



**Anticipatory action to mitigate the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic on food security and livelihoods**

**Project code:** OSRO/SIL/001/BEL

**Donor:** Belgium through the Special Fund for Emergency and Rehabilitation Activities – Anticipatory Action window

**Contribution:** USD 400 000

**Implementation:** 01/06/2020 – 31/01/2021

**Target areas:** Bo, Kenema, Moyamba and Western Area Rural districts



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**Objective:** To anticipate and mitigate the impacts of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) on the food security, nutrition and livelihoods of the most affected vulnerable farming households in the targeted districts.

**Key partners:** Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry and two national non-governmental organizations.

**Beneficiaries reached:** 2 070 households, of whom 82 percent headed by women.

**Activities implemented:**

- Identified and selected targeted areas and vulnerable farming households affected by COVID-19, in collaboration with the Ministry at district level.
- Distributed 395.1 kg of assorted vegetable seeds, 10 800 garden tools, and 40 000 kg of fertilizers to 2 070 households (of whom 82 percent headed by women) in Moyamba, Kenema, Bo and Western Area Rural districts.
- Selected and trained 80 lead farmers in good agricultural practices for vegetable production who in turn trained the other beneficiaries through the farmer field school approach.
- Identified and trained 510 vegetable producers (of whom 454 women) out of the 2 070 beneficiary households in post-harvest loss management and marketing skills.
- Selected and supported two youth agri-businesses with tools, equipment, technologies and means of transportation to facilitate purchasing, processing, packaging, preservation, distribution, and marketing of processed vegetables and fruit purchased from female and youth vegetable producers.

**Results:**

- Enhanced social cohesion and strengthened farmers' capacities in innovative approaches to improve vegetable production practices thereby contributing to improved household income, food security and nutrition, and to help households recover from the shocks linked to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Contributed to preventing the spread of COVID-19 thanks to the effective community-based service approach adopted by the lead farmers in ensuring extension support services to households.
- Increased vegetable producers' knowledge and skill on processes to increase the shelf life of produce; reduce post-harvest losses through proper harvesting, packaging and transportation to markets; and increase their income, which was used to cover other household needs and purchase inputs for next cropping season.
- Increased the two agri-businesses' processing, preservation and marketing capacities, for their recovery from the effects of the pandemic; and promoted employment opportunities for youths engaged in agri-businesses, boost their business and enhance their livelihoods.