserrado	Rehabilitation of schools & roads, seed & tool distribution	Seeds & tool distribution, training and extension	Not currently
Conservation International (CI)		Strengthening capacity of environmental organizations	Training, information sharing	Not currently

Source: Independent Consultant, 2007.

## 2.10 The role of women and indigenous knowledge

A revitalized research and extension system must take into account the technology, information and learning needs of female farmers, especially given their critical role in food security and natural resource management. Liberia has had some interesting experiences with indigenous farming strategies (communal farming) based on traditional forms of organization (*kuus* and *susu*). Women play a critical role in this system, indeed it was women and their involvement in indigenous farming systems that provided the bedrock of the agricultural research system during the war. Nonetheless, the civil war caused mass displacement of people from their villages and farms (the number of IDPs in 2003 was estimated at 464 000, including 350 000 returnees and 100 000 ex-combatants, including 21 000 child soldiers). This caused a serious disturbance to indigenous farming knowledge. A major task of resettlement, reintegration and retraining, including training for improved productivity and livelihoods (e.g. agriculture, forestry and fisheries) and efforts to recapture, research and document indigenous farming knowledge, should be carried out as an integral part of the agricultural recovery process. For a summary of the opportunities and challenges facing the system, see Box 1.

**Box 1. Strengths, opportunities, weaknesses and threats (SWOT) of Liberian agricultural research system**

*Strengths*

- Government commitment to providing a favourable macroeconomic environment.
- Government commitment to agriculture.

*Opportunities*

- Renewed continental, regional and donor interest and commitment to agriculture, through CAADP and FAAP for example.
- Prevailing political stability and emerging new leadership.

*Weaknesses and Threats*

- Limited availability of trained human resources.
- Inadequate funding and dilapidated infrastructure.
- Inadequate linkages/partnerships between key stakeholders.
- A moribund extension service.

## 3. KEY CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This report has argued that agriculture remains critical to economic recovery in Liberia. The sector is expected to contribute to increased food security, generation of employment, increased exports and foreign exchange earnings. However, the national agricultural research system, which should spearhead agricultural recovery, is currently in tatters:

- the policy and institutional framework for agricultural research policy – including clear and transparent mechanisms for priority setting, national strategic plans and results or performance measurement – frameworks is non-existent;
- the existing organizational structures are neither efficient nor effective;
- there are few if any linkages between the various actors in the national agricultural research system – CARI, universities, the private sector, NGOs, extension services;

- the public research sector, especially CARI and public universities, are understaffed and under-resourced.

Agricultural R&D in the developing world has undergone major paradigm shifts in recent decades. These include: a redefinition of the role of government in agricultural R&D; decentralization and privatization of R&D activities; broader and active stakeholder participation emphasizing the need for new partnerships and networks; new funding arrangements; orientation of R&D toward client needs; impact considerations. These shifts have been stimulated by changes in political and socio-economic environments; changes in domestic and international markets; changing demand for R&D services; emerging technologies (biotechnology, nanotechnology, and information and communication technologies). Increasingly, agricultural R&D in many developing countries is guided by one or more of the following perspectives: innovation systems, value chains, research for development, and impact orientation.

The national agricultural research system in Liberia might benefit from explicitly considering these perspectives in designing its R&D strategies. Subsequently, the proposed strategies should inform the organizational structures, management models and resource endowment (human, financial and infrastructure) needed to achieve the strategic objectives of the research system. Given the magnitude of the crisis facing the system, we propose a two-stage plan of action for revitalizing the R&D system: short-term priorities and medium- to long-term priorities.

### 3.1 Short-term priorities

These are “quick win” measures that need to be undertaken immediately in order to launch the revitalization of the national research system. Primarily, this stage should focus on the following: re-initiating adaptive and applied research; capacity building activities (human and physical); formation of strategic alliances and partnerships with key stakeholders; resource mobilization; the development of a long-term strategy for national agricultural research for development. Activities that can be undertaken during this phase include those listed below.

- Using participatory techniques, identify (including selective borrowing), test, multiply and distribute appropriate germplasm for priority agricultural crops, livestock and fisheries. Create and manage a suitable germplasm bank and a germplasm working collection.
- Conduct an inventory of available germplasm of major food crops (rice, cassava, vegetables) and livestock.
- Re-establish links with specific CGIAR centres that may assist in recovering the germplasm that has been lost (for instance rice from the Africa Rice Centre/WARDA; cassava from IITA).
- Identify, test and adapt existing/proven or new agricultural technologies at subregional/regional level.
- Initiate system-wide strategic planning processes.

These early action steps will help with the following objectives.

1. Identifying and developing sites for participatory and multi-location testing to reflect the diversity in the agro-ecological and production systems in Liberia.

2. Establishing the necessary partnerships both domestically (learning institutions, farmer organizations, civil societies, private sector, NGOs) and globally (international agricultural research centres, donors, and regional and continental bodies such as CORAF, NEPAD, FARA) for mobilizing resources; joint programme and project formulation; technical backup; germplasm acquisition; dissemination of proven technologies and feedback from farmers and users.
3. Building critical capacity (physical and human) to address the immediate challenges:

- *Human resources:*

This would help to (i) assess training needs, (ii) assess technical assistance needs at subregional/regional level, and (iii) develop a coherent strategy that will sustain the national strategy and vision of the role of NARS in sustainable food security and poverty alleviation.

- *Physical resources:*

This should be aimed at mapping the current status of various research facilities across the country (laboratories, equipment, experimental fields, etc.).

- *System-wide strategic planning:*

This would aid the development of long-term agricultural R&D policy and strategy. The strategy should specifically address the mission, mandate, priorities, governance, and resources (human, financial and physical) needed to deliver the long-term objectives. Due consideration should be given to:

- establishment of a clear development-oriented vision, mission and mandates for CARI, public universities, the extension system and related organizations;
- demand-driven or needs-based research;
- resource mobilization strategies;
- mechanisms for linking research, extension, policy-makers, farmers and universities;
- establishment of an appropriate monitoring and evaluation system for assessing system performance, effectiveness and impact.

Given its limited financial and human resources, CARI should rationalize its current activities. Some of the activities related to export crops could be rationalized and transferred to the other relevant stakeholders. For example, the research capacity of the Forest Development Authority could be strengthened and the mandate and responsibility for forestry research could be transferred to FDA. The Director General of CARI could be a member of the board of FDA, and a technical advisory committee could be created to guide research in FDA. Similar arrangements could be considered for rubber (with Firestone). In the case of cocoa and coffee, substantial research has been conducted in Ghana and Nigeria (cocoa) and Côte d'Ivoire (coffee). Liberia could benefit from the progress already made by these countries through innovative cooperative or collaborative research agreements or partnerships. CORAF could play a role in designing mechanisms and incentives for facilitating such arrangements. This would free up resources for CARI to focus on food crops, other cash crops and livestock. The responsibility for fisheries research is another area that should be critically looked into.

### 3.2 Medium- to long-term priorities

The experiences of the immediate action plan should guide the medium- and long-term priorities. The priority activities could include:

- Development of a realistic research strategy for the short and medium term in view of further long-term development of appropriate strategies for agricultural research for sustainable development.
- Implementation of the long-term strategy. Expand research activities based on the priorities identified and a rationalized mandate for CARI. The research agenda should include both strategic and applied research.
- Development of substations to enable decentralization of activities to appropriate locations.
- Aggressive recruitment and a long-term training programme for CARI and other public sector agencies.
- Sustainable enhancement of human resources through group training in the following areas:
  - (i) research project planning, management and monitoring;
  - (ii) impact assessment of agricultural technologies on food security at national level;
  - (iii) scientific writing;
  - (iv) data collection/management and analysis.
- Support to academic degree training for students and young scientists (at M.Sc. and Ph.D. levels).
- Rehabilitation and reconstruction of adequate facilities for germplasm conservation.
- Development of diversified and sustainable funding mechanisms.
- Enhanced public–private–civil society partnerships.
- Mechanisms for the strengthening of farmer organizations.
- Development of a policy and socio-economic research capacity within CARI.
- Mechanisms for documenting and disseminating research results and impacts of research.
- Institutionalization of systems thinking, innovation system perspectives, and agricultural value chain approaches, etc.

The uptake of research output and the relevance of that output depend on a well functioning extension (and farmer education) system and relevant, high quality education in agriculture. Therefore there is a need for a fully integrated agricultural research, extension and education system.

## CAAS-Lib – Institutions investment proposal 2

<b>Name of Programme</b>	<b>Rehabilitation and revitalization of the Central Agricultural Research Institute (CARI), Liberia</b>
<b>Institutional responsibility</b>	Ministry of Agriculture (MOA), CARI technical committee and stakeholder partners
<b>Aim(s) of activity</b>	To rehabilitate and renew CARI as the lead national research institution in developing innovations in support of a revitalized agriculture sector, contributing to improved household food security and smallholder commercialization for export markets. NB. CARI was one of the institutions that experienced virtual total destruction during the civil war (1989–2003).
<b>Description of main activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rebuild and refurbish research buildings and facilities at CARI headquarters in Suakoko.</li> <li>• Recruit, establish and train/re-train a critical mass of research expertise and support staff across focal disciplines and programme areas with a central focus on technology borrowing (from neighbouring and other countries/institutes) and adaptive, participatory research.</li> <li>• Revitalize field research programmes for co-knowledge development with farmers and extension personnel in areas such as crop improvement and multiplication (rice and cassava), peri-urban agriculture, pasture rehabilitation, livestock, fisheries, fruits and new areas such as mushrooms, beekeeping, snail farming, biotechnology for fuel, pesticides and fertilizers, and floriculture.</li> <li>• Renew and develop a decentralized agricultural knowledge system in collaboration with MOA departments of extension, and planning and policy.</li> <li>• Design, commission, equip and staff three new decentralized substations in the coastal, derived savannah and forest ecologies.</li> </ul>
<b>Expected result(s)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A revitalized and high-performing CARI producing relevant innovations that contribute demonstrably to increased food production across its focal programme areas in collaboration with farmers and extension personnel.</li> <li>• CARI's approaches and outputs recognized and valued by national stakeholders, peer institutes and regional and international research organizations/fora in the region e.g. FARA, CAADP/NEPAD, CGIAR.</li> </ul>
<b>Impact on food security, poverty reduction &amp; economic development</b>	In producing innovations for improved crop and livestock productivity across the major agro-ecologies, CARI will contribute to increased smallholder food production and security, decreased over-reliance on food relief and imports, realisation of smallholder export potentials, improved management and conservation of natural resources, increased rural income and employment through agri-enterprise development, and an overall improvement in the incomes and livelihoods of the rural poor.
<b>Period of execution</b>	2008–2015
<b>Estimated cost</b>	US\$10 million

## 4. AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY AND EXTENSION SERVICES

### 4.1 Background and introduction

Since 2003, and following a period of protracted conflict over fourteen years, Liberia is currently grappling with the challenges of moving from an emergency situation to rehabilitation and long-term sustainable development. At the heart of those challenges is the need for a transformation process to renew and revitalize the public and non-public sectors and allied institutions so that they can lead the restoration of national economic and social development through strategic investment, employment creation, service provision and local self-reliance among rural communities, many of whom were displaced and rendered vulnerable and dependent during the years of conflict.

Liberia's agricultural sector has traditionally been characterized by a dual system of production consisting of a commercially oriented plantation sector and subsistence producers. The majority of rural Liberians have worked as labourers on commercial plantations or as subsistence farmers. A distinct and dynamic smallholder sector has not been a feature of Liberian agricultural development, yet the potential for its development is certainly there. In contrast, the majority of Liberia's West African neighbours have experienced at least some development of viable smallholder sectors in which households manage integrated cash and food production systems including crops, livestock, fisheries and agroforestry. The achievement of a viable smallholder sector will depend critically on fundamental transformation of a low input/low output system based on shifting cultivation to one that involves broad-based farmer participation and emancipation as organized groups involved in integrated and productivity-led food production, processing and marketing systems.

Side by side with the development of a commercially oriented smallholder sector, there is also the need to move towards reducing the dependency syndrome through optimizing household food security for poor rural smallholders with the potential to achieve it fully or partially. While GOL policy commitments are the starting point for achieving the above goals, the crucial factors for their enduring achievement lie in sector-wide institutional capacities and the quality of systems in place for service provision to farmers.

Currently, public agricultural institutions are severely debilitated in the country with few active personnel at national and county levels, low budget allocations, few programmes/projects and low morale among personnel. Under the prevailing emergency conditions, NGOs (circa 600) are very active across the country with a very wide scope in the range and reach of their activities in food relief and security. The National Information Management Centre (NIMAC) has a database tracking the humanitarian activities of international and national NGOs – the latter are frequently implementing for the former and generally do not have their own distinctive profile of services/activities. Information is on the “offer or supply side” of activities that are primarily involved in food relief/security. While such activities are undoubtedly useful under emergency circumstances, they generally lack the approach, content and quality assurance of “demand-led” extension services required under the new services paradigm for sustainable development of smallholder farmers in the medium to long term.

Based on findings from interviews with national-level MOA personnel and field visits to counties during this sub-sector assessment, we found that the current public system lacks threshold management and operational capacity to plan and coordinate extension services effectively from national to county delivery levels. Clearly, the public extension service system, including associated partners and institutions, has to be revitalized and renewed as stated in the GOL *Statement of Policy Intent for Agriculture* (SPI), March 2006:

*“ MOA will direct its long-term policy efforts to the restructuring of the central units in the Ministry and related agencies and towards a more cost efficient and effective decentralized structure... the imperative is to address the technical and management capacities of the agricultural institutions at the central and decentralized level and at the revitalization of the public services, with special focus on research and extension... select community areas for pilot support to institutional and organizational strengthening of producer groups, specifically in support of kuu associations... restructure and build capacities of associated farming unions, cooperatives and agencies... ”*

This presents both formidable challenges and opportunities. This framework delineates the salient challenges that MOA and partners will have to engage with and the kind of responses that will be necessary in the context of international and African regional experience and lessons over the past fifteen years. The opportunity for Liberia is to design and develop a renewed national extension service system based on the lessons and successes of other African countries, while avoiding, as far as possible, any shortcomings or failures encountered in those efforts.

Liberia's extension system in pre-war decades was characterized by the "transfer of technology" approach in which clan extension agents provided field training for farmers in the then-prevailing hierarchical "expert teaching" mode. That paradigm was predominantly technical and had little emphasis on emancipatory or participatory approaches to planning and development with rural communities. In the mid-1980s, however, there was a GTZ rural development project in Nimba and Bong counties that was acknowledged to be pioneering in terms of bringing all ministries and key NSA rural actors together in combined and integrated planning processes at district and county levels. The benefits and impacts of those approaches are still remembered by senior MOA personnel, national agricultural consultants and representatives of farming organizations.

The central focus for renewal of the extension system is on facilitating processes that will elaborate the vision, strategy and knowledge to give practical effect to the desired ends of national policy intent for the provision of agricultural extension services to farmers. This will involve a flexible and iterative "learning by doing" approach to ensure that change management in rural institutions and in approaches to local development is grounded in the specific contexts and needs of Liberian communities. The guiding value is "learning and growth in collective and participatory local ownership" by Liberian actors across the agriservice system, with farmers, their organized groups and allied stakeholders at the centre of demand-led agendas for responsive service provision and enduring capacity development at central and local levels.

#### **4.2 Lessons and institutional challenges arising in the new paradigm for extension systems**

*"Extension reform is in flux, and the reforms are moving extension toward institutionally pluralistic rural knowledge and innovation networks. However, in most cases these networks are not conceived with a clear understanding of the broad implications of such a system. The immediate challenge facing Governments is to reform extension in ways that increase client-oriented services, while still responding to continually changing social needs and economic pressures. For Governments that have not undertaken extension reform, the challenge is to establish a strategic vision and build commitment within the public sector (in ministries of agriculture, finance and stakeholders throughout the system). They then have to identify local change managers and maintain realistic expectations of what can be accomplished in given periods of time. Reforms in extension systems and services are ubiquitous, ongoing and probably a permanent feature of the sub sector's institutional and programmatic development".<sup>6</sup>*

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<sup>6</sup>*Extension Reform for Rural Development* (2004). Salient conclusions from proceedings of an International Workshop on A Convergence of Views on Extension hosted by the World Bank, USAID and the Neuchatel Initiative (FAO & Bilateral Donors) in 2002. Washington, DC, USA.

### 4.3 Lessons from international experience

Against a backdrop of changing public policies driving fundamental changes in public extension services, the World Bank, USAID, and the Neuchatel Group (see Box 2) convened a workshop of about 70 extension experts to review recent approaches to revitalizing extension services (World Bank, 2002). Participants generally agreed that the key to reform has been the strengthening of demand for services through participatory approaches and stakeholder involvement processes. The lessons learned from past experience with reforms were summarized as follows.

- Extension is a knowledge and information support function for rural people that have a broader role than merely providing agricultural advice.
- A mature extension system is characterized by a pluralistic system of extension funders and service providers. The public system continues to be a major player, both in providing funding and in coordinating operations.
- Poverty reduction should be the focus of public funding whether services are provided by public services or contracted out to non-state organizations.
- Extension policies and strategies need to define an effective division of labour between public extension and other providers, and to identify overall objectives for public sector involvement in extension in line with PRSPs and NEPAD.
- Long-term commitments should be made for new approaches to be fully institutionalized within a widely shared vision and strategy at different levels – international, national, regional and community.
- Stakeholder coordinating mechanisms are important to provide a common framework in which all actors can participate and operate.
- Building capacity of rural producer organizations (RPO), the public sector and other service providers is necessary to empower users and expand the pool of qualified service providers. This requires links with, and implies modernization of, the agricultural education system.
- Extension services should be part of the decentralization and devolution agenda, engaging full involvement of local government units and grassroots organizations.
- There is greater scope for cost-sharing and fee-for-service programmes than is usually acknowledged. Realism is necessary as to the limits of fully private extension.
- Extension, whether public or private, cannot function properly without a continuous flow of appropriate innovations from a variety of sources, local and foreign. Knowledge creation and access remain weak in most developing countries.
- All service providers need a system to assess extension outcomes, and to feed this information back to policy and coordination units.

### 4.4 Paradigm change in field extension approaches

The replacement of top-down, supply-driven approaches and methods of extension by demand-led participatory approaches has been the most significant and challenging change for directors, managers and practitioners socialized in the traditional research and extension systems pursued in most African countries from the 1960s through the 1980s. Given the legacy of centralization and hierarchy in the Liberian Government system, especially at local levels, embracing new pluralistic and participatory processes under decentralization will pose immense challenges for all actors in extension services provision.

The central lesson arising from experience since 1990 is that the learning processes of farmers, researchers and extension personnel are more cyclical than linear, and problem identification and solution seeking at farm level, to be valid and legitimate, has to be conducted through bona fide participatory processes in which all knowledge and experience is valued, analyzed and exchanged. See Box 2 below.

### Box 2. Contrasting extension paradigms

Through the 1970s and 1980s, extension systems essentially focused on the transfer of technology (ToT) model that conveyed technical messages and packages to farmers, either individually or in groups. It tended to be a highly structured, top-down, prescriptive approach to technology transfer. The paradigm was centred on the belief that outside experts (planners, extension and research) know the priority problems encountered by farmers and communities and are able to prescribe the appropriate solutions. Building on the wealth of indigenous knowledge and experience of farmers and blending this with “modern” technology received little if any serious consideration. Moreover, the old supply-driven system paid little attention to the capacity empowerment of communities, and their capacity and the confidence to decide upon their own development priorities. Grassroots communities often did not “own” the development process.

Pluralistic extension systems began to evolve in the 1990s and involved participatory extension approaches (PEA) that aim to develop demand-driven services by engaging in a totally different paradigm. This involves listening to farmers and other stakeholders through engaging in interactive dialogue with farm families and their communities, in which the communities define their problems, needs and priorities and participate fully in the search for solutions. It results in a true sense of community and individual “ownership” and thereby a greater commitment and interest by participating beneficiaries. Promoting self-reliance and self-help – a belief in themselves – within communities is an important goal of participatory extension. The involvement of non-public as well as public actors is also central to the success of pluralistic, participatory systems. The need for change is increasingly recognized in some countries. While the trend is to consult more closely with communities about development priorities, the culture of “we-know-best” is still deeply embedded. Moreover, “consultation” is not the same as “participation”. In the latter case it is the community that decides, while with the former decisions are still made by authorities or agencies.

As has been successfully demonstrated in various initiatives in the SSA region, participatory development approaches can simultaneously contribute towards meeting rural community needs in production, capacity building, natural resource conservation and improved livelihoods. Participatory extension does not abandon the concept or practice of technology adaptation or adoption or, where applicable, commercialization. On the contrary, it facilitates an environment under which these aims and processes are more likely to be accepted by farmers and are more likely to be sustained. The emphasis under the new pluralistic paradigm is on emancipation and empowerment of farming communities and organizations and facilitating agricultural education, development and service institutions to change and renew their systems and structures to better support farmers in their efforts to improve their food security and livelihoods.

Source: Connolly, M. & Ashworth, V. 2005

## 5. POLICY AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A PLURALISTIC EXTENSION SERVICE SYSTEM

### 5.1 Extension policy development

This is an inherent part of agricultural sector policy formulation processes and, in the emerging pluralistic paradigm for services development and provision in Africa, is increasingly based on the principles of the Neuchatel Initiative (Box 3) and the lessons arising from experiential learning and field case studies at regional, country and district/local levels. It is important for Liberia’s agricultural policymakers, professionals and practitioners in extension, education and research/innovation to understand the context in which regional

extension policy, strategy and service provision has been changing and evolving over the past fifteen years and to engage with the implications of these outcomes in their visioning and planning processes for a renewed national system.

A key insight from recent regional experience is that extension policy development is a process that can commence with acceptance and engagement with the above Neuchatel Principles and be further developed and gradually adapted and refined based on experiential learning in national institutions and at local service development and delivery levels. Investment in premature and elaborate policy development exercises that are not informed by robust in-country learning processes to assimilate local lessons and practice have been found to be academic and imprudent in terms of relevance, local learning and utilization of scarce financial resources. A guiding framework for policy development based on the Neuchatel Principles is currently recommended as the best starting point for provision of ongoing pilot learning across the range of extension functions and service provision that continually captures and incorporates key lessons from local practice. Task teams formed to advance policy development processes should be composed of a broad range of disciplinary specialists (e.g. planners, economists, agronomists, agribusiness, livestock experts and farmers).

## 5.2 Lessons and guiding principles from recent experience in Africa

Under the current pluralistic and decentralized paradigm for extension services delivery in sub-Saharan Africa, the following are some of the important lessons and guiding principles derived from recent practice and experiential learning from reform programs and projects across the region.

- To assure enduring national capacities and impacts, institutional reform and development programmes need to be strongly rooted in *local ownership, commitment and accountability* for change processes and outcomes. This includes engagement with processes, implications and outcomes of core functional analyses and role review exercises in MOAs and technical service departments.
- Renewed extension systems need to develop and demonstrate a *strong service and client orientation* that is responsive to the specific demands of different categories of farmers, from poor or marginalized smallholders seeking household food security to those with potential for commercialization.
- The desired ends for reform and transformation of extension systems (i.e. policy goals and objectives) can only be brought into effect through well conceived and *systemic change management strategies and processes* (e.g. organization development) that facilitate holism and interdependence among all actors. Piecemeal or disjointed efforts have often resulted in a slow pace of institutional learning and sometimes failure to foster viable partnerships between actors in improving service arrangements.
- Programmes/projects need to engage in pilot learning and innovation with alternative frameworks for extension service provision at local delivery levels (community and district) before outscaling or mainstreaming to wider provincial or nationwide levels across the system.
- Reorientation towards their changed roles and ongoing competency development for managers is an important thrust in reform programmes for extension services provision. Programmes in leadership/management development combined with mentoring and

coaching have proven very useful – especially for those with responsibility for service development, coordination and provision.

- Extension capabilities at field level have to be extended beyond imparting mere technical knowledge/skills. Staff competencies need to be developed/strengthened in social and organizational development areas such as participatory problem-solving for food security with resource-poor smallholders, supporting the development of self-reliant farmer groups and associations, and identifying and training lead or contact farmers to conduct farmer-to-farmer extension.
- While national systems embarking on institution-wide change and capacity development programmes require substantial initial advice, support and facilitation from external specialists in extension reform processes, there is a need from the outset to plan and develop partner and counterpart competencies to manage, facilitate and evaluate internal change processes and outcomes.
- A crucial factor in assuring sustained progress in service reform programmes is the realization that there are no easy prescriptions for change as circumstances in each country are different. The preparedness of all actors to engage in open experiential learning processes is crucial for success as this facilitates the growth of leadership and self-confidence to support partners/colleagues in testing alternative, innovative approaches while taking responsibility for their shared efforts, outcomes and lessons.
- As the roles, competencies and expected contributions of public sector staff are changed and geared towards improved performance, there is a need to revisit *reward and incentive systems* as part of the wider reform of the national public service.

**Box 3. The Neuchatel Initiative for paradigm change in agricultural service systems**

The commitment to change and renewal in agricultural services provision in Africa comes in the context where international donors and development agencies have come together under the Neuchatel Initiative (NI) to engage in clearer and more strategic dialogue with national partners to develop a common and shared vision for the future role, delivery arrangements and funding of extension services in rural development. The NI Common Framework for Extension (1999) advanced some key principles to guide and inform transformation processes. Those principles include:

- the importance of *sound agricultural policy* to providing a conducive and enabling environment for rural sector development;
- *pluralism* i.e. various state and non-state actors providing a diverse range of services under coordinated arrangements;
- the importance of the *market* and *demand-led impetus* in the supply of goods and services;
- *facilitation and problem solving approaches* for more heterogeneous and resource-poor communities;
- *decentralized provision of services* in processes of continuous dialogue with local stakeholders.

Extension service providers are, therefore, increasingly challenged to open up to new demands in more businesslike ways and, through broadening their horizons and approaches, to renew their roles as more active and effective players in assuring food security, improving rural livelihoods and supporting smallholder farmers and organizations with potentials for commercialization.

## 6. PRIORITIES AND PROCESSES FOR RENEWAL OF THE NATIONAL EXTENSION SYSTEM

### 6.1 Starting over with fresh thinking and openness to new approaches

<sup>7</sup>*Prior to the conflict, many observers claimed that Liberia's public sector was characterized by a chaotic regulatory environment, a derelict public administration with unwieldy procurement and financial systems, and a large parastatal sector... This state of affairs will need to be changed if a smallholder strategy is to be successful... Given the opportunity for Liberia to "start over" in developing new approaches to problems the country is facing, Ministries need to think "out of the box" and not just adopt "the before war" institutional context. Experiences from other countries could provide useful examples.*

The above comments, combined with some of the earlier findings under institutions, which explain current multiple levels of budgetary controls as partly "a relic of former practices", underscore the magnitude of the challenge facing MOA and its partners in changing mindsets and bringing in fresh thinking and approaches to renew its performance in planning, management and implementation practices in provision of extension services.

Given the principles of the SPI and the core focus on measures that will have an immediate impact on production, food security and rural commerce, it is the redefinition and reshaping of the role and capability of MOA that poses the biggest sectoral challenge to GOL over the coming years. To gear effectively itself to manage the transition from ad hoc emergency measures for vulnerable groups to long-term development of farmers and their organizations, MOA – specifically the Department of Regional Development and Extension (DRDE) – will have to learn and grow from an "old paradigm" implementation agency into a new role of coordination, facilitation, regulation, partnership, collaboration and evaluation with its focal partners in the public and non-public sectors. Therefore, the process of managing that change effectively merits overarching priority as the *sine qua non* in building human resource capacity in DRDE and MOA.

### 6.2 Department-wide change management programme

Recent experiences from other African countries (e.g. Ghana, Malawi, South Africa, Zambia) indicate that, to engage purposefully with the formidable challenge of re-orientation and capacity development, the DRDE will need to embark upon a *Change Management Programme* (CMP) specifically designed for facilitation across all levels of staff in the department. The programme would initially be of medium-term duration (2–3 years) with staff devoting about 20 percent of their time to its activities in the inception phase over the first 18 months. This would allow the programme to be implemented concurrently with, and without disruption to, ongoing work plans and commitments of management and staff. The programme would be based on the principles and practices of organization development (OD) to assure openness to new thinking, learning and self-development, individual and group accountability for performance, and institutional ownership in the process through which the department grows progressively into its new or revised functions and roles. For coherence and cohesion, MOA should give serious consideration to the implementation of a similar type of programme Ministry-wide.

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<sup>7</sup> Tefft, J. *Agricultural Policy and Food Security in Liberia*. (2005) ESA Working Paper No. 05-11. FAO.

Programmes that aim substantively to change extension institutions and services have to focus strongly on processes that review roles, responsibilities and relationships (the 3Rs) for institutional units, groups and individuals. This exercise, including preparation of revised job descriptions, needs to be conducted early on in the change programme and should be informed by the findings from system-wide services and functional analyses exercises that appraise the relevance and costs of existing services for clients. The reason for such strategic focus is because, without early clarity on these matters, important related issues of performance and accountability at various levels may subsequently be difficult to pinpoint, assign and assure across the service providers in the system. Personnel need to contemplate and engage with their new roles from very early in the change programme.

The proposed focal areas for a CMP for DRDE are outlined in Box 4.

**Box 4. Proposed focal areas for a change management programme – DRDE, MOA**

- Study/learning tours by DRDE/MOA, farmers and NSA partners to other African countries to gain knowledge and insights from experiences and case studies in the reform and renewal of extension systems.
- A national multi-stakeholder workshop for initial orientation of key sector actors; formation and orientation of National Change Team and DRDC-led Task/Change Teams to lead major thrusts and exercises outlined below.
- **Service analysis exercise to assess relevance, quality, capabilities and costs of existing service provision to various smallholder farmer categories at county level.**
- Core functional analysis (CFA) exercise followed by a national stakeholder workshop to agree core functions of DRDE, MOA and its relationships with key partners.
- Visioning, planning and reorganization of DRDE, MOA including organizational structure, guidelines for multi-annual and decentralized budgetary allocations, disciplinary specialisms, and staffing from head office to county/clan levels.
- A DRDE skills audit followed by revision of departmental job descriptions at divisional, specialist and county levels; subsequent review and adoption by MOA and staff recontracting/recruitment under a competitive remuneration system.
- DRDE TNAs followed by management training and mentoring programs in agriservices planning and coordination for divisional managers, technical staff and county coordinators.
- Preparation and implementation of new training programmes for county trainers/staff in PEA, FFS, agribusiness/farm enterprise management, farmer group and organizational development.
- Design and facilitation of pilot programmes at county level involving new approaches to local services coordination and delivery under pluralistic and decentralized arrangements with robust stakeholder involvement processes.
- Continual evaluation of learning and progress in accomplishing expected outputs by change teams with the support of external facilitation/expertise as required.

The CMP outlined above would form the core of a *comprehensive management and staff training and development plan* that should be elaborated and included for support as a strategically important public good investment under the PSIP, integrally linked to the IPRS. The costs of such comprehensive and transformational capacity development programmes are undoubtedly high – but the consequences and costs of not embarking on them can also be grave and high.

<sup>8</sup>Capacity, perhaps more than any other variable, will determine how quickly Liberia will turn itself around in coming years. It will need to be rebuilt at all levels – public sector,

<sup>8</sup> Draft Interim GOL Poverty Reduction Strategy (2006).

*private sector, civil society – almost simultaneously. But while every area could conceivably be considered a priority for capacity enhancing support, clear and decisive prioritization, sequencing and targeting of responses will be crucial.*

Without new and adequate strategic investment in the human capital of its most vital public service department, Liberia and its donor partners may risk piecemeal support for institutions that clearly require and deserve a new and sustained beginning in revitalizing their contributions and services to the rural population, where over 80 percent of households exist as poor subsistence farm families with no cash income. That reality, combined with the instructive international lesson that long-term commitments are needed for sustainable reform of extension service systems, provides the context and makes a strong case for new investments, partnerships and development modalities that have the potential to give effect in practice to the <sup>9</sup>10 *Default Principles for Capacity Development* in shaping a renaissance in Liberia's rural service provision in the years ahead.

## 7 FOCAL THRUSTS FOR ACTION IN EXTENSION RENEWAL

### 7.1 County focus in the development, planning and provision of services

With the focus for decentralized and demand-led extension service provision centring on the counties, there is a need to put in place processes that will assure robust local stakeholder involvement and well-planned and coordinated provision of advisory and training services to farmers. Services have to respond to the differentiated needs of various farming groups to take account of agro-ecological zones, smallholder farmer categories, focal commodities and population density.

Based on experiences in other countries, DRDE/MOA need to renew and strengthen agriservices planning, coordination and impact evaluation at county level through (1) facilitating multi-stakeholder fora with specific inclusion of marginalized and vulnerable farming groups, and (2) leading substantive county coordination teams/units for services development, planning and coordination. To be effective, such units will need to conduct services analyses and develop capability profiles for all major service providers in each county to inform and facilitate appropriate and optimal deployment of actors and assure quality of delivery in county extension plans and strategies. In designing new programmes for service provision, MOA/DRDC has to ensure that issues of gender equity and equality are analysed and incorporated into the design of extension service programmes.

The respective functions and specific roles of staff in the DRDE divisions need to be clarified as part of the departmental CFA exercise. In relation to <sup>10</sup>HIV/AIDS, it is important that there is harmonization between MOA and other relevant ministries and that the topic of HIV/AIDS is mainstreamed in extension training programmes and meetings involving rural communities. The social challenges for extension systems in responding to gender and HIV/AIDS issues are described in Box 5.

<sup>9</sup> Lopez, C. and Theison, T. (2003). *Ownership, Leadership and Transformation: Can We Do Better for Capacity Development?* Earthscan/UNDP, New York, USA.

<sup>10</sup> National prevalence estimated at 10–12 percent: Source: Draft *Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy* (2006).

**Box 5. Engaging with the social extension challenges posed by HIV/AIDS and gender equality**

Many rural communities are struggling to survive in the face of the havoc wreaked by the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Families are being debilitated – even decimated – by the loss of heads of households, decreasing labour for agricultural production, children unable to attend school because of the need to care for affected family members and the loss of family income arising from incapacitation of adults and reduced scope for income-generating activities. Increasingly, minors or orphans have to head affected households.

While there is greater awareness and understanding among rural communities of the impacts of the pandemic in recent years, there are serious challenges for rural service providers in promoting and fostering adoption of mitigation measures to strengthen the survival capabilities of households in nutritional and food security. Those measures involve the use of agricultural production practices and technologies to optimize household food self-reliance while conserving collective family energies and labour.

In addition to improved food production systems at individual household level, there is also a need to facilitate more active community-based approaches to strengthening survival strategies and livelihoods. There is an increasingly recognized need for new conceptual and strategic approaches to provision of extension services at both community and district levels to better interpret and respond to the complex social demands that have become very evident.

As women are often centrally responsible for labour-intensive operations in household food production and utilization, it is critical that social and participatory extension approaches are implemented to facilitate their emancipation and empowerment and progressively develop the potential and competencies of those women in assuming key roles in group and community leadership. The newly evolving decentralized extension systems will have to engage purposefully with these challenges and transform both their approaches and their capabilities to renew relevance and impact in providing services appropriate to the immediate and acute social demands throughout rural society for basic nutrition for survival and, in the medium to long term, more stable and locally sustainable livelihoods.

*Source: Connolly, M. FAO/GTZ Study on Practices for HIV/AIDS Mitigation, 2003.*

## 7.2 Services analysis, planning and coordination

While there is an Agricultural Coordinating Committee (ACC) at national level to provide general coordination of international and national NGOs, MOA does not yet have substantive information at county level on the roles and capabilities (especially for farmer training) of the array of non-state “quasi-extension” service providers. It needs to develop such profiles urgently in order to begin to take the lead in its new role of facilitating optimal service planning, coordination, provision, evaluation and quality assurance across the country. The coordination of international and national NGOs is acknowledged by MOA County Coordinators to be one of the foremost challenges they face, and they are manifestly unable to cope adequately with it at present. The dependence of county MOA staff on NGOs for operational funding for transport and project initiation and support has understandably weakened their standing and credibility in taking a lead role in service planning and coordination in counties, especially those that are very dependent on emergency food relief.

Findings from a preliminary exercise to obtain profiles of NGOs involved in extension/farmer training during this assessment revealed that respondents are not yet accustomed to sharing information openly on their activities with MOA. In response to a questionnaire exploring their activities in farmer training, the few NGOs surveyed appeared reticent and unforthcoming; for example in response to a request for examples of the training programmes they conduct with farmers, no sample programmes were furnished. Under protracted emergency conditions where GOL/MOA presence and capacities have been weak, NGOs

have had wide, and perhaps often unbridled, freedom and reach in implementing their activities. In the current national transition to “rehabilitation and development mode” this situation will clearly need to change, and enhanced mutual understanding of what this means for MOA and NGOs is an important area for proactive attention by both parties. MOA/DRDE will need to take the lead in facilitating a process of more active dialogue and interaction via county-level workshops where NGOs present and discuss their profiles and activities with key stakeholders as preparatory inputs to county agricultural planning processes. To do this, County Coordinators and key staff will need training to strengthen their leadership, facilitation and planning skills.

The aim of a wider service analysis exercise (see box under institutions earlier) is to identify the outputs i.e. the deliverables (products or services) that are provided currently for farmer client(s) by providers and obtain estimates of the actual costs of each output. The cost estimates for each service will provide real insights into how existing services are being financed and the relative allocations, contributions and current prioritization of given services under specific functional areas. For example, NGOs sometimes finance the travel and subsistence costs of extension personnel for project advisory activities without making any contribution to the personnel overhead cost of the officers (daily remuneration costs). In such cases the public service is subsidizing the provision of the service. This cost element has to be factored in to establish the true costs of that service – it is not merely the operational costs provided by the NGO. Another issue is that of coverage of farmers by extension service providers. How many farmers in a given area benefit directly from services and at what cost annually? These kinds of issues/questions will be addressed in the service analysis exercise. Based on the recent assessment of NGO activities in agricultural extension undertaken under CAAS-Lib, it is concluded that extension services in counties such as Grand Gedeh, Nimba, Bong, and Grand Cape Mount will have to be funded and delivered, at least in the short to medium term, by GOL.

The service analysis will help to guide service providers on the criteria that should inform their decisions on service prioritization, planning and funding. The analysis will also give some preliminary indication of the effectiveness and efficiency with which DECE and other NSA providers perform their functions. The findings and results of exercises such as the services analysis should be shared with stakeholder fora by service managers/staff so as to gain client feedback and input to policy formulation and programming. Processes of stakeholder involvement in the services system have to be sustainable, which means that eventually they have to be self-led, organized and financed, and this has to be emphasized strongly and prioritized by all actors during the transformation stage. One crucial test of how effectively the vision for the overall renewal of the agricultural services system has been realized will be the extent to which emancipated processes of stakeholder participation are in place and visibly robust in leading and determining the agendas for service provision to farmers in the counties.

### 7.3 Learning, innovation and knowledge management

Just as planning processes benefit substantially from approaches centred in “learning by doing together”, so does the development of appropriate arrangements for service management and provision, field-based approaches to technology development and farmer

knowledge and organization. Recent experiences with PEA in <sup>11</sup>Limpopo Province, South Africa provide some interesting case studies in this respect.

Often there are no relevant models or formulas for framing responses to the challenges presented in services provision to enhance the economic status and livelihoods of smallholder farmers. Based on analysis of experiences at local level and in other countries, farmers and their advisors decide to test approaches and adapt them to their local circumstances through “learning by doing together”. These initiatives may be informed by wider macro studies of the potential of given commodities or enterprises in given areas/ecologies, or through focal area approaches that aim to tap the comparative advantages of given areas and communities for specific enterprise development. Such *approach development* would appear to be very relevant for innovation and services development by DECE, CARI and other stakeholder partners and farmers.

The old style research-extension linkages have not worked very well over the past 20 years in most African countries. In the emerging paradigm, both need to demonstrate more relevance and appropriateness to farmers’ demands. Research is expected to produce innovations, and extension is expected to provide services. Farmer-centred collaboration involving both research and extension, working closely with farmers, is emerging as the most appropriate way of assuring improved relevance and accountability in their combined efforts. Working together, key actors can develop “home grown” knowledge and institutional capabilities in areas such as:

- viable food production and nutrition programmes for poor households;
- role delineation of actors and complementarity in collaboration/partnerships;
- farmer group and organizational development;
- how commodity and value chains can improve livelihoods;
- provision of appropriate information and farmer training at county and clan levels.

The link to knowledge management rests in the quality of learning during such processes and the sharing and documentation of specific experiences with colleagues and for institutional memory through case studies and lessons to guide ongoing programme and project design and planning. Some reasons why pilot learning and innovation is necessary in the transformation of an extension system are given in Box 6.

#### 7.4 The emerging framework for extension service delivery

Based on experiences in other African countries, conceptual and operational frameworks are evolving that encompass the values, process and modalities of decentralized and pluralistic extension systems. Three pillars form the basis of these emerging frameworks:

- understanding and interpreting farmers’ demands based on their real problems;
- organizing appropriate service responses to meet those demands;
- supporting those responses at policy and programme levels in MOAs and MOFs.

Figure 1 illustrates the components and processes in such an emerging service delivery framework in South Africa and related project initiatives/strategies for its implementation.

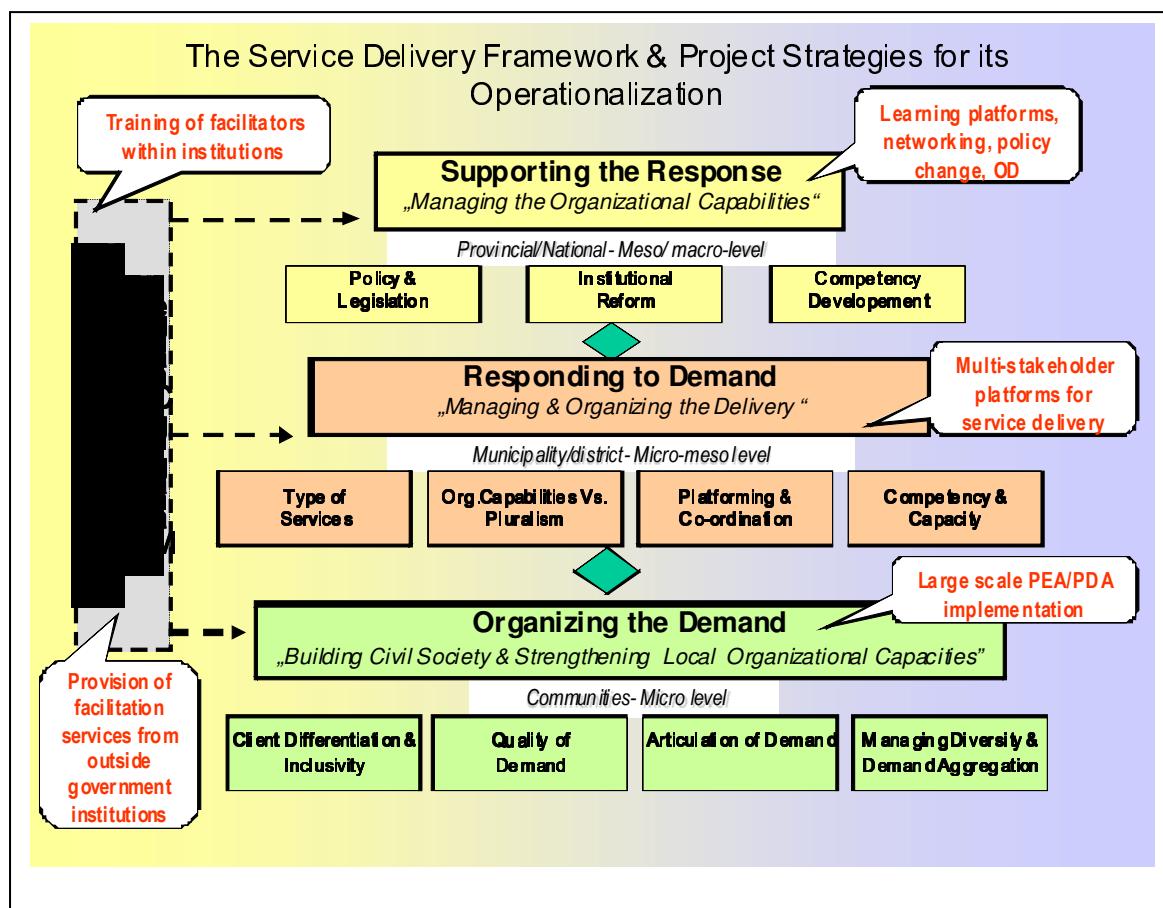
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<sup>11</sup> Strategic Framework for Re-Orientation and Renewal of Limpopo Department of Agriculture. (2006) DOA, South Africa

**Box 6. Why are pilot learning and innovation necessary in transforming an agricultural extension service system?**

- Changes to county systems of extension services provision on the scale and depth proposed under decentralized arrangements have not been introduced before in Liberia.
- The agendas for change are complex and cut across many aspects of existing institutional mandates, functions and service responsibilities. County personnel will have to “grow into” their emerging roles and engage actively with the challenges.
- As no comprehensive case studies of good or best practice yet exist for such a system in Liberia, there is a need to explore and test a range of concepts and strategies at local levels (*in situ*) initially in a “learning by doing together” approach.
- There is a need to build gradually the competencies of individuals and capabilities of teams/organizations/institutions across the system to learn and gain the confidence to bring the change agendas into effect.
- There is a need to foster high-quality learning from experiential practice strategies or practices nationally to districts in a discrete number of districts initially, before seeking to upscale or mainstream.
- To seek to introduce such a new system without pilot learning would risk disruption to the entire existing system of service delivery, without the crucial lessons and insights to implement the alternative arrangements with the competencies and demonstrated knowledge necessary to succeed.

**Figure 1: Service delivery framework – Broadening Agricultural Services for Extension Delivery (BASED) RSA, 2002.**



Senior management and staff of DRDE, together with farmers and NSAs, should familiarize themselves fully with new developments in extension services management and emerging

frameworks and processes for field delivery through study and learning tours to other African countries with relevant experiences in demand-led, pluralistic approaches.

### 7.5 Decentralization of extension services

Services for farm families are delivered at county and district/clan level and thus decisions relating to such local delivery are best made at that level. Where decision-making affecting services delivery in districts is retained at central/national levels, there has often been very poor delivery or quality of services and little valid accountability at the appropriate local level for the shortcomings/failures. Centrally controlled systems of extension services management and delivery have in many instances been supply-driven, remote from reality and not sufficiently responsive to local needs – they have often led to outdated approaches or programmes being imposed or continued long past their usefulness, resulting in wastage of scarce resources.

Decentralization involves the devolution of authority or decision-making to the level at which most knowledge, insight and practical accountability for consequences of decisions and actions exist. In Liberia, MOA intends to “*rehabilitate and adequately equip decentralized structures to ensure high quality and timely delivery of extension services*”. For effective decentralization, however, systems and processes have been shown to be more important than structures. Effective systems involve fiscal measures that allow local control and authority over the budget, under processes of open and due accountability to (1) local communities and (2) central government. Local administrative procedures for devolving agricultural budgets should, for example, include specific provision for programme decentralization to ensure transparent responsiveness to farmer demands under county agricultural development plans.

The aim is to focus decentralization of extension services provision at county level on building local capacity to assure coordination and complementarity of efforts between stakeholders and providers in the new pluralistic paradigm. Gaining consensus and integration of county-level efforts among all actors, together with harmony and accountability within districts to assure client satisfaction and optimal resource utilization, will constitute the key indicators for success in this crucial area.

For decentralization of extension service provision to succeed, it is recommended to:

- Include provision for initial testing of decentralized approaches under pilot learning and innovation (see 5.3 above). For example, through a special derogation, devolve budgets for PEA training in one of the poorer counties directly to the CAC and his/her county training team and see what improvements/differences can be achieved in delivery arrangements and impacts within the existing budgetary allocation system.
- Orient and develop capacities of key local actors in advance of putting decentralization measures in place. This means explaining to local extension management what the new administrative and organizational arrangements will be, how they will be implemented, and what the operational relationships will be with local government entities and other ministries. It is also necessary to provide orientation for local government personnel (mostly administrators) on agricultural extension services and rural development.
- Ensure that extension management participates actively in all county and community planning processes led or facilitated by local government organizations.

## 7.6 Farmer training and organization development

The MOA will fulfil a facilitating and coordinating role in extension service provision in partnership with other non-state actors in two central areas:

- optimizing household food security for poorer smallholders who have the potential to attain it fully or partially;
- focusing on the development of farmer groups and organizations that have the potential to produce surpluses for the market and commercialize their enterprises.

How the emerging pluralistic extension system responds to those two challenging areas will determine both its relevance and its effectiveness over time in services coordination and provision for farmers. In terms of the extension proficiencies needed at management and field levels to respond to the above priorities, MOA/DECE will need to invest in core capability development in two key areas: (1) participatory extension approaches (PEA), and (2) agribusiness development, including farm management expertise. To provide planning, coordination and oversight for programmes at national and county levels, MOA will need to develop specialist staff in those areas that also possess strong facilitation/training skills to actively support field staff and farmers.

In addition to technical knowledge, the new range of competencies for effective field extension agents *include process facilitation, farmer communication and mobilization, group development and dynamics, organization development, agribusiness and marketing*. Those proficiencies will demand higher levels of ability, qualifications and knowledge from both new entrants and existing practitioners in a performance-based extension service delivery system. Team approaches by extension staff for group training and development of farmers will also be essential in a system where the farmer to DECE extension agent ratio will be probably high (up to 2 500 rural families per clan agent).

For testing and local adaptation of new approaches to extension systems such as PEA and farmer field schools (FFS), MOA and partners should conduct initial pilot learning exercises in about three counties with comprehensive documentation of programmes and local stakeholder evaluation of impacts, training costs and viability before outscaling to further counties or national level. In the context of decentralized extension systems that involve increased commitment to group development and farmer-to-farmer knowledge exchange, it is vital to ensure that new approaches are demonstrably relevant, that trainer capabilities are proven, and that outcomes are viable and enduring for smallholder farmers under their particular local circumstances. In this respect, farmers have to be increasingly involved, initially through robust participation in local stakeholder fora, in assessing the effectiveness and impact of extension services and field personnel.

The central thrust of emerging extension systems in Africa is on emancipating and empowering farmers as full partners in development. With the county as the decentralized hub for agricultural service provision in Liberia, improved local availability and access to knowledge becomes critical. Experience from other countries indicates that making agricultural information available close to farmers makes a difference, especially when extension agent coverage and farm visits are declining. In that context, MOA at county level should consider in concert with NSAs the setting up, on a pilot basis initially, of rural/agricultural knowledge centres in locations that farmers visit frequently (e.g. markets) or in village/community centres. Such centres could provide extension leaflets, periodic

farmer group meetings, training materials and, where possible, access to ICTs – especially to promote and encourage greater interest and involvement by young people in farming as a career.

A comprehensive medium-term staff training and development plan should be prepared by a MOA/NSA task team to develop the core capacity for the renewed Liberian public extension system. Financial support should be sought for this plan under the Public Sector Investment Programme (PSIP). The plan would cover orientation and education of department heads and senior staff, and the reorientation and training of MOA county teams in the new service arrangements, including extension managers, specialists and field staff. New foundation training programmes in agriservices development and management, PEA, farmer group and organization development and agribusiness/SME development could be initial focal areas for action in the plan

## **7.7 Staffing complement and performance management in MOA/DRDe**

Recent experience with reform and renewal of extension systems in other countries indicates that for any new system to be affordable and effective it will need a much reduced overall staff complement compared with that of the 1980s or 1990s (perhaps one-quarter to one-third), but with higher and more flexible/versatile staff competencies and performance contracts.

The CFA exercise should inform detailed decision-making by MOA/DRDE on the future extension system structure, staffing and funding.

The DRDE should focus initially on putting core extension service teams (five to six persons, led by the CAC) in place in each county and providing orientation and active training support to them in planning, coordination and management of agriservices as early as circumstances and resources permit. However, without a competitive, performance-linked remuneration system that is at least as attractive as that obtainable from NGOs, MOA will not attract the more highly qualified and proficient staff that the new extension system will undoubtedly need. MOA/GOL public service policies on public sector remuneration will need to be revised and updated. Without the commitment and means to recruit, re-employ and re-train staff with proven ability or proficiency, MOA will not be able to embark with any probability of success on the major capacity development challenge facing it in developing a renewed extension system.

## **7.8 Farm enterprise and market information systems**

Given the national policy intention to develop the potential for commercialization of smallholder farmers and promote value addition through improved agroprocessing and marketing of commodities and produce, there is an evident need to strengthen and develop the economic and financial analysis and knowledge of farm enterprises. This includes gross margin analysis, project planning and implementation and capabilities to facilitate and supervise feasibility studies in specialist commodity/produce areas. While some NGOs are involved in an ad hoc manner in assessing the margins and profitability of crop and livestock enterprises, the need for enhanced leadership and capability in these areas within a renewed MOA/DRDE is very apparent.

Farm management capabilities need to be developed at national and county levels in enterprise and gross margin analysis and specific training should be provided for farmer groups in these areas and in broader aspects of financial management. Additionally, there is the need for information on regional, national and global markets. MOA with DECE should consider setting up a farm enterprise and market information system/unit involving personnel from policy and extension units to strengthen overall knowledge management in support of sectoral policy development, planning and programme/enterprise development.

## 7.9 Strengthening partnerships between agricultural extension and education

<sup>12</sup>*The reform and modernization of national extension systems will remain a dream if measures are not taken for reforming pre-service education in extension. Any serious effort at reforming the national agricultural extension systems should logically start with the reform in extension education at agricultural academic institutions; which currently produce ill-prepared graduates for working in a modern extension service.*

In higher education institutions in many African countries, the academic programmes and curricula in extension are outdated and increasingly out of recent learning loops involving innovation in services development over the past 15 years. In the new competency areas such as PEA/PDA, local and farmer organization development and pluralistic agriservices management, it is clear that, in many cases, learning in the field has moved ahead of that in colleges and university faculties of agriculture – many of which are operating in antiquated paradigms bereft of modern approaches and systems of experiential learning.

From an extension perspective, it is essential that joint task teams from national agricultural extension and education systems be formed to begin the process of sharing and mutual learning in the interests of farmers, students and staff. The education and training of rural people in trades and vocational skills will be critical to providing enhanced rural services for farmers as they seek to modernize, increase productivity and generate local employment.

## 8. AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICES DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME

The foregoing analysis and focal thrusts for action comprise a complex agenda for facilitation and implementation by MOA/DRDE. The CMP involves a sequence of interdependent tasks or “change inputs” that pave the way for renewal and capacity development of the service system to begin to engage with the array of challenges and deliverables described in section 5 above.

Experience from recent practice in sub-Saharan African countries indicates that the “change agenda” has to be advanced in a systemic and holistic way by taking all thrusts forward in a learning process with optimum and cohesive participation by all actors. In many countries this has led to the design, planning, funding and implementation of agricultural services programmes (also named agricultural service management programmes or support programmes). While there have been mixed experiences with these types of programme, the

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<sup>12</sup> Qamar, M.K. (2005). *Modernizing National Agricultural Extension Systems: A Practical Guide for Policy-makers of Developing Countries*. FAO. Rome, Italy

lessons learned have been instructive and have led to improved design and facilitation of more recent programmes by MOAs and donor partners.

As integrated efforts, agricultural service programmes avoid the overly reductionist approaches to agricultural institutional change pursued in the past, which often failed to harness the momentum of change – often diluting its substance and thrusts by overemphasizing single issues or aspects at the expense of the wider, institution-wide processes that make or break the entire effort. They were often “project prescriptions” seeking the ends of change without any means or processes to achieve those ends.

MOA/DRDE should give serious consideration to an integrated agricultural service development programme to take forward the formidable but necessary agenda proposed above to bring about the much-needed renaissance of its national extension system.

### 8.1 Short-term recommendations

- Representative teams (MOA/CACs/farmers/stakeholders/NGOs) from the agricultural sector should undertake study tours to selected African (e.g. South Africa/Kenya) and other countries.
- Conduct short training programmes for CACs and senior staff to orient them towards management and coordination of agricultural services under the emerging decentralized, pluralistic paradigm.
- A services analysis exercise should be started by the MOA Department of Planning and Development and DRDE following the Planning and Partnership Workshop proposed with MOA/NGOs earlier.
- Design and implement a nationwide programme to train MOA facilitators/trainers at county levels (three to four per county initially) building on recent and current experiences with FFS/NFSP and UNDP/NARDA.
- In conjunction with FAO/NFSP, and building on existing knowledge and practice with CBOs/NGOs, prepare training programmes, manuals and extension support materials on household nutrition and food security – cognizant of current low rural literacy levels.
- Hold consultative workshops with farmer organizations/associations on the development of a new training programme on farmer organization development; develop TOR and set up a task team to advance the process with stakeholders.
- Conduct a study on rural young people and their potential and training needs to become involved in farming as a career; explore prospects for an urgent pilot programme in this area.
- Conduct a TNA of management and staff in DRDE and input proposals for training and development to the wider MOA staff training and development plan.
- Form joint extension–research teams with CARI staff and farmers in areas prioritized for programme development by farmers/stakeholders in county/district planning processes.

### 8.2 Long-term recommendations

- Design and facilitate the implementation of an *Agricultural Services Development and Management Programme* in DRDE to take forward the agendas for change management outlined in Box 4 above; integrate the programme with wider MOA institutional capacity development and performance improvement programmes.

- Facilitate new partnerships with agricultural education institutions through the setting up of joint task teams, and perhaps programme development, on sectoral education needs/exchange/curriculum development/modernization.
- Establish, initially on a pilot basis, rural/agricultural knowledge or resource centres, preferably at locations where farmers congregate or meet.
- Introduce performance-based contracts and remuneration systems for extension management and staffing in line with MOA/GOL personnel policies.
- Promote and facilitate robust stakeholder involvement processes in all counties and districts in preparation for mainstream decentralization measures.
- Ensure mainstreaming of cross-cutting issues such as HIV/AIDS and gender equity/equality in all extension training programmes and cooperate with UNDP at county level in striving to achieve the MDG targets in these and related areas.
- Devise and agree impact evaluation criteria for local extension service provision with stakeholders and farmers.
- Improve knowledge management on extension policies, concepts and practices, and document learning and case studies to inform policy development and strengthen institutional memory in DRDE/MOA.
- Develop expertise and provide technical inputs for the farm enterprise and management information system in conjunction with the Department of Planning and Development.
- Consolidate learning, approach development and divisional expertise for farmer group and organization development, and facilitate modular training programmes covering areas such as agribusiness, marketing, financial management, organization development and service provision.

### CAAS-Lib – Institutions investment proposal 3

Name of programme	Agricultural Services Development and Management Programme for DRDE and Stakeholder Partners
Institutional responsibility	MOA/DRDE/stakeholder partners
Aim(s) of activity	Renew and develop DRDE capacity for improved performance in facilitating agricultural services development, coordination, management provision and evaluation in a decentralized system for rural community development.
Description of main activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Renew and reorganize DRDE functions, organizational systems and capabilities in line with the new paradigm for pluralism in agricultural services provision, including stakeholder involvement and decentralized services coordination and provision to farmers.</li> <li>• Direct investment in improving the facilities, equipment and mobility of DRDE management and staff through procurement of vehicles, motorcycles and office/training equipment for decentralized/field staff.</li> <li>• Strengthen DRDE coordination capabilities in county and district-level planning and coordination of agricultural programmes and service provision, including stakeholder involvement processes.</li> <li>• Facilitate training of DRDE/CBO facilitators for county- and district-level provision of participatory training programmes in household food security and farmer organization development.</li> <li>• Strengthen DRDE capacities in knowledge management for agri-enterprise development and impact evaluation of extension programmes.</li> <li>• Facilitate and consolidate decentralization of MOA services to counties/districts, including evaluation processes.</li> </ul>
Expected result(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A responsive and streamlined extension department facilitating service provision that meets the needs of farmers cost-effectively and efficiently.</li> <li>• Multi-stakeholder partners cooperate with DRDE and are satisfied with approaches to planning and county-level services provision to farmers.</li> </ul>

Name of programme	Agricultural Services Development and Management Programme for DRDE and Stakeholder Partners
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DRDE management and staff capacities developed to high standards of performance supported by comprehensive monitoring and evaluation systems.</li> <li>MOA/DRDE has a state-of-the-art knowledge management system at central and county levels with local agricultural knowledge/information centres geared to the specific needs of various farmer groups.</li> <li>Extension services are fully decentralized to all counties, with county teams integrated into planning processes with local government institutions.</li> </ul>
Impact on food security, poverty reduction & economic development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DRDE will be better positioned to deliver programmes for poverty reduction and provide coordination for all actors involved in programme implementation and service provision.</li> <li>Decentralization and integration of DRDE activities into county development systems will help to ensure that programmes and services are relevant and responsive to the local demands and needs of farmers and that training and services are provided cost-effectively to farmers (subsidiarity).</li> <li>Integrated and farmer-centred planning with all actors will lead to the emergence of self-reliant farmer groups and organizations contributing optimally to local food security and producing surpluses for income generating agri-enterprises that will lift the income base and livelihoods of rural communities.</li> </ul>
Period of execution	2008–2012
Estimated cost	US\$8 million

## 9. AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION

### 9.1 General overview

Agricultural education and training (AET) is one of the essential building blocks that underpins any effective sustainable agriculture development strategy, and produces the human capital required for agricultural development. Agricultural education programmes provide education and training of agricultural professionals in a wide range of instructional areas at different educational levels, using various pedagogies, and adopting best practices as appropriate. Unfortunately, AET in Liberia has not been seen as essential to sustained agricultural development but instead as a complementary activity, and therefore very few resources have been invested in AET programmes.

The low priority given to AET within the agricultural development matrix during the past fifteen years has resulted in serious deficiencies of available trained agricultural professionals. While this situation has been exacerbated due to disruption and eventual closure of educational institutions throughout the period of the civil conflict, these deficiencies were also evident prior to that period. This deficiency of available trained professionals has undoubtedly contributed to the stifling of agricultural development efforts over the years.

Secondary and college-level programmes developed prior to the civil conflict offered a limited range of instructional areas, and lacked the necessary coordination with agricultural research (at CAF and CARI), local knowledge and information centres, and educational agencies responsible for developing national curricula and for regulating and administrating educational programmes. By and large the same situation exists currently.

Curricula for vocational agriculture training programmes and short-term agriculture training programmes are developed independently by each school, NGO, or agency carrying out the training, with no input from the Ministry of Education (MOE), MOA, the CAF/UL, or CARI. Clearly there is a need to set up a process of collaboration between the aforementioned institutions, through which minimum content standards are developed and proper mechanisms put in place that can provide oversight of the development of all vocational agriculture training curricula and in the administration of vocational agriculture training programmes.

Agricultural education programmes form an important link in the interactive process (the other two links being research and information systems, and extension systems) through which knowledge and information, technology, and advanced methods acquired through study, research, and through interaction with farmers and other actors, are taught to individuals and introduced into farming systems, ultimately resulting in increased incomes and improvements in the quality of life of rural farmers. Currently AET programmes have no such links with CARI, or research being done in Cuttinton University's agricultural programme, the national extension service or other agriculture service providers.

Agricultural development can be sustained only when there are adequate numbers of trained agricultural professionals available. Currently there are serious gaps in the total numbers and range of specialization of agricultural professionals, specifically in research, teaching and extension. The current agriculture curriculum at the CAF and CU, which offers a very limited number of areas of specialization at B.Sc. level and no advanced/graduate level training, does little by way of redressing this critical lack of trained agriculturists.

Curricula at both the CAF and CU must be revised to allow for an increase in the number of instructional programme areas offering B.Sc. degrees in agriculture (and related areas), and a real commitment made to introduce, within the medium term, graduate degree programmes in agriculture. This will ensure that a stock of trained agricultural professionals and specialists is available that can augment and/or replenish agricultural human capital, and in relationship to advanced graduate level training, at costs far less than that of equivalent overseas graduate training.

Curricula of AET programmes need to be reviewed and revised at three levels: college level education offered at the CAF/UL and CU; vocational agriculture training, which is currently being undertaken by the Booker Washington Institute (BWI), Tubman High School and Zwedru Multilateral High School; and short-term training programmes, which cover specific topics or targeted areas of intervention and are carried out mainly by NGOs and some government agencies.

Agricultural Education programmes require the full commitment and financial support of GOL and of the donor community. Financial and technical resources must be provided for strengthening and expanding instructional and research capacities of the agricultural colleges (CAF/UL & CU), and for strengthening AET programmes at other institutions. Total GOL expenditure on AET (for both secondary and higher education programmes) over the last 15 years has been dismal. Clearly this trend of low financial support must be reversed.

While GOL clearly has primary responsibility for funding national agriculture education and training programmes at the CAF, BWI and other public secondary vocational training programmes, it currently does not have the required resources.

**Table 1: Profile of agriculture education and training programmes by institutions, excluding NGOs**

Name of institution	Type of programme	Areas of specialization
CAF/University of Liberia	College level (B.Sc. degree)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agronomy</li> <li>• General Agriculture</li> <li>• General Forestry</li> <li>• Wood Science &amp; Technology</li> </ul>
CARS/Cuttington University	College level (B.Sc. degree)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agronomy</li> <li>• Animal Production</li> <li>• General Agriculture</li> <li>• Rural Development &amp; Rural Science</li> </ul>
BWI, Tubman High, Zwedru Multilateral High School	4-year secondary vocational agriculture programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General Agriculture – emphasis on food and cash crop production</li> <li>• Livestock production and animal husbandry</li> </ul>

Substantial increases in the overall level of donor financial assistance will be required over the next decade or so to help revitalize and expand instructional programme areas, develop administrative and instructional capacity and rehabilitate infrastructure at these institutions. Given the fact that the per capita cost of college-level agricultural training programmes is much higher than primary/secondary level vocational agricultural training (given the relatively high administrative, academic, infrastructural and other costs associated with university-level agricultural education), a significantly greater portion of resources should be allotted to college-level agricultural training programs at the CAF and CU.

Several studies justify increased support for university-level agricultural training programmes by showing a significantly higher rate of return to higher education than to secondary education. It is these programmes that produce the corps of highly trained individuals in all areas of specialization, who in turn become researchers, teachers, and providers of technical support and services for the agricultural sector.

Coordination of AET Programmes is critical to minimizing unnecessary programme duplication, maintaining programme standards, and providing oversight, which ensures that the range of training needs within sector is provided for. Currently there is a serious lack of coordination between the relevant parties; these include MOA, the Ministry of Education (MOE), the College of Agriculture and Forestry of the University of Liberia (CAF), the College of Agriculture, Rural Development and Sociology at Cuttington University (CARS), vocational agricultural training institutes, international non-governmental organizations (INGOs), and local NGOs, all of whom are involved in developing and delivering primary, secondary and higher agricultural education and vocational agricultural training.

Along with severe training needs within the agriculture sector, MOA itself has a range of training needs related to its organizational and institutional capacity building requirements within the context of its new organizational arrangements. High priority should be given to strengthening the capacity of the MOA's human resources development and training unit to assess, monitor and evaluate its internal personnel needs and provide that same coordination of training activities for agricultural programmes sector wide.

## **10. HISTORY AND INVENTORY OF AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION PROGRAMMES IN LIBERIA**

### **10.1 College of Agriculture & Forestry/UL & College of Agriculture, Rural Development and Sociology/Cuttington University**

University-level AET programmes were first introduced into Liberia in the late 1950s and early 1960s, with the establishment of the School of Forestry at the University of Liberia. Around this time an agriculture programme was also started at Cuttington College, now Cuttington University (CU), in Suakoko, Bong County.

Subsequent to the establishment of the School of Forestry, the Government of Liberia entered into an agreement with the United Nations Special Fund (UNSF) and FAO to assist in establishing a College of Agriculture as an integral part of the University of Liberia. The College was formally inaugurated in 1962 and a 4-year curriculum in general agriculture was developed, producing its first four graduates in 1965.

The School of Forestry, which had been established earlier with assistance from FAO, produced its first graduates in 1959. That same year the school was elevated to the status of a College offering a 4-year B.Sc. degree programme in General Forestry. Both colleges were merged in 1967 into the College of Agriculture and Forestry (CAF).

The agriculture programme that was started at Cuttington College in the late 1950s offered a 4-year degree in General Agriculture. This programme was, however, soon discontinued. During the late 1970s the Rural Development Institute (RDI) was established at Cuttington University College, now Cuttington University, offering Associate of Arts degrees in Agriculture. This programme, which lasted for about a decade, was in response to the need for trained agriculturists to work in the extension service and throughout the sector, but was discontinued due to lack of funding. While the RDI program did produce scores of graduates many of them were subsequently lost or have relocated abroad due to the civil conflict.

Cuttington University reinitiated its agriculture programme with the establishment of the College of Agriculture, Rural Development and Sociology in 1998, offering B.Sc. degrees in General Agriculture and in Rural Development and Rural Science.

#### ***10.1.1 Features of the CAF & CARS Programmes***

The University of Liberia and Cuttington University remain the only two institutions of higher learning in the country offering B.Sc. degrees in agriculture; CAF also offers a degree in forestry. Advance graduate degree programmes have not been developed at either institution. The lack of such programmes means that advanced graduate training can only be obtained abroad, at much higher cost than would be the case if it were available locally. The higher cost is indeed a constraint that limits the ability of GOL and donors to provide training of the large number of agricultural professionals required to sustain a highly developed and productive agriculture sector.

#### ***10.1.2 Enrolment in both the CAF and CARS has increased since the resumption of classes***

Enrolment in CARS increased from 10 students in the 1998/99 academic year, the year in which the programme was introduced, to 264 for academic year 2006/2007.

- Enrolment in CAF for academic year 2004/2005 totalled 71 students. Tabulation of enrolment data for 2005/2006 has not been finalized:

Agronomy	22
General Agriculture	30
General Forestry	18
Wood Science and Technology	1

**Table 2a and b. Profile of college graduates earning degrees in Agriculture Sciences**

Name of institute	Total number of graduates					
	1995/96	1997/98	1998/99	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03
CAF/UL	40	36	37	45	47	71
CARS/CU	NA	NA	NA	NA	4	40

Name of institute	Area of specialization (B.Sc. degree) total no. of graduates 1995–2005						
	Agronomy	General Agriculture	General Forestry	Animal Production	Wood Science	Rural Development & Rural Science	Home Science & Community Development
CAF/UL	81	87	101	NA	4		3
CARS/CU	5	13		8		18	

The agriculture curricula developed by the CAF and CU provide basic knowledge and skills through a limited number of course offerings combined with some laboratory and practical fieldwork, with very little research being undertaken.

- The instructional content of courses reflects an emphasis on basic knowledge and generic information, but lacks sufficient integration of location-specific knowledge acquired through the harnessing of information from indigenous research and from farmers and local farming systems, which should be integrated into their curricula to ensure relevance.
- CARS is involved in a “limited form of research” focusing on adoptive research on New Rice for Africa (NERICA) and breeding of tilapia species and pigs, but no indigenous research is currently being done at the CAF, and both programmes currently have no interaction with CARI, extension providers or farmers.

An AET programme was introduced into the Teachers College at the University of Liberia in 1980, aimed at preparing vocational agricultural instructors for secondary schools. This programme offers a B.Sc. in Agricultural Education involving the first two years of instruction at the CAF covering content areas in agriculture courses, and the last two years of instruction at the Teachers College covering the professional education courses. A small number of graduates with a B.Sc. in Agriculture Education have been produced since the inception of the programme, with most of these individuals finding employment in agricultural disciplines other than vocational education.

- Of the current total of 500 students enrolled in the Teacher College at UL only 17 are enrolled in Agriculture Education.
- The number of graduates majoring in Agriculture Education since the start of the program in 1984 is 25.

For the most part this programme is self-perpetuating and exists at the margins with low enrolment, limited instructional capacity, and lack of interaction and collaboration with complementary institutions (MoE, MoA, CARI, etc.), which would be essential for maintaining high instructional standards and relevance, and for enhancement of vocational agricultural education in secondary schools in Liberia. Vocational agricultural curricula for secondary schools have not yet been developed.

Both CAF and CU have extremely limited instructional capacity in terms of classroom and lecture facilities, instructional materials, including computing and information technology infrastructure, laboratory and shop facilities, field plots, and quantity and quality of faculty and instructional staff.

- A small number of instructors have advanced degrees. Advanced graduate training in agriculture and related areas of specialization continues to be possible only by training abroad.
- Prior to 1990 virtually all such advanced graduate training was funded by GOL with substantial assistance from foreign donors, principally USAID. The focus of these programmes was on faculty development at the CAF. The discontinuing of overseas advanced training programmes, combined with the loss of most of the highly trained faculty, has severely limited the instructional capacity at the CAF and thus created a gap in the available pool of essential high-level agricultural professionals.

Both CAF and CARS currently have no faculty and staff development programmes in place, and no plans to develop such a programme. Authorities at both institutions recognize this as a major problem and acknowledge the necessity for a training needs assessment, but lack the capacity to do such an assessment. Existing staffing limitations and deficiencies will require a significantly high level of investment in providing advance faculty and staff training. A couple of initiatives have been taken by both institutions in this regard, but much more needs to be done.

- CAF has recently submitted a proposal to the FAO for assistance to improve the instructional capacity for the Forestry and Wood Science programme.
- CARS has recently signed an agreement with the University of Missouri in the United States to assist in the creation of a graduate programme offering a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree, which will require a significant amount of advance training of faculty and staff.

Currently only CARS conducts standardized annual programme evaluations. No programme evaluation has been done at the CAF that anyone there can remember. The annual evaluation at CARS looks at three areas: enrolment and graduation, instructional performance, and placement. We were, however, unable to review the evaluation forms, or ascertain what the results of the most recent evaluation were.

Financial support to the CAF is provided solely by GOL; CARS receives financial support from the Episcopal Church in Liberia and from Anglican Universities in the USA. Foreign

donors provide minimal technical assistance. Currently very limited technical assistance (mainly equipment and assistants) is being provided to the CAF by the People's Republic of China; however, based upon their recent statements much more technical assistance will be provided in the future. Other donor assistance provided to these programmes includes:

- UNDP has provided text books and reference books to the CAF.
- UNDP has provided assistance with maintaining animal/livestock facilities.
- The Association of Researchers of Social Sciences & Agronomy (AZUR), in collaboration with Africare, has funded a limited inland fisheries hatchery research project at CARS.

Institution	Faculty profile																										
CAF	<p><b>Total no. faculty</b> <b>35</b>  <b>Total no. of advanced degrees</b> 20 (including 2 Ph.D.)  <b>Specializations:</b></p> <table> <tbody> <tr><td>Horticulture</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>Sericulture</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>Forest Economics</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>Forestry</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr><td>Agronomy</td><td>4</td></tr> <tr><td>Wood Science</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>Agri.Mech</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>Agri. Econ.</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>Food Crops</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>Poultry</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>Agri. Engineering</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>Entomology</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>DVD</td><td>1</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Horticulture	1	Sericulture	1	Forest Economics	1	Forestry	5	Agronomy	4	Wood Science	1	Agri.Mech	1	Agri. Econ.	2	Food Crops	1	Poultry	1	Agri. Engineering	1	Entomology	1	DVD	1
Horticulture	1																										
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Agronomy	4																										
Wood Science	1																										
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Poultry	1																										
Agri. Engineering	1																										
Entomology	1																										
DVD	1																										
CARS	<p><b>Total no. faculty</b> 8  <b>Total no. of advanced degrees</b> 5  <b>Specializations:</b></p> <table> <tbody> <tr><td>Post-harvest tech</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>Pasture agronomist</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>Rural development</td><td>3</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Post-harvest tech	1	Pasture agronomist	1	Rural development	3																				
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## 10.2 Vocational education and training programmes

### 10.2.1 Current programmes

Vocational agricultural training programmes currently being offered at the secondary level can be placed in two categories: (1) 4-year secondary programmes, and (2) accelerated vocational agriculture training programmes. These training programmes provide training for the range of agriculturists, vocational agricultural teachers, students who will matriculate and receive college degrees in agriculture, extension workers and service providers, and farmers.

#### *Four-year secondary vocational agricultural programmes:*

##### **Booker Washington Institute (BWI):**

A 4-year secondary vocational agriculture programme is offered by the Booker Washington Institute (BWI), with graduates awarded Diplomas in General Agriculture. For many years this was the only such vocational agriculture training programme in the country, producing

hundreds of graduates over the years, and it provided much of the trained workforce for the agricultural sector.

The vocational agriculture programme at BWI was started in 1929 with assistance from Tuskegee University, which had entered into an agreement with GOL to assist in the development of a 4-year vocational agriculture programme at the BWI. Additional donor assistance from the Phelps Stokes Fund was provided for staff training and development, working with Priere View A&M University in the United States, which started in the mid 1970s and lasted until the civil conflict. Over the years this effort was generally very successful in developing a fairly highly trained faculty and staff. Unfortunately well over 90 percent were either killed or left the country during the civic conflict, creating a serious deficiency of adequately trained instructors.

Donor assistance to BWI is again being provided by the Phelps Stokes Fund, with additional assistance from the Government of the People's Republic of China for institutional support including training. Much more donor assistance is needed, particularly for faculty training and development. The current vocational agriculture curriculum that is being offered at BWI provides instruction in the areas of food crops, tree crops, livestock (pig, poultry, cattle, goats and sheep), extension, and agriculture mechanization. Instruction is also provided in soil science, fisheries and farm management.

This curriculum has remained largely unchanged over the years, and needs to be reviewed and revised by integrating advanced knowledge, technology, and specific local-based knowledge of farming systems that could make the training being offered more relevant to the current workforce needs and requirements within the sector. Efforts should be made to ensure that the curriculum development workshop scheduled to be held during the 2007 school year institutes the process through which such periodic revisions can be made.

### **List of courses offered under General Agriculture Curriculum at BWI:**

#### *Introduction to Animal Science*

- Pig production
- Poultry production
- Small ruminants (goats & sheep) production

#### *Introduction to Food Crops*

- Rice
- Vegetables

#### *Introduction to Cash crops*

- Coffee
- Cocoa
- Rubber

#### *Introduction to extension*

#### *Agricultural Mechanization*

The curriculum incorporates practical field training with subject-matter class room instruction throughout the 4-year programme. Authorities at BWI indicated that efforts are being made, in cooperation with CARI, to reintroduce the in-service training internship programme for seniors, which in the past was conducted annually at CARI. Graduating seniors are also provided internships with agricultural institutions, plantations and large private farms, whenever possible, to ensure placement and eventual employment.

Unavailability of textbooks and other instructional materials, and the destruction of classrooms, research and reference material, laboratories and workshops have limited the programme's capacity to deliver quality instruction. While substantial physical renovation carried out within the last three years has restored many of the physical facilities to near pre-war levels, not much has been done to improve the quality and availability of instructional materials. The authorities at BWI are very conscious of and concerned about this and are looking at a number of innovative solutions, including the use of distant-learning methodologies.

Authorities at BWI recognize the urgent need for staff development and for improving and revising the current curriculum. The current administration recently initiated a faculty development assistance programme that pays 60 percent of tuition, and provides subsistence and transportation allowances for faculty members of the vocational agriculture department who pursue advance training at the CAF. Plans for a long-term staff development programme, including advanced overseas training, have been presented to BWI's Board of Directors, and hopefully will be implemented with assistance through the Phelps Stokes Fund and the PRC.

**Profile of agriculture faculty at BWI:**

<b>Total no. of agriculture faculty</b>	<b>8</b>
B.Sc. General Agriculture (CAF)	3
AA General Agriculture (RDI)	2
Laboratory Assistants (BWI graduates)	3

Enrolment in vocational agricultural programmes currently ranks third among all programmes being offered at BWI. Enrolment in vocational agriculture has ranged from 11-15 percent of total student enrolment between the 2003/2004 and 2005/2006 academic years. These statistics are encouraging in that they indicate a healthy level of interest in agriculture among students who choose to undergo vocational education, even without special recruitment or promotional efforts, which if introduced could further increase enrolment in vocational agriculture at BWI. financial support to BWI from GOL is minimal and is insufficient to support the institution in spite of an increase, since the current Government came into office, from US\$340 000 in 2004/2005 to US\$566 000 currently. Additional support is provided through donor assistance for specific programmes and activities.

Despite concerted efforts made by the Principal and Board to engage the donor community, their level of assistance remains extremely low, which reflects the global trend of neglect and indifference within the donor community towards agriculture education and training.

- The PRC currently provides farming and workshop equipment and tools for the agriculture mechanization programme.
- Mercy Corps, an International NGO that is a major USAID implementing partner, has committed to providing assistance to strengthen the extension training programme.

### **10.3 Vocational agriculture programmes in high schools**

Prior to the 1990 conflict all public secondary schools were mandated by the MOE to have agricultural programmes. These programmes were first introduced in the 1970s, with mixed results, and according to the MOE were intended to provide a broad introduction to agriculture with the hope that students' interest would be kindled, eventually resulting in

positive choices of future vocation and careers in agriculture. Two types of programme were offered in secondary schools. One was offered in conventional high schools over 3 years starting in the 10th through 12th grades, and the second was offered by multilateral high schools over 4 years. While these programmes were not compulsory, indications are that enrolment in them was comparable to that in other vocational programmes.

The programmes in the conventional high schools in many instances were limited to school gardening activities, with very little subject matter instruction or exposure to careers in agriculture. For the most part these programmes were poorly administered and resulted in failure. Students were forcibly subjected to traditional labour-intensive farming practices, which made these programmes unattractive and resented by the students. As a result they did not achieve their intended objective of developing and stimulating an interest in agricultural that could have persuaded students to pursue vocational choices and professional careers in agriculture. Currently these programmes are no longer being offered in high schools nationwide.

The aim of vocational agriculture programmes offered by multilateral high schools is to provide rural students with job skills as well as life skills. The programmes were recently reintroduced at Tubman High School in Monrovia and in Zwedru Multilateral School in Grand Gedeh. The MOE plans to expand the programme to Voinjama Multilateral School in Lofa County and to Greenville, Sinoe County. These programmes are 4 years in duration, and offer classroom instruction and practical fieldwork in food and cash crop production, and livestock (poultry, pig, goat and sheep) production.

According to MOE there is no national curriculum for vocational education. Each school is expected to develop its own curriculum. The MOE is studying the situation to “determine the type of institution and needed level of instruction in order to develop a national curriculum with flexibility for location factors and industry/employee demands”.

### ***10.3.1 Accelerated vocational agricultural training programmes***

Vocational agriculture training is being carried out by a number of NGOs and is aimed at providing practical skills training in specific areas. These programmes are classified as accelerated training programmes of not more than 9 months' duration. Generally these programmes are designed to meet specific needs of NGOs, who usually conduct their own training. Participants in these programmes include NGO field staff and members or clients of community-based organizations (CBOs).

## **11. PROBLEMS AND CONSTRAINTS AFFECTING AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION**

A number of problems and constraints have been identified by the educational institutions, government agencies, NGOs, and other actors involved in the delivery of AET. These include those listed below.

- The low salaries paid to agriculture faculty, at both universities, and to vocational agriculture instructors are reflective of the low priority that is given to AET. This in turn has negatively affected the recruitment of instructors and enrolment of students for agriculture education programmes. Currently there are only two agriculture education teachers in the Teachers College at UL.

- Lack of adequate funding for agriculture education and training, at all levels, coupled with significant reduction of donor support, has resulted in ineffective AET programmes.
- There is a lack of instructional infrastructure such as classrooms, laboratories, field plots, etc., and of instructional materials.
- There is insensitivity to the need for coordination between educational and research institutions, providers of extension services (particularly NGOs), farmers, business and industry in the process of developing educational curricula, and the provision of education and training.
- A lack of appreciation by those involved in the development and delivery of AET programmes of the interconnectivity between research, teaching, and extension within an interactive process, which takes time to develop.
- Fragmentation of planning, regulation and implementation of AET between separate agencies (MoE, CAF, technical vocational institutions, NGOs, etc.).
- Inadequate curricula at institutions of higher learning in terms of both content and instructional areas. Curricula for both Forestry and General Agriculture degrees at CAF, and the Agriculture and Rural Development degree being offered at CU also lack sufficient local relevance. Authorities at the CAF have admitted problems with the Forestry and General Agriculture curriculum and expressed the need for review and revision.
- There is a serious lack of commitment of political leaders to providing adequate financial support for AET.
- The sole dependence on overseas providers for graduate-level AET, and the lack of research at the CAF and CU, seriously limits their capacity to advance both teaching and extension functions.
- Insufficient numbers of vocational agriculture teachers are being trained, thereby limiting the opportunity for establishment of vocational agriculture education programmes at the secondary school level.

## 12. PLANS AND PROPOSALS TO IMPROVE AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION

From discussions with MOE, CAF, CU and BWI (the major institutions responsible for development and delivery of agriculture education programmes in Liberia), we have discovered that a number of interventions are being planned (some have already started) for enhancing agriculture education and training.

- The MOE recognizes the need to develop a vocational agriculture curriculum that reflects local needs, in collaboration with the MOA, CAF, CARS, and CARI. Efforts to institute such a collaborative process for curriculum development have now begun.
- Authorities at the University of Liberia are looking into the possibility of creating an Agriculture Education Department within the College of Education at the University of Liberia, and establishing a programme to encourage higher enrolment in the vocational agriculture teacher training programme at the University of Liberia's Teachers College.
- MOE is looking at strengthening the relationship with the UL Teachers College through developing and introducing a certification requirement and testing for secondary agriculture vocational teachers by the Bureau of Teacher Education.
- MOE is currently in discussions with the Government of Ghana to enter into an agreement for assistance in providing training for vocational agriculture instructors.
- MOE and the authorities at BWI are in discussions with UNESCO about merging the BWI and the Kakata Rural Teacher Training Institute to create a college offering

vocational and technical teacher training programmes, which would include vocational agriculture.

- The MOE recently convened a national conference on curriculum revision that did not address the issue of vocational agriculture education. However, revision is being made to address this situation given that the West African Examination Council (WAAC) plans to include vocational education in the WAAC examinations by 2008. All secondary graduates are required to pass the WAAC examinations as a prerequisite for graduation.
- An Agricultural and Industrial Training Board has been established with responsibility to set standards based on industry needs, and to certify and evaluate all vocational training institutions.
- The CAF is planning to reintroduce the CARI internship program for graduating seniors, which should enhance their practical knowledge.
- The CARS has recently signed an agreement with the University of Missouri in the United States to provide professors and staff to assist in the establishment of a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) programme and a Health and Animal Production (HAP) programme; both will be graduate-level programmes. The programmes will involve two years of study at the CU campus and three years of study at the University of Missouri.

### **13. RECOMMENDATIONS TO ENHANCE AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION IN LIBERIA**

The following recommendations are advanced to improve and enhance agriculture education programmes in Liberia.

- Efforts should be made to seek assistance through the World Bank's "Africa Agriculture Education Training (AET) plan", which is being proposed for strengthening AET programmes in Africa over a 30-year timeframe.
- Clear political commitment at the highest level is required, to give priority to strengthening AET particularly at the college level, which should translate into increased financial support for AET.
- Efforts should be made to develop strong curricula for both secondary and college agriculture training programmes with flexibility for location factors and industry/employee demands.
- Training of agriculture education instructors at all levels should be given the highest priority. Curricula for these programmes should be upgraded and standardized.
- Partnership should be developed between the CAF and CARS, which will allow students from both programmes to take courses at each other's campuses within the context of their graduation requirements. This will expand the total number of available areas of specialization.
- Training and accelerated internship programmes should be developed to provide training in special areas of need and for equipment and technology that has been provided by NGO's to rural communities and remains either unused, due to lack of trained personnel, or under-utilized, due to inadequate training.
- A full assessment should be made of the infrastructural requirements and other material needs at the CAF in light of existing pressing needs and for future expansion.

## CAAS-Lib – Institutions investment proposal 4

<b>Name of programme</b>	<b>Rehabilitation and Renewal of Agricultural Education Institutions in Liberia</b>
<b>Institutional responsibility</b>	GOL and stakeholder partners
<b>Aim(s) of activity</b>	<p>To rehabilitate and renew the education and training capacities of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The College of Agriculture and Forestry of the University of Liberia (CAF)</li> <li>• Vocational agricultural training institutes (Booker Washington Institute, Tubman High School, Zwedru Multilateral High School).</li> <li>• College of Agriculture, Rural Development and Sociology, Cuttington University (CARS).</li> </ul>
<b>Description of main activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rehabilitate buildings and teaching facilities, principally at the CAF and vocational training centres.</li> <li>• Provide higher education and training opportunities for existing and newly recruited teaching and support staff at colleges and training institutes.</li> <li>• Revise and update curricula for undergraduate and vocational training in line with current regional and global developments and practices in agricultural and related sciences.</li> <li>• Facilitate and support internship programmes for undergraduates in national institutes such as CARI.</li> <li>• Develop partnerships for national capacity development (including twinning and bilateral arrangements) with higher education institutes in Africa, the United States and Europe.</li> <li>• Conduct studies on ongoing national priorities and programmes in higher education in conjunction with MOE and MOA.</li> </ul>
<b>Expected result(s)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A reinvigorated higher education system providing agricultural education and training to international standards for public and non-public institutions in the agricultural sector.</li> <li>• Increased numbers of qualified graduates, postgraduates and postdoctoral workers available for institutions and companies across the agricultural sector.</li> <li>• The quality of teaching and graduates produced by Liberia's universities and colleges will be recognized and valued by national stakeholders and peer regional/international higher education institutions.</li> </ul>
<b>Impact on food security, poverty reduction &amp; economic development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only through the development of the human capital base of its most important economic sector can a country, emerging from a traumatic post-conflict period, begin to renew its self-sufficiency in food production and optimize its potential for export growth through improved rural incomes and livelihoods.</li> <li>• Significant increases in the numbers of qualified professionals across agricultural disciplines will over the long term lead to enduring capacity development for agricultural research and extension services thereby impacting positively on poverty alleviation and overall social and economic development.</li> </ul>
<b>Period of execution</b>	2008–2022
<b>Estimated cost</b>	US\$30 million

Note: The total indicative investment for the four preceding institutional areas is US\$54 million.

## ANNEX 1

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## **VI. NGOs AND CBOs IN LIBERIA**

**A brief evaluation and strategies for maximizing their contribution to agricultural development and poverty alleviation**

**by**

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**Liberia 2007**



## VI. NGOs AND CBOs IN LIBERIA

### 1. INTRODUCTION

A non-governmental organization (NGO) is an independent, non-profit making, non-political and charitable organization, with the primary goal of enhancing the social, cultural and economic well-being of communities in its operational areas. A community-based organization (CBO) is an association of residents of a particular community operating collectively either as a unisectorial or multisectorial sovereign non-profit making body. Cooperative societies, as defined by the Cooperative Development Society (CDA), are societies that are organized as business organizations primarily to cater to the development needs of the less fortunate rural and urban dwellers using their own self-help initiatives. They empower their members to achieve socio-economic independence through working together as a united group with a common bond to promote the interests of all members and their communities.

The involvement of NGOs in the national development initiatives of Liberia can be traced as far back as pre-war days. The pervasive awareness of the significant role of NGOs has continuously attracted support as well as international donor funds to execute specific activities throughout the country since the 1990s. Over the years there has been a rapid increase in the number of NGOs operating in the country. The civil war in Liberia, which caused the displacement of a significant number of people at the time, as well as the huge entry of refugees from Sierra Leone in the 1990s, resulted in the proliferation of both local and international NGOs undertaking relief and developmental activities throughout the country. Many of these NGOs were involved in agricultural activities. Another group that is emerging are the faith-based organizations (FBOs). The FBOs are often organized by NGOs within a community as a strategy to implement certain agricultural project activities.

This paper contains a brief evaluation of NGOs and CBOs in Liberia with proposed strategies to maximize their contribution to agriculture development and poverty alleviation. The evaluation will not place emphasis on critical analysis of the organizational capacity index (OCI) of the NGOs/CBOs.

### 2. METHODOLOGY

The information contained in this paper was obtained mainly from data provided by NGOs that filled in a questionnaire form (Annex 1) prepared by the Department of Planning, Ministry of Agriculture (MOA), Liberia. The form when properly filled provides the necessary information to allow the Ministry officials to assess NGOs for accreditation. Other sources of information were the FAO database and those of the UN Humanitarian Information Center, the MPEA, and the Cooperative Development Agency.

Based on the information that was provided by NGOs, a cursory evaluation of NGO/CBO activities and involvement in Liberia was undertaken via the following processes:

- review of the content and national coverage of the programmes of the main institutions;
- assessment of the institutional capacity, mandate, mission, structure, staff strength and quality, and the logistical and financial support of the institutions;

- assessing the opportunities and mechanisms for participation of NGOs and CBOs at all stages of agricultural policy decision-making and delivery of services;
- assessment of the efficiency of the mechanisms in place for coordination and monitoring of NGO and CBO activities at national, county and community level;
- examination of the strengths and weaknesses of existing internal and external structures of NGOs and CBOs.

In addition brief field visits were made to six communities in six counties (Bomi, Bong, Cape Mount, Gbapolu, Margibi and Nimba counties) to confirm the presence of NGOs and the activities they were involved with in the counties. An OCI rating for these NGOs/CBOs was not obtained from the above reviews and assessment of data due to time limitations and the terms of reference. However, an in-depth understanding was gathered from the review of these data of the activities of these NGOs/CBOs and the Cooperative Societies.

Some of this information was used to quantify (where possible) the number of NGOs (local and international) operating in the agriculture sector.

Based on the findings from the above, proposed strategies were advanced for maximizing the contribution of NGOs and CBOs to agricultural development and poverty alleviation in Liberia.

### **3. FINDINGS FROM THE CURSORY EVALUATION OF REGISTERED NGOs/CBOs IN LIBERIA**

*Comparison of NGOs vs CBOs vs Cooperative Societies in Liberia* NGOs in Liberia can be classified as local or international NGOs. These are humanitarian/relief organizations with the ability to respond to the needs of people in times of crisis to save lives as well as to undertake active development work in communities. However another group that is also referred to as “CBO” has emerged. A review of documents as well as Articles of Incorporation from the MOA did not show any clear-cut differences between an NGO and a CBO. However, a careful examination of the definitions of NGO/CBO that were given in the introduction shows that CBOs are locally entrenched within villages/communities. CBOs normally should operate within the territorial limits of those communities in which they were organized and registered to undertake specific objective(s). Currently, this is not always the case: some CBOs have registered as local NGOs and operate as NGOs.

The principles of cooperatives were practised in Liberia in the traditional form of *susu* (credit and savings mobilization) and *kuu* (farming through group work). These activities were principally geared towards putting members' resources and energy together to accomplish their aims and objectives, which could not be done easily by an individual. In recent times they have become legally registered business entities with a large membership operating nationwide.

#### **3.1 NGO/CBO eligibility and accreditation**

The MPEA is the arm of GOL that is in charge of all NGO/CBO registration, monitoring and evaluation, in collaboration with specific sector ministries. In line with its function, the Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs (MPEA) has developed draft criteria for eligibility and accreditation. According to MPEA, an organization wishing to operate as an NGO or CBO in Liberia must fulfil the following requirements *inter alia*:

- it must be a legal entity;
- it must have a mission statement, objectives, target beneficiaries, etc;
- it must have an easily located office space with signboard clearly exhibited, an easily reached postal/email address, a bank account in the organization's name and evidence to access funds to support programmes;
- it must have a well defined administrative structure and accounting system that can be audited;
- it must have not have fewer than three permanent staff members;
- it must have a board of trustees or an equivalent policy-making body.

The registration guidelines state that a Community Base Organization (CBO) or Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) must have an annual registration period, i.e. January to December. The annual registration involves submission of documents as defined by the sector ministries/agencies. In the case of MOA the requirements are outlined in Annex 1. Data obtained from MOA show that prominent NGOs operating in the country have not applied for accreditation for the year 2007. It is worth mentioning that annual accreditation is mandatory for all NGOs wishing to operate in Liberia. In 2004/2005 the MOA registered 78 NGOs/CBOs involved in the agriculture sector. There were no data for 2006.

Currently the MOA have only renewed the registration of 17 NGOs/CBOs for 2007 (Annex 3). According to M. Tito, the Officer in charge of NGOs/CBOs at the MOA, many of these stakeholders either have not applied for renewal of registration or have submitted incomplete registration documents.

Annexes 2a and 2b contain a list of 44 international NGOs (Annex 2a) and 113 local NGOs/CBOs (Annex 2b) that are currently involved in the agriculture sector in Liberia (FAO, 2007). However, it was observed from field visits to Cape Mount, Margibi, Bong and Nimba counties that there are other local NGOs/CBOs who have not registered with either FAO or MOA.

*Strengths and weaknesses of existing internal and external structures of NGOs\CBOs* The existing structures of NGOs\CBOs may be measured by how the entity translates its mission statement into objective(s) that are 'SMART'. This means that the objective must be:

- S = simple
- M= measurable
- A = achievable
- R = realistic
- T = time bound.

The strengths and weaknesses of the existing internal and external structures of NGOs\CBOs are clearly indicative of how the entity project objective(s) are manifested into achievable results within the specified time.

Many international NGOs have strengths in their many years of experience of working elsewhere in the world. They bring with them this experience and are therefore positioned to write grant winning proposals. Because many are from developed countries, they have established strategic fund-raising techniques, enabling these INGOs to raise seed funds to commence humanitarian activities elsewhere in times of need. This is exactly what happened

in the case of Liberia during the 14 years of civil crisis. Additionally their straightforward “internal control systems” have caused donors to build trust in them and readily release funds to them for implementation of activities on their behalf. It can be observed in Annex 2 that INGOs have been funded through donors such as USAID, OFDA, the EU, the EC, ECHO-Aid, DANIDA, UNDP, FAO, Irish AID and the Swiss Development Corporation, etc. Other strengths emanate from their financial accountability, access to information and timely reporting.

The strength of local NGOs lies in their community mobilization abilities. It is believed that, because they are locally based and familiar with the culture and environment, they are an easy entry route into the communities.

The main weakness of INGOs, in our opinion, is their reluctance to work through local NGOs. Perhaps this is due to a lack of confidence in financial accountability and timely reporting, i.e. poor internal control systems. It is widely believed that many INGOs spend considerable sums of money on logistics, international staff and consultancies, etc. Many do not build the capacity of the local NGO. However, Mercy Corps is one INGO that states “capacity building of local NGOs” as one of its many project objectives. Mercy Corps have built the capacity of about 11 local NGOs, many of which (eg. AGRA, PBRC, CJPS) are now operating independently and winning donors’ confidence (stated from personal experience of working with the organization for 2 years). Other weaknesses could be the “top-down approach” in project proposal development. Often the projects are brought to the beneficiaries for implementation without consultation.

The main weakness of local NGOs is poor internal control systems; in addition many lack offices, logistics, the ability to source funding and qualify staff.

*Content and national coverage of programmes of NGOs/CBOs and cooperative societies* The civil crisis in Liberia resulted in displacement of farming families as well as destruction of storage facilities, thus farming activities were halted. During the crisis period (1990–2005) most NGOs were involved in “life saving” emergency work, i.e. distribution of food and non-food items, construction and management of camps for internally displaced persons (IDPs).

Liberia has now emerged from conflict to peace via a period which most refer to as “transition”. During this period IDPs began to return to their places of origin; some Liberians that were residing in neighbouring countries also began to return home. Most NGO activities during this period involved distribution of seeds and tools as well as involvement in crops and livestock/fishery production to assist the returnees in various communities around the country. In addition, training in agricultural best practice was conducted in these communities. During this period FAO, MOA and NGOs in the agriculture sector had a consensus whereby the activities of NGOs would be tracked. A tracking mechanism (datasheet) was jointly developed to be used by the Agricultural Coordination Committee (ACC). All NGOs provided information regarding their activities to the ACC through the datasheet. A summary of the data revealed that in 2005 21 NGOs (9 international, 12 local) undertook crop (rice, roots and tubers, leaf vegetables) and fishery production activities involving 93 221 beneficiaries in the 15 counties. In 2006, more NGOs provided their activity reports to FAO. Twelve international and 14 local NGOs undertook crop and livestock (small ruminants and poultry) production activities involving 106 565 beneficiaries in the 15 counties of Liberia.

The UN Central Emergency Relief Fund (CERF) provided assistance to Liberia through FAO for an agriculture recovery programme. In 2006 FAO undertook a rice pest management project in 11 counties. Thirteen NGOs implemented the project with 19 200 beneficiaries (FAO-OSRO Report). Another CERF project involving distribution of seed rice to 81 900 farming families was implemented by 16 NGOs in the 15 counties of Liberia in 2007 (FAO-CERF Reports).

Annex 3 shows the number of programmes and their locations in the country for NGOs/CBOs that have applied for 2007 renewal of registration with MOA. Among the NGOs/CBOs registered with MOA five have no funded programmes, while the others have from one to four programmes funded. The NGOs/CBOs with programme funding are spread throughout 14 of the 15 counties of Liberia. They serve approximately 234 000 beneficiaries. If these projects are sustainable, they could have exponential effects and may lead to poverty reduction.

Data for cooperative societies are presented in Annex 4. According to the Cooperative Development Society (CDA) assessment data, 28 cooperative societies in four counties with a total membership of 14 991 are involved in crop production and produce marketing.

*NGO/CBO missions, organizational structure, staffing, and logistical and financial support*  
A review of articles of incorporation shows that all NGOs have a mission statement with specific objectives deriving from this statement. All INGOs have a well defined organizational structure and the minimum staff requirement of not fewer than three permanent staff in accordance with the draft NGO guidelines produced by MPEA. All INGOs have reliable sources of funding from donors such as USAID, OFDA, the EU, the EC, ECHO-Aid, DANIDA, UNDP, FAO, Irish AID and Swiss Development Corporation, etc. (Annex 2). Most local NGOs are implementing partners of INGOs, hence they have secured the bulk of their funding from these sources. It was also noted that all INGOs have the minimum logistical support required for their programmes. Other INGOs, such as Mercy Corps, are involved in building the capacities of their local implementing partners by assisting them to secure offices, opening bank accounts in the organization's name, and providing of minimal office equipment, e.g. computers with printers, and project vehicles where necessary (stated from personal experience of working with the NGO in 2002/2003).

*Opportunities and mechanisms for participation of NGOs/CBOs at all stages of agricultural policy, decision-making and delivery of services* In 1991, MOA established the Agricultural Coordination Committee (ACC). The objective of the ACC is to coordinate the activities of all NGOs/CBOs and donor agencies providing agricultural services to farmers in Liberia. The ACC holds monthly meetings in which all NGOs/CBOs participate, report their activities, share experiences and discuss issues relating to the sector. The monthly meetings are held at national level in Monrovia and at county level. These meetings are organized and chaired by officials of the MOA. The ACC has an Agricultural Policy Committee at the highest level, which includes heads of NGOs as well as the Minister of Agriculture as members. It also has a technical working group (TWG) of which NGOs are also members.

Through the ACC, the FAO from time to time has engaged NGOs/CBOs to implement several of its project activities nationwide.

*Mechanisms for coordination and monitoring of NGO/CBO activities at national, county and community levels* A technical working group (TWG) was established as a standing committee

of the ACC. The TWG is responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of all the activities of stakeholders in the agriculture sector. The membership of the TWG consists of MOA, FAO, USAID, EU/ECHO, ICRC, UNMIL Civil Affairs, LINNK and NGOs with the requisite background and expertise in specialized subject matter. The TWG is responsible for undertaking field assessment and monitoring, impact evaluation and annual appraisals of field activities of all agriculture service providers. In addition all NGOs/CBOs present reports on all project activities to the ACC monthly meetings at both national and county levels.

Currently, MOA is setting up a monitoring and evaluation unit in the Department of Planning. Its mandate and strategies are being finalized.

#### **4. PROPOSED STRATEGIES FOR MAXIMIZING THE CONTRIBUTION OF NGOs/CBOs TO AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT AND POVERTY REDUCTION**

The NGOs/CBOs have strengths in resource mobilization and project management as well as community mobilization. The creation of an enabling environment by GOL, including duty free privileges, sustained peace and security, is necessary to allow NGO/CBO activities to continue from the transitional period to development.

The programme content and coverage of NGOs/CBOs covers all counties of Liberia. These activities can be considered as provision of agriculture extension services to the farming populace. Thus, a pluralistic extension policy is being suggested. This is so because an effective extension system does not currently exist. The MOA cannot adequately perform its developmental role until its extension network in postwar Liberia is revitalized and restructured under a “new policy”. The MOA acknowledges that donors, NGOs/CBOs (44 INGOs, 112 LNGOs) and other providers of extension services are crucial to the delivery of extension services to the diverse farming community in the country. At the same time the Ministry also acknowledges that these alternative providers of extension services are no substitute for public extension services in the country. For continuity and sustainability, especially when the alternative providers cease to function, it is prudent to establish a *“pluralistic extension policy” that recognizes the complimentary roles of both the Government and non-governmental agencies that are involved in extension service delivery.*

At present INGOs and some local NGOs have adequate logistical facilities and the ability to raise funds, hence their activities are spread nationwide. Their impacts and sustainability are minimal in some areas, however. Thus, a strategy should be developed for extension delivery services to be localized or specialized for all stakeholders. The MOA is in the process of collecting detailed information on all agricultural NGOs/CBOs to include strengths and weaknesses of existing internal and external structures, programme content and national coverage, and institutional capacity with regard to staff strength, logistical and financial support, etc. These data can be used to categorize NGOs/CBOs with respect to types of service delivery. In addition, a self-assessment of all NGOs/CBOs is recommended. Because Liberia is in transition from recovery to development, funds for development do not come as smoothly as those for emergency relief. Thus NGOs/CBOs should strategically position themselves in a particular area of operation. As observed earlier an NGO may operate in three or four non-contiguous counties. This requires considerable resources to set up offices and meet other logistical needs.

Therefore, MOA should organize a one-day workshop for all agricultural NGOs/CBOs as well as the MOA extension service to allow them to undertake a self-assessment exercise, i.e. a personal “X-ray” that will define the strengths and weaknesses of each stakeholder. They should jointly develop strategies to localize activities for certain extension service providers in a clan, district or single county. Additionally, other service providers should be allowed to provide specialized service over a wider coverage area e.g. more than one county. That is, specialized NGOs such as *Veterinaires sans Frontières* could be allowed to work in a wider coverage area if their resources permit.

*Mapping of extension service delivery nationwide is being advanced* The need for all stakeholders to be aware of who is doing what, where and for how long will go a long way towards maximizing the contribution of each stakeholder to the provision of agriculture services to farmers. This will enable each new service provider quickly to identify gaps and position itself without overlapping of functions. Discussion of the mapping exercise should commence at the monthly ACC meeting both at national and county level. Placement of NGO/CBO names and activities on a map of Liberia must be undertaken only when there is a consensus by all stakeholders on the principles of “specialization” vs “localization”. Donor-driven NGOs/CBOs should be localized, i.e. they must operate only within one county. However, NGOs/CBOs with specialized skills, such as veterinary service provision, fabrication of agriculture tools, plantain and banana production, root and tuber production, etc. should be allowed to spread their technologies nationally as far as their resources permit.

It has been observed in the past that most projects are developed by identifying the needs of beneficiaries without their involvement and are brought to them for implementation. Agricultural services to farmers have been supply driven – a top-down approach. Although this may have its own advantages the results in Liberia have not shown a “quantum leap” in agricultural production and the vast majority of the farmers remain poor. The thinking is that agriculture service providers should reverse gear and work with farmers within communities in a participatory manner to jointly determine their needs for farming. This approach will be demand driven and when the farmers’ needs are provided, agriculture productivity is more likely to make the “quantum leap”. In addition, clan groups have close relationships and have trust in one another. Thus, planning of extension services (projects) should begin at the grass roots, e.g. clan/community level.

In 1998 FAO and MOA began the process of setting up grass roots agricultural organizations at the clan level in the counties. The group was named the Clan Agriculture Development Association – CARDA for in short. In several counties a CARDA was set up at the clan level. The administrative structure of a particular CARDA was decided by the communities making up the clan, based on their developmental needs. The CARDA system takes into consideration the holistic development approach while using agriculture as a driving force. All agriculture service providers were asked to work within a particular CARDA system to help build the capacity of the organization to become sustainable. Lack of support and the continued civil unrest destroyed the vision.

A compressive assessment of the cooperative societies in Liberia has been done by the Cooperative Development Authority (CDA). According to the Deputy Registrar of CDA (H. Wennie) the cooperative societies have began to rejuvenate and they need capacity building (training, logistical support, etc). However the capacity of the CDA itself needs to be increased. Currently they are operating in a temporary location with minimal levels of staffing and logistics capability.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

The strengths of existing internal and external structures of NGOs/CBOs are their ability to secure funding and gather information, the high quality of their staff, considerable logistical support, efficient internal control systems (INGOs) and community mobilization (local NGOs).

Their main weakness is their reluctance to work through local NGOs. Perhaps this is due to a lack of confidence in the financial accountability, timely reporting, and internal control systems of the latter. Many INGOs spend considerable sums of money on logistics, international staff and consultancies, etc. Many do not build the capacities of local NGOs. While the local NGOs may have poor internal control systems, many also lack offices, logistic support, the ability to source funding and qualified staff.

The author reviewed the content and national coverage of the programmes of NGOs/CBOs and found that most NGOs/CBOs had defined programmes and funding sources for 2007. All the INGOs and implementing partners with support from numerous donors have ongoing programme activities covering all of the 15 counties of Liberia. About 0.5 million lives have been touched positively by these interventions.

The opportunities and mechanisms for participation of NGOs/CBOs at all stages of agricultural policy, decision-making and delivery of services were assessed. It was discovered that the ACC, which was established in 1991, holds monthly meetings for all agricultural stakeholders. It is through this medium that views are exchanged, experiences are shared and issues affecting the agriculture sector are discussed.

The efficiency of the mechanisms for coordination and monitoring of NGO/CBO activities at national, county and community levels were also assessed. A TWG has been established as a standing committee of the ACC. The TWG, of which some NGOs/CBOs are members, is responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of all the activities of stakeholders in the agriculture sector. The TWG undertakes field assessment and monitoring, impact evaluation and annual appraisals of field activities of all agriculture service providers. In addition, all NGOs/CBOs present reports on all project activities to the ACC monthly meetings at both national and county levels.

Proposed strategies for maximizing the contribution of NGOs/CBOs to agriculture development and poverty reduction were advanced and include *inter alia*:

- establishment of a pluralistic extension policy;
- extension delivery should be localized or specialized for all stakeholders;
- extension service delivery nationwide should be mapped out;
- extension services should be planned from the grass root, i.e. clan/community, level.

Finally, it can be noted that working with NGOs as implementing partners ensures rapid service delivery to farmers in the counties, using their existing relationships with community organizations and available logistics with support from donors.

## 6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the cursory evaluation of NGOs/CBOs and the proposition of suitable strategies for maximizing their contributions to agriculture development and poverty reduction the following recommendations are made.

- The NGO/CBOs with donor support provide an immense contribution nationwide to the reduction of food insecurity and hence to poverty reduction; thus an enabling environment via duty free privileges and security should be provided to encourage them to remain operational in the country.
- The MOA national extension programme needs to be reviewed for better coordination.
- A pluralistic extension policy must be put in place to involve all stakeholders.
- Extension delivery should be localized or specialized for all stakeholders to avoid wastage of scarce resources.
- Extension service delivery should be mapped nationwide to avoid duplication of services and to provide a clear route of entry for newcomers.
- Extension services should be planned from the grass root, i.e. clan/community, level to take advantage of the close relationships and trust among clan and community members.
- All cooperatives should be revitalized and their capacity built, including the CDA.
- The need to encourage INGOs to remain in the country and work in partnership is necessary because working with NGOs as implementing partners ensures rapid service delivery to farmers in the counties, via their existing relationships with community organizations and their available logistics with support from donors.

**ANNEX 1****Requirements for accreditation of agricultural NGOs**

In order to obtain accreditation for operation in the agricultural sector, the following requirements must be submitted by all NGOs/CBOs to the Department of Planning and Development, Ministry of Agriculture, 5<sup>th</sup> Street, in Monrovia (Liberia).

1. Name of Organization
2. Date of Establishment
3. Head Office
4. One copy of Articles of Incorporation from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
5. A copy of Certificate of Accreditation from the Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs
6. Proposed agricultural program(s)/project(s) detailing:
  - a) Title of project
  - b) Aims and objectives
    - Date of commencement
    - Date of completion
  - c) Targeted beneficiaries/population
  - d) Location of operation
    - County
    - District
    - Towns/village
    - Population
  - e) Source of support/funding
    - Organization name
    - Full address
    - Email address
    - Telephone number(s)
    - Post office box number
    - Contact person
  - f) Resume of technical/support staff:
    - Expatriate:
      - Name: \_\_\_\_\_
      - Qualification: \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_
    - Local
      - Name: \_\_\_\_\_
      - Qualification: \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_
7. Implementing partner (any)
  - a) Partner's name \_\_\_\_\_
  - b) Organization \_\_\_\_\_
  - c) Year \_\_\_\_\_

**ANNEX 2A****List of international NGOs in the agriculture sector**

<b>Names of NGO</b>	<b>Abbreviations</b>	<b>Address in Monrovia</b>
1. Action Aid Liberia	AAL	Mega Cpd, Randall Street
2. Action Contre La Faim	ACF	Mamba Point, Monrovia, Liberia
3. Adventist Development and Relief Agency	ADRA	Old CID Road, Mamba Point
4. African Concern International	AFCON	17th Street, Sinkor, Monrovia
5. AFRICARE	AFRICARE	98 Sekou Toure Avenue, Monrovia
6. Agri System UK	ASUK	c/o EU Office, Monrovia
7. American Refugee Committee	ARC	Atlantic House, Tubman Blvd., Monrovia
8. Cap Anamur	GED	Bong Mines Hospital
9. Caritas International	CARITAS-I	National Catholic Secretariat
10. Catholic Relief Services	CRS	19th Street Sinkor, Monrovia
11. CHF International	CHF	Old Road Junction, Congo Town
12. Christian Aid Ministries	CAM	15th Street, Sinkor
13. Christian Children's Fund	CCF	18th Street, Sinkor
14. Concern	CONCERN	VP Rord, Sinkor
15. Concern Worldwide	CONCERN/W	VP Rord, Sinkor
16. Conservation International	CIL	Atlantic House
17. Cooperative and Human Development Foundation	COHDEFI	Captan Building, Broad Street
18. Danish Refugee Council	DRC	Mamba Point, Monrovia
19. Diakonie Emergency AID	DEA	Congo Town, Monrovia
20. Emergency Response Fund	ERF	Mamba Point, Monrovia, Liberia
21. Environmental Foundation for Africa	EFA	18th Street, Sinkor
22. Equip Liberia	EQUIP	Tubman Blvd., Sinkor
23. Fauna and Flora International	FFI	Dennis Compound, Mamba Point
24. Finnish Refugee Council	FRC	Dennis Compound, Mamba Point
25. Geomar International	GEOMAR	Camp Johnson Road
26. German Agro Action	GAA	18th Street, Sinkor
27. German Technical Corporation	GTZ	Mamba Point
28. International Committee of the Red Cross	ICRC	Bushrod Island, Monrovia
29. International Rescue Committee	IRC	Congo Town
30. Liberia Community Infrastructure Program	LCIP	U.N. Drive & Randall Street
31. Lutheran World Federation/World Service	LWF/WS	Lutheran Church Compound
32. Mercy Corps	MC	Newport Street
33. Norwegian Refugee Council	NRC	Randall Street
34. OXFAM-GB	OXFAM-GB	UNICEF Compound
35. Peace Winds Japan	PWJ	Tubman Blvd., Congo Town
36. PMU Interlife	PMU Liberia	12 Houses Road, Paynesville
37. Premiere Urgence	PU	21st Street, Sinkor
38. Samaritan's Purse	SP	9th Street, Sinkor
39. Save the Children Fund – UK	SC-UK	Mamba Point, Monrovia, Liberia
40. Solidarites Aide Humanitaire D'urgence	SOLIDARITES	12th Street, Sinkor
41. TEARFUND	TEARFUND	ELWA Compound
42. Trocaire	TROCAIRE	Corina Hotel, Sinkor
43. Visions in Action	VIA	Monrovia, Liberia
44. World Vision Liberia	WVL	Mamba Point, Coconut Plantation
45. ZOA Refugee Care Netherlands	ZOA	3rd Street Sinkor, Monrovia

**ANNEX 2B****List of local NGOs/CBOs that are involved in the agriculture sector**

NAME OF NGO/CBO	Abbreviations	County
1. Action for Community and Human Development	ACOHD,INC	Montserrado
2. Action for Greater Harvest	AGRHA	Montserrado
3. Agriculture Relief Services Inc	ARS	Nimba
4. Assistance for All	AFAL	
5. Beekeepers and Agriculturist Association	BEEKAA	Montserrado
6. Bettie Agriculture & Development Union	BADU	Montserrado
7. Blebo Disabled and Handicapped Assistance Program	BLEDISHAP	
8. Blumu Agriculture, Education and Development Projects Inc.	BAEDP	Montserrado
9. Boewein Agricultural Development Productivity INC	BADEP INC	
10. BUCCOBAC	BUCCOBAC	Grand Bassa
11. Caritas Cape Palmas	CARITAS	Cape Palmas
12. Caritas Gbarnga	CARITAS	Bong
13. Caritas Liberia	CARITAS	Montserrado
14. CATALYST	CATALYST	
15. Center for Socio-Economic Empowerment & Environmental Protection	CESEEP	
16. Christ Foundation - SEAMA	CFS	
17. Christian Humanitarian Service	CHS	
18. Community Caring Association	COCASS	
19. Community Development Program	CDP	Cape Mount
20. Community Humanitarian Assistance Program	CHAP	
21. Community Reconstruction Resettlement & Agriculture Program	CORRAP Inc.	Cape Mount
22. Community Rehabilitation Association for Agriculture & Development	CRAAD	
23. Community Sustainable Development Program	CSDP	
24. Community Union for Productivity	CUP	Nimba
25. Community Union for Sustainable Development	CUSD	Nimba
26. Engineering Agricultural Reconstruction Education & Health Services Incorporated	EAREHS INC.	
27. Faimaba Fisheries Development Cooperative, INC.	FFDC	
28. Farmers Against Hunger	FAH, Inc.	Montserrado
29. Farmers Associated to Conserve the Environment	FACE	
30. Fassama (Kpakonu) Development Assoc. INC	FAKPADA,INC	
31. Foundation for African Development Aid	FADA	Montserrado
32. Foundation for African Development Aid	ADA	Montserrado
33. Gbarto Agriculture Development Program	GADP	
34. Gbor-Kwado Development Association	GKDA	
35. Global Community Agriculture Env. Action Group	GCAEAG	Montserrado
36. Good Samaritan Fellowship International	GSFI	Montserrado
37. Grace land International Inc.	GLI	Bomi
38. Grand Bassa Agriculture Group	G-BAG	Gradn Bassa
39. Grassroots Democracy Inc	GDI	Nimba
40. Grassroots Development Program	GROPS	
41. Helping Hand in Liberia Inc.	HHL	Nimba
42. Hope International Mission	HIM	Montserrado
43. Human Development Foundation	HDF	Cape Mount

NAME OF NGO/CBO	Abbreviations	County
44. Human Development Program	HDP	
45. IMANI House Inc.	IHI	Montserrado
46. Integrated Rural Development Organization	IRDO	Montserrado
47. International Colleges and Universities Bureau Inc.	ICUB	Montserrado
48. Karmon Agriculture Development Initiative	KADI	Nimba
49. Kpain-Kpain-Gbo	KKG	Montserrado
50. KRUDF	KRUDF	
51. Kweatornor Development and Relief Organization	KDRO	Bong
52. Liberia After War Volunteer	LAWVI	
53. Liberia Agro Systems	LAS	Grand Gedeh
54. Liberia Environment Care Organization	LECO	Bong
55. Liberia Initiative for Development Services	LIDS	
56. Liberia Islamic Union for Reconstruction and Development	LIURD	Montserrado
57. Liberia Local Cash Crops Farmers Association & Development Inc.	LIFARADE	Nimba
58. Liberia National Farmers Union	LINFU	Montserrado
59. Liberia NGOs Network	LINNK	Montserado
60. Liberia Productivity Agency	LIBPA	
61. Liberia Reconstruction Aid Workers Society	LRAWS	
62. Lofa Educational and Agricultural Foundation	LEAF	Lofa
63. Lutheran Development Services	LDS	
64. Mano River Relief Services	MARS	Cape Mount
65. Model for Reconstruction and Social Development	MORESODEV	
66. Modern Agriculture and Reconstruction	MORA	
67. Movement for the Promotion of Agriculture & Rural Development	MPARD INC	
68. Multi-Agrisystem Promoters	MAP	
69. National Foundation Against Poverty and Disease	NAFPD	
70. National Resettlement and Development Organization	NRDCO	
71. National Women's Commission of Liberia	NAWOCOL	Montserrado
72. North West Development Association	NWDA	
73. Organization for the Development of Agriculture and Farmers Related Association	ODAFARA	Montserrado
74. Permanent Liberian African for Citizen Empowerment	PLACE	
75. Professional Agricultural Consultancy Expertise Services of Liberia	PACESL	Montserrado
76. Project Bomi Inc.	PBI	Bomi
77. Project New Outlook	PNO	Margibi
78. Project Rebuild Liberia	PREBLIB	Montserrado
79. Promoters for Reconstruction and Development	PRED	
80. Rural Agriculture & Community Development Promoters INC.	RACDP	
81. Rural Assistance and Development Organization*	RADO	
82. Rural Communities Development Promoters, INC	RUCODEP	
83. Rural Community Oriented Services, INC.	RUCOS, INC.	
84. Rural Empowerment Foundation	REFOUND	Bong
85. Sinoe Relief and Development Assistance Program	SIRDAP	Sinoe
86. Skills International Inc.	SKILLS	
87. South-Eastern Agricultural Relief Agency	SARA	
88. Sustainable Agriculture Services Union	SASU	Montserrado
89. Sustainable Development Institute	SDI	
90. Sustainable Development Promoters	SDP	Montserrado

NAME OF NGO/CBO	Abbreviations	County
91. Sustainable Livelihood Promoters Program	SLPP	Cape Mount
92. Sustainable Development Institute	SDI	
93. Technocrats United for Reconstruction and Development*	TECURD	Bomi
94. True Love International	TLI	
95. Uncle Sam's Development & Agriculture Corporation	USDAC	
96. Union Farm Services	UFS	
97. Union for Rural Farmers Association Inc.	URFA	Nimba
98. United Liberia Inland Church Agency for Relief & Development, INC.	ULICARD	
99. United Methodist Church Agriculture Program	UMCAP	Montserrado
100. United Methodist Committee of Relief	UMCOR	Montserrado
101. Voinjama District Women Organization for Peace and Development	VODWOPED	Lofa
102. Vulnerable Welfare Foundation of Liberia	V_WELFOL	
103. War Affected Women in Liberia	WAWL	Montserrado
104. Women & Children Development Organization	WOCHIDO	Montserrado
105. Women and Children Development Organization	WACDO	Montserrado
106. Women and Children Rehabilitation Resource Center Inc.	WOCHIRRC	
107. Young Men's Christian Association	YMCA	Montserrado
108. Youth Aid Education Health Care and Development	YAEHD	
109. Zao Development Council*	ZADC	Montserrado
110. Zoe-Geh Development Council INC	ZOGEDCO	Nimba
111. Zorror District Women Care, Inc.	ZODWOCA	Lofa
112. Zwedru Multi-lateral High School	ZMHS	Grand Gedeh

Source: FAO Liberia, July 2007 (blank spaces indicate lack of information in database).

## ANNEX 3

**Contribution of NGOs/CBOs to agriculture development and poverty reduction in Liberia**

Nº	NGOs/CBOs	Date of establishment	No. of projects (2006/07)	No. of beneficiaries	Funding source	National coverage counties	Nº of staff m.
1.	ACF	-	1	11 700	ECHO	Lofa	3
2.	ADRA	1991	3	47 199	DANIDA/A DRA UK, etc.	Lofa & Nimba	3
3.	COMFORT	2003	1	-	Africare- Liberia	Nimba	3
4.	DRC	1998	2	13 339	ECHO,	Nimba, River Gee, Grand Kru	3
5.	GCEC	2005	1	500	European private donors	Nimba	3
6.	Imani House	1986	2	9 500	FAO	Bomi & Bassa	3
7.	LAS	2000	-	-	-	Grand Gedeh, Sinoe, River Gee	3
8.	FWF/WS	1990	4	9 522	LWF H/Quarter, Geneva	Mont., Maryland, Bong, Lofa	3
9.	MercyCorps	2002	1	30-50 000	USAID	Mont., Bong, Margibi, Bassa	3
10.	NEWFAD	1993	-	-	-	-	3
11.	RIGDCO	2006	-	-	-	River Gee	3
12.	SAPRO	2006	-	-	-	Bong	3
13.	Samaritan Purse	2003	3	7 850	SP-USA, USAID, OFDA	Cape Mount, Gpapolu, Lofa, Bong	3
14.	SLPP	2003	-	-	-	Cape Mount	3
15.	TEARFUND	2004	3	44 541	Irish Aid Swiss Dev. Corp. ECHO, Canada	Bomi. Sinoe, Nimba	3
16.	TECURD	1997	1	40 500	LCIP	Grand Gedeh, Bomi., Cape Mount	3
17.	WOCHIDO	1997	1	1 000	SA&D	Montserrado	3

## ANNEX 4

## List of active production and marketing cooperative societies in selected counties

Nº	Name of active cooperative society	Area of operation	Membership	Activities	Date of registration
		<b>BONG COUNTY</b>			
1.	Pulukpeh Farmers Coop Soc.	Raymond Town Bong County	500	Oil-palm, prod. rice, lowland, rubber	12 February 1975
2.	Fuamah Dist. Farmers Coop. Soc.	Bong Mines Bong County	600	Lowland vegetable production	6 February 2002
3.	Kukatonno Farmers Coop. Soc.	Palala City Bong County	100	Lowland rice vegetable products	16 December 2004
4.	Konkpoya Farmers Coop. Soc.	Belefanai Town Bong County	150	Rice, sugar cane produce marketing	14 October 1997
		<b>LOFA COUNTY</b>			
1.	Intofawor Farmers Coop. Soc.	Foya Airfield Lofa County	800	Oil-palm & prod. marketing	19 April 1971
2.	Voinjama Dist. Farmers Coop.	Voinjama City Lofa County	2 500	Produce marketing	31 August 1972
3.	Gbandi Farmers Coop. Soc.	Kolba City Lofa County	850	Produce marketing	31 August 1972
		<b>NIMBA COUNTY</b>			
1.	Dokodan Farmers Coop. Soc.	Gbedin Town, Nimba	2 500	Paddy field veg. production	12 February 1975
2.	Vanco Agri. Multi-purpose Cooperative Soc.	Tunukpuyee Town, Lao Clan	65	Lowland rice, vegetable product.	31 December 1996
3.	Zoyah Farmers Coop. Soc.	Kamplay City Nimba	500	Produce marketing	22 October 2002
4.	Substainable Agri. Dev. Coop.	Tappita City Dist Nimba	300	Seed multiplication thru swamp dev., tree crops	16 August 2002
5.	Sroh Kwado Multi-purpose Coop.	Gbei Vonwea Town, Gbehley Dist.	325	Cash crops production market.	15 May 1998
6.	Boe & Quella Multi-purPose Coop.	Zuatuo Town, Tappita	66	Cash crop production	4 October 2000
7.	Buu-Yoa United Lib. Farmers Coop	Gbloulay Zoe-geh Dist	81	Cash crops marketing	19 July 2005
8.	Nyao Multi-purpose Coop. Soc.	Nyao Wee Clan, Saclepea Mah Dist.	55	Lowland rice, vegetable prod.	29 May 2002
9.	Nequopi Kwodo Multi-purpose Coop. Soc.	Forhlay Town	155	Cash crops production market.	27 June 2005
10.	Gbehley Farmers Coop. Soc.	Karnplay City	289	Cash crops	
11.	Kpodo Farmers Cooperative Society	Zahglay Town Nimba County	865	Paddy rice, cash crops and marketing	July 2001

Nº	Name of active cooperative society	Area of operation	Membership	Activities	Date of registration
12.	Beo Sehgren Cooperative Society	Beo Yodar Town Nimba County	460	Cash and food crops marketing	25 February 1988
13.	Zodo Farmers Cooperative Society	Kpaiply Town Nimba County	436	Cash and food crops marketing	20 July 2001
14.	Nyor Kalokakou Cooperative Society	Nyor Chiefdom Nimba County	245	Cash crops and marketing	28 November 1980
15.	Nimba Kwaplah Cooperative Society	Bonglay Town Nimba County	209	Cash crops and Marketing	6 October 2005
16.	Wala-laakeh Farmers Cooperative Society	Yekepa Town Nimba County	296	Produce marketing	28 October 1977
17.	Douplay Warperley Multipurpose Cooperative Society	Douplay Town Nimba County	375	Low & upland farming and production of citrus fruit	16 November 2005
		<b>GRAND GEDEH COUNTY</b>			
1.	Work & See Farmers Cooperative Society	Zwedru City Grand Gedeh County	600	Lowland & vegetable production	20 September 1974
2.	Amenu Farmers Cooperative	Zleh Town Grand Gedeh County	750	Oil-palm, lowland & vegetable production	28 November 1972
3.	Konobo District Farmers Cooperative Society	Zieh Town	650	Oil-palm, cash crop production	6 August 1980
4.	Marylan Farmers Cooperative Society	Harper City Maryland County	269	Rubber and cash crops	26 April 1978

Sources: Cooperative Development Agency Assessment Report, 2007.  
 Central Emergency Relief Funds (CERF) – FAO, Final report, August 2007.  
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 Project – OSRO - LIR-HCR 602/604 Reports, 2007.