

Sierra Leone/Consortium for Rehabilitation and Development (CARE, Prime)  
FY 2008 Results Report

## Annual Results Report

Multi-Year Assistance Programs/Development Activity Programs

## Title II

# Sierra Leone/Consortium for Rehabilitation and Development Fiscal Year 2008

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**CS HQ Contact Name**

**CS HQ Contact Address**

**CS HQ Contact Tel.**

**CS HQ Contact Fax**

**CS HQ Contact Email**

CARE Sierra Leone (Freetown)

Brian Larson, Country Director

Christian Portal, Chief of Party, LEAD Program

35 & 35A Wilkinson Road

P.O. Box 744

Freetown, Sierra Leone

Telephone: 232-22-234227/8

Fax: 232-22-234280

E-mail : [brian.larson@co.care.org](mailto:brian.larson@co.care.org), [christian.portal@co.care.org](mailto:christian.portal@co.care.org)

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## II. ACRONYMS

<i>Acronyms and Abbreviations</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
CBO	Community Based Organizations
CCU	Coordination and Compliance Unit
CFA	Committee for Food Assistance
CHC	Community Health Committee
CHO	Community Health Officer
CORAD	Consortium for Rehabilitation and Development
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
DMO	District Medical Officer
DRP	Developmental Relief Programme
EPI	Expanded Program of Immunization
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FFA	Food for Asset
FFP	Food for Peace
FFS	Farmer Field School
FFW	Food for Work
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GOSL	Government of Sierra Leone
HDI	Human Development Index
IEC	Information Education and Communication
IEE	Initial Environmental Examination
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IR	Intermediate Result
ITSH	Internal Transport Shipping and Handling
LEAD	Livelihood Expansion and Asset Development
LOA	Life of Activity
MAFS	Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security
MCHP	Maternal and Child Health Post
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MOHS	Ministry of Health and Sanitation
MYAP	Multi Year Assistance Programme
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PITT	Performance Indicator Tracking Table
PHU	Peripheral Health Units
PLA	Participatory Learning and Action
SLRA	Sierra Leone Roads Transport Authority
TBA	Traditional Birth Attendance
UNAMSIL	United Nation Mission in Sierra Leone
USAID	United State Agency for International Development
USG:	United State Government
VDC	Village Development Committees
VDHC	Village Development Health Committee
VGf	Vulnerable Group Feeding
WFP	World Food Programme

WVI World Vision International

### III. ANNUAL RESULTS

#### 3.1 PARTICIPATION OF TARGETED COMMUNITIES

During FY 08, community stakeholders were directly involved in the implementation and monitoring of the various projects in their localities. Community Based Organizations (CBOs), including project participants, received training in participatory monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and principles of good governance. This enhanced their capacity to select sustainable projects and fully participate in the implementation process. During several visits made by donors and other partners to gather feedback through focus group discussions, interviews, and community meetings, the responses from stakeholders and other project participants clearly indicated that the involvement of the community members in project selection and implementation process will continue to enhance community ownership, leading to sustainability. As of now, it is clear that, communities have bought into the idea of creating sustainable mechanisms for long-term internal support structures.

To ensure that communities played an active role in the oversight of development activities, Consortium for Rehabilitation and Development (CORAD) worked closely with Village Development Committees (VDCs). Each VDC plays an over-arching role in the planning, monitoring, evaluation, and resource mobilization at the community level, as well as serving as a voice for community members. As a functional structure, the VDCs have established bylaws which serve as a suitable tool for promoting principles and practices of good governance amongst project participants.

#### 3.2 Progress Towards Planned Activities and Targets

**Program Objective I:** Human capabilities of farmers in 16,000 poor farm households, 3,400 economically marginalized youth, and pregnant and lactating women/children in 16,000 poor farm households protected and enhanced.

**Intermediate Result 1.1:** The capacities of 16,000 farmers to seek out, experiment with, and adapt new ideas related to market-led agricultural production are increased.

*IR 1.1.1 Farmers participating in a 4-month series of learning sessions through farmer field schools*

Under the Livelihood Expansion and Asset Development (LEAD) project, CORAD uses the Farmer Field School methodology to conduct praxis-oriented training for farmers in rural areas. During FY 08, a total of 3,767 farmers (see gender and age breakdown below) completed the four month learning cycle in 126 farmer field schools (FFS). This represents 54.2% of the targeted number (6,948) of farmers.

	Ages 15-35	Ages over 35	Total
<b>Male</b>	1,363	736	<b>2,099</b>
<b>Female</b>	1,206	462	<b>1,668</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,569</b>	<b>1,198</b>	<b>3,767</b>

In addition, a Training of Trainers (TOT) in the FFS methodology was conducted for 87 Farmer Facilitators (62 male and 25 female) in LEAD communities. After the completion of the training, the facilitators served as trainers of their fellow farmers and established more schools in their communities. 20 bicycles were distributed to 20 active farmer facilitators to ease their movements in carrying out their duties.

Currently, there are 145 FFS that have not yet finished the four month learning cycle, with 4,336 people enrolled.

	Ages 15-35	Ages over 35	Total
<b>Male</b>	1,614	763	<b>2,377</b>
<b>Female</b>	1,392	567	<b>1,959</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,006</b>	<b>1,330</b>	<b>4,336</b>

The newly established schools have identified locations for experimental sites but will embark on experimental designs when the necessary inputs are made available to them. Special topics like criteria for site selection, participants, farm layout, etc, which are pre-requisites for the implementation of FFS methodologies, have been completed. Participants' perception level is high as they are very eager to learn new ideas and skills through FFS learning sessions.

*IR 1.1.2 Farmer field schools undertaking experiments*

All FFS are encouraged to undertake experiments on their demonstration plots after enrollment and initial training in the FFS concept. Identification and selection of experiments were participatory, using the 'ten seed technique' or proportional pilling. This gives participants the opportunity of presenting opinions in a democratic manner which includes identifying problems and selecting the related experiments that need to be conducted to address identified and prioritized constraints. The experiments related to the problems identified by farmers include the following: varietal trials, appropriate crop combination, land preparation, seed rate, timing of weeding, apical versus basal methods of planting cassava and sweet potato, soil fertility trials, and system of rice intensification (SRI). During FY 08, the average number of experiments conducted by the FFS was 4.6, or 76.2% of the annual target. Results confirm the early maturity of the Nerica varieties and emphasize the important role these varieties can play in reducing the hunger season. Experiments conducted with the apical vine show that it is superior to middle and basal vines in terms of tubal yield per hectare.

**Intermediate Result 1.2: Capacities of 3,400 Economically Marginalized Youth (EMYs) able to effectively manage income-generating activities or small businesses are increased**

*IR 1.2.1. Economically marginalized youth participating in business management training*

Business management trainings were conducted for 1,354 economically marginalized youth (466 male and 888 female) during FY 08, this represent the 76% of the total targeted (1,726). The trainings covered business introductions (you and your business), business planning, adding value; marketing, market information, record keeping, financial planning, and costing and pricing.

*IR 1.2.2 Economically marginalized youth participating in village savings and loan activities*

Over the course of FY 08, 91 savings and lending groups were formed by CORAD partners, with a total of 1,056 members (430 male and 626 female). The number of youths planned reach through this intervention was 917, so the target was exceeded by 139 youth, or 15.2%.

*IR 1.2.3 Economically marginalized youth who gain access to and complete vocational training facilitated by the program.*

Two trainings were completed for 150 EMYs (14 male and 136 female) at local vocational training institutes, representing 277.8% of the annual target of 54. The first batch consisted of 136 whilst the second batch consisted of 14 trainees.

Training courses started for an additional 150 (113 male and 37 female) EMYs enrolled in September 08 at vocational institutions in Freetown (19 male and 21 female), Lunsar (6 male and

4 female), and Makeni (88 male and 12 female). The duration of courses ranges from one year to three years for those taking the National Certificate for Technical and Vocational Award (NCTVA), in such areas as carpentry, tailoring and dress making, hairdressing, construction, auto-mechanics, IT, metal works, and electrical and electronic engineering. Trainees were orientated on the nature of job markets with the help of potential employers. All courses end in 2010, and thus will be included in the FY 10 Results Report.

**Intermediate Result 1.3: Members of 16,000 households demonstrate understanding and skills related to improved health and nutrition practices.**

*IR 1.3.1 Growth promotion weighing of children under five conducted*

Over FY 08, 54,197 Growth Monitoring and Promotion (GMP) weighings were conducted for children under five (184% of the targeted for this FY), of which 47% were weighings of boys and 53% were weighings of girls. From all of the weighings conducted throughout the year, 63% found the children to be adequately nourished, 30% moderately malnourished, and 7% severely malnourished. Consequently, the children that were severely under weight were referred to the nearest peripheral health units (PHU) for nutritional rehabilitation. The moderately under weight children were rehabilitated in the PD/Hearth sessions where their caregivers were provided with trainings on child nutrition education and cooking demonstrations. Nutrition education messages focused on appropriate child feeding, care/hygiene and health seeking practices. During the weighing sessions, children were weighed, mothers are counseled, and the level of malnutrition was determined.

	Male	Female	Total
<b>Adequately nourished (“normal”)</b>	16,781	17,305	<b>34,086</b>
<b>Moderately malnourished</b>	7,996	8,282	<b>16,278</b>
<b>Severely malnourished</b>	1,739	2,094	<b>3,833</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>25,516</b>	<b>27,681</b>	<b>54,197</b>

*IR 1.3.2 Children who gain at least 600 grams after six weeks of participating in Hearth*

One of the fundamentals of PD/Hearth is that mothers learn how to feed their children with locally grown nutritious food from the positive practices of other mothers in their communities. During FY 08, a total of 603 children and their caregivers were involved in PH/Hearth sessions, and 394 (65.3%) of these gained at least 600 grams after participating for six weeks. Although the number of children who gained at least 600 grams only represents 62.1% of the FY 08 target, the high percentage of children who gained weight while participating is heartening. Indeed, the average weight gain from all participating children was 939.2 grams, which indicates that even those who did not reach the threshold of 600 grams may also have made significant progress.

	Children participating in PD/Hearth	Children who gained at least 600 g
<b>Boys</b>	264	158
<b>Girls</b>	339	216
<b>Total</b>	<b>603</b>	<b>394</b>

*IR 1.3.3 Village Development Health Committee (VDHC)/Community Health Committees (CHC) member trained in malaria, acute respiratory infection and diarrhea*

During FY 08, a total of 6,692 people (1,201 male and 5,491 female) from 216 CHCs and 80 VDHCs were trained in prevention and treatment of malaria, diarrhea, and acute respiratory infections (ARIs). The CHC training covered various health, nutrition, personal hygiene, environmental, and water sanitation topics. Specifically, childhood illnesses including prevention and home based management of malaria, diarrhea, ARI, and child rights were emphasized. The

total number of people trained represents 210.6% of the annual target of 3,177, and even exceeds the LOA target of 6,271. This was possible due to the low-cost approach adopted by CORAD of conducting trainings through weekly meetings.

*IR 1.3.4 Women practicing exclusive breastfeeding with their under six month babies*

Over FY 08, CORAD partners worked with communities to form 196 breastfeeding support groups with 2,942 women. Pregnant and exclusive breastfeeding (EBF) groups meet on a monthly basis in the communities. These meetings give the women in the group the opportunity to discuss issues related to EBF (when to work on their nutrition garden, problems faced while exclusively breast feeding, breast diseases and how to cope with situations etc). Partner field agents and Traditional Birth Attendants (TBAs) advise these groups on technical issues such breast diseases, positioning of baby during breast feeding, new information on EBF, and counseling of mothers. The mothers were supported with trainings promoting EBF and with seeds and tools to undertake the preparation and cultivation of 242 baby friendly farms (women’s gardens that grow micronutrient rich foods for house hold consumption). The members of these EBF support groups include care givers, family members, CHC members and TBAs. Out of the 2,942 participants in these groups, 1,757 women were practicing exclusive breastfeeding (83.9%).

**Program Objective 2:** Livelihood capacities of 16,000 poor farm households and 3,400 economically marginalized youth protected and enhanced.

**Intermediate Result 2.1:** 505 farmer groups/marketing associations are formed or strengthened to support increased agricultural production and better prices for production sold.

*IR 2.1.1 Farmer groups, marketing associations functioning*

The essential element in CORAD’s economic development strategy revolves around capacity building of farmers’ associations in marketing and business. To achieve this, CORAD partners cluster together FFS (the main mechanism for training farmers on improved agro-production techniques) into Marketing Associations that can pair training in agro-production with skill building around marketing, thus facilitating the entry of subsistence farmers into the formal economic sector.

During FY08, CORAD facilitated the establishment of 179 farmer groups (61.3% of the planned), comprising 4,649 participants. Composition of the membership indicates that 69.5% are youth; and 47.8% are women. The FFS have provided a medium through which they can address the movement of youth between agriculture and mining. FFS have thus provided gainful employment in farming during off-season.

	Ages 15-35	Aged Over 35	Total
<b>Male</b>	1,674	751	<b>2,425</b>
<b>Female</b>	1,559	665	<b>2,224</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,233</b>	<b>1,416</b>	<b>4,649</b>

*IR 2.1.2 Developing input supply and marketing plans*

During this FY, 1,410 members (798 male and 612 female) of 179 farmers’ groups participated in training workshops on the development of input supply and marketing plans. Topics covered included enterprise selection, market analysis for products, producing marketing plans, collective marketing, and organizational leadership. During FY 08, 100 input supply and marketing plans were developed by farmer groups (87% in relation to the 115 planned). The marketing plans

detail actions and activity time lines for various enterprises to be undertaken by the groups. Some of the groups highlighted the need for training in business management concepts.

*IR 2.1.3 Farmer groups successfully operating agro enterprises*

During FY 08, a total of 49 groups were formed and initiated plans to start enterprises with the help of capital grants—significantly less than the 75 planned groups as CORAD found that it took much longer than expected to find groups with suitable experience and . However, many of these nascent groups have been overwhelmed during FY 08 by the dual challenges of the high costs of agricultural inputs and the high transportation costs for agricultural outputs—both of which have the potential to raise the cost of the unprocessed crops required for enterprises related to agro-processing. CORAD partners continue to work with groups on their plans, and are planning to provide capital grants in FY 09 when the recent drop in fuel costs may positively impact their purchasing abilities. To-date, only one of the groups has reached a level of successful planning and implementation of activities to produce products from the selected enterprises (3% of the annual target). The group that has been successful in commencing agribusiness activities established under the former Development Relief Program (DRP). It is presently engaged in mechanical cultivation with large acreage of paddy fields and cassava farms and is also embarking on processing cassava into garri. The income from this enterprise has not yet been assessed.

**Intermediate Result 2.2: Access to viable economic activities in agriculture, agro-processing, or micro-enterprise is facilitated for 3,050 economically marginalized youth.**

*2.2.1 Economically marginalized youth participating in farmer field schools*

As presented in IR 1.1, during this FY, CORAD sponsored a total of a total of 1,832 EMYs (974 male and 858 female) to enroll in FFS, exceeding the annual target by 529.5%. This achievement far exceeds the target for the period and is a result of the high interest of participating communities.

*IR 2.2.2 Average savings accumulated per youth savings group*

Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLA) combine access to savings and loans with informal education to reach the poor and marginalized capable of engaging in microenterprise. Currently, VS&LA offers participants much more than financial services, it provides them with a vehicle to practice democratic processes, improve social status, and engage in collective action to benefit the community.

During FY08, 42 savings and lending groups were formed with a total of 1,171 members, but one of these groups has now graduated and is now operating independently from CORAD. For the 41 groups that are currently operational, the average savings per group is \$334.91, much higher than the expected \$200.00.

	Ages 15-35	Aged Over 35	Total
<b>Male</b>	378	92	<b>470</b>
<b>Female</b>	597	104	<b>701</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>975</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>1,171</b>

*IR 2.2.3 Economically marginalized youth accessing start up capital (loans) from youth group savings*

Over FY08, a total of 511 EMYs (157 female and 354 male) accessed \$15,235.90 in the form of loans from youth group savings. This is 75.1% of the planned 680 EMYs to be reached during FY08. The target was not achieved due to the delays in receiving approval of the FY 08 PREP.

*IR 2.2.4 Economically marginalized youth accessing start up capital (Loans/Grants) from program/ other sources*

A total of \$96,959.12 was disbursed to 970 EMYs (306 male and 664 female) in FY 08 as 512 capital grants and 350 start-up grants. The 970 EMYs reached represent 79.1% of the target.

**Program Objective 3:** Improved community infrastructure and stronger linkages to service providers for 375 rural communities.

**Intermediate Result 3.1:** 16,000 households in 375 communities have access to comprehensive maternal and childcare services, thru Maternal Child Health Posts and/ or Outreach Clinics.

*IR 3.1.1 Providing TBAs with refresher training*

A total of 335 TBAs were identified and trained during FY 08, representing 95.2% of the annual target. This training was done in collaboration with the District Health Management Teams (DHMTs) in the operational districts. Topics included safe and clean delivery, timely recognition of risk signs, and referrals.

*IR 3.1.2 Increasing access to outreach clinics (consultations)*

CORAD continued to work towards the restoration of the functional relationships between rural populations and basic health services by facilitating the provision of services at the village level through outreach clinics. During this fiscal year, a total of 34,456 consultations were conducted of which 7,468 were with pregnant women and 26,988 were with children under-five (13,177 for boys and 13,811 for girls).<sup>1</sup> Immunization (EPI), antenatal consultation, health/nutrition education, iron tablets for pregnant women, and vitamin A for post-partum women were all offered during outreach consultations.

	Pregnant Women	Children Under Five		Total (women, children)
		Male	Female	
<b>Consultations</b>	7,468	13,177	13,811	<b>34,456</b>
		26,988		

Although these 34,456 consultations represent 72% of the targeted for FY08, the attendance rate for the outreach clinics progressively increases as more communities are targeted, thereby access to MCH and nutrition services as an integral component of rural health services delivery is increasing. Also, the energy used to cover long distances to PHUs has reduced considerably with the conduction of the out reach clinics. Consequently, the reserved energy and time is now used on child care and other domestic purposes.

Through the CHCs and outreach clinics, CORAD has conducted training for 21,818 pregnant and lactating women (7,358 pregnant and 14,460 lactating) during FY 08. Topics covered included maintenance of sanitary facilities, schistosomiasis, family planning, diarrhea, malaria, acute respiratory infections, exclusive breast feeding, nutrition disorders, birth preparedness, and complimentary feeding. The trainings were conducted in their own local communities where mothers easily accessed training venues and freely expressed themselves. Due to the awareness raised in the communities visited, the majority of the community people are using clotheslines to dry their clothing and plate racks for cooking utensils, rather than spreading the wet items on the ground. Communities are also using compost fences for proper disposal of garbage.

**Intermediate Result 3.2:** 2200 targeted households in 55 communities have expanded access to safe water and sanitation.

<sup>1</sup> It is important to note that CORAD tracks the number of consultations conducted, not the number of women and children participating as the walk in policy for outreach clinics would create a strong possibility for double counting.

Although CORAD remains committed to water and sanitation targets, the funding for these activities has not yet been received from the Government of Sierra Leone, resulting in unmet targets for these activities. The US Embassy in Freetown continues to advocate with GOSL.

During FY 08, nine public latrines were completed in four communities, using 2.72 MT of food.<sup>2</sup> A total of nine Community Water Management Committees (CWMCs) were formed during this fiscal year (see membership breakdown below), a figure that represents only 27.3% of the annual target as CORAD preferred to wait to start new groups until the funding issue was resolved. The committee members were trained to effectively manage the water facilities provided.

	Ages 15-35	Aged Over 35	Total
<b>Male</b>	50	69	<b>119</b>
<b>Female</b>	51	24	<b>75</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>194</b>

**Intermediate Result 3.3: Community-managed infrastructure associated with production, marketing, storing or processing agricultural commodities rehabilitated in 375 communities.**

*IR 3.3.1 Kilometers of farm to market roads rehabilitated*

In FY08, a total of 219.18 km of farm-to-market roads were rehabilitated using a food for assets approach (59% of the annual target). A total of 652.419 MT of food were distributed to 9,374 participating workers (5,939 male and 3,435 female). With the rehabilitation of these roads, CORAD estimates that 26,709 people in the 327 communities served can now use vehicles to transport their products to markets, rather than relying on carrying the loads on their heads.

*IR 3.3.2 Community assets rehabilitated, constructed or established*

During FY 08, CORAD has worked with its communities to rehabilitate or construct 145 assets, providing 548.942 MT of food to 8,672 workers (4,769 male and 3,903 female). This represents 100% of the annual target, and 142% of the LOA target.<sup>3</sup> These assets are already being used by more than 23,644 households in 327 communities.

Type of Asset	# of assets	# of MT used for FFA	Workers		# communities benefitting	# of HH benefitting
			Male	Female		
<b>Fish ponds</b>	62	500.780	2,605	1,704	115	17,338
<b>Community market</b>	0 <sup>4</sup>	16.42	427	197	86	3,120
<b>Drying floor</b>	16	10.089	427	462	16	390
<b>Grain store</b>	8	6.704	164	226	12	295
<b>Community IVS</b>	9	24.16	200	282	30	241
<b>Community farm</b>	45	22.75	746	587	54	1,615
<b>Community plantation</b>	5	20.67	200	445	14	645
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>601.574</b>	<b>4,769</b>	<b>3,903</b>	<b>327</b>	<b>23,644</b>

**Intermediate Result 3.4: Community-managed safety nets in 375 communities serving 2,746 chronically vulnerable households established.**

*IR 3.4.1 Distributing food rations to chronically vulnerable households*

In FY 08, CORAD supplied 1,052.972 MT of food commodities to 4,491 vulnerable households with a total population of 8,565 in the LEAD operational communities. Of the households, 4,358

<sup>2</sup> 3 wells and 5 toilet/TBA hut units are currently under construction and slated to finish in quarter 1 of FY 09.

<sup>3</sup> Due to carry-forward of remaining food from the Developmental Relief Programme (DRP).

<sup>4</sup> Unlike other types of assets constructed, workers on community markets receive more than one food payment. For this reason, although no markets have been completed in the FY under review, workers on 4 markets have received food payments.

were classified as chronically vulnerable (and received 1,033.76 MT), and 133 households were classified as acutely vulnerable either due to a localized emergency (such as fire or flood) or due to a child within the household who was found to be severely underweight and/or acutely malnourished during a GMP session. A total of 19,212 MT were distributed to acutely vulnerable households. The table below shows the gender breakdown of all of those who benefitted from vulnerable group feeding—the two “direct” columns represent the individual within each household who was classified as vulnerable, while the “indirect” column represents others in the households who benefit from the food provided to the vulnerable person.

	Chronically Vulnerable		Acutely Vulnerable	
	Direct	Indirect	Direct	Indirect
<b>Male</b>	1,826	6,356	87	485
<b>Female</b>	2,532	9,384	46	310
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,358</b>	<b>15,740</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>795</b>

*IR 3.4.3 Forming community welfare committees to implement safety-net action plans*

Over the course of FY 08, CORAD formed 187 Village Welfare Committees (VWCs), all of which have developed and are implementing safety-net action plans. This represents 140.6% of the annual target. All the plans developed are geared towards the cultivation of community farms in order to increase food production so as to replace program-provided food with community-mobilized food for the chronically vulnerable. However, given the growing conditions in some operational areas, the crops that are likely to be the highest yielding in the long-term (such as cassava) are slow to mature, meaning that none of the VWCs have yet been able to supplement the food provided by the project. This may prove challenging in FY 09, when the monthly ration size for chronically vulnerable households will start to decline.

**Program Objective 4:** 990 community-based organizations in both rural and urban areas are able to practice and demand the basic principles of good governance, i.e., transparency, accountability, and representation.

**Intermediate Result 4.1:** 90 Groups (Village Development Committees, farmer groups, community health clubs, youth groups, and community welfare committees) participating in the program understand and implement principles of good governance in their group activities.

*IR 4.1.1 Training groups on Principles of Good Governance*

During FY 08, 4,775 participants (2,381 male and 2,394 female) from 402 CBOs serving 255 communities were trained in the principles of good governance. This represents 66.2% of the FY 08 target of 607 groups trained. The groups trained included FFS, VDCs, Marketing Associations, CHCs, VWCs, youth groups, VS&LA sub-committees, TBA Associations, women’s organizations, CWMCs, and small business groups. These groups were represented at the training by their secretaries, chair persons, youth leaders, and women leaders.

Training was conducted based on the governance manual and related training materials developed by CORAD. This training covers the roles and responsibilities of District, Ward, and chiefdom councils and how CBOs can work with the council structures to foster development.

*IR 4.1.2 Developing group bylaws that clearly define the principles of good governance*

During FY08, 225 groups (125% of the annual target) developed by-laws that have incorporated principles of good governance including transitions in leadership, decision-making processes,

and record-keeping. Within those groups that have had by-laws in place for several months, group members have also noted improvement in decision making within the group.

**Intermediate Result 4.2:** Community-based groups in 200 communities practice the training they have received on principles of good governance in periodic meetings with district leadership, chiefdom leadership, or other government institutions to discuss issues

*IR 4.2.1 Facilitating meetings between groups and governmental agencies*

Sierra Leone is plagued by a recent history of corruption and poor governance that has disempowered civil society and created a strong divide between governmental stakeholders and the communities they serve. To bridge this gap, CORAD encourages meetings between governmental stakeholders (both native and state) and civil society actors. During FY 08, meetings brought together representatives of civil society groups such as FFS, VDCs, CWMCs, CHCs, and TBA Associations with governmental officials of agencies such as District Councils, MAFS, Community Health Officer (CHO)/PHU Nurses, and Chiefdom Treasury Clerks. As demonstrated by the table below, the number of meetings held in the last six months of FY 08 has far exceeded the targets (between 175% and 450% of the target of two meetings per month per sector), although the number of trainings held on youth-related topics continues to prove more challenging for civil society groups working in CORAD’s areas.

	Total # of meetings	Target for ave. # of meetings	Ave. # of meetings (total / 6)
<b>Health</b>	54	2	9
<b>Agriculture</b>	48	2	8
<b>Youth</b>	21	2	3.5
<b>Safety Net</b>	46	2	7.7

Topics discussed at meetings conducted in FY 08 included youth start-up grants, how to access new seeds and new technology, how to take care of the vulnerable in the community, leadership management, management of community driven projects, and monitoring and control mechanisms and the role of the District Council and its sub-committees.

**3.3 CONTEXT MONITORING AND ASSUMPTION TRACKING**

**Incidents of Localized Insecurity**

In April, Koidu Town experienced clashes between youth and police over the use of tailings from the Number 11 Plant located in Kamara Chiefdom. Police used tear gas to disperse angry youths, resulting in the death of one youth and a dusk-to-dawn curfew. This affected staff movement for two weeks (affecting activities across all sectors), but the situation is now calm.

During FY 08, CORAD partners were also monitoring the security situation in the run up to the highly-anticipated local council elections due July 5, 2008. Although incidents of unrest were noted in the Eastern Province (such as petty thefts and skirmishes between supporters of rival parties), the local elections also passed without major incident.

**Coordination with and Support from GoSL**

There is high level of collaboration between LEAD project staff, Government stakeholders and line ministries. Monthly District Coordination Meetings continued throughout FY 08, during which LEAD staff report achievements to government stakeholders and other NGOs in the district. Their support was instrumental in mobilizing communities for active participation.

Although as a whole CORAD enjoys strong relations with the government of Sierra Leone, a few challenges have arisen at the national and district levels. Some officials will not participate in

meetings without receiving sitting fees, in spite of the meetings conducted by CORAD staff at the start of LEAD. When their expectations are not met, their participation drops dramatically. In the Tonkolili district, relationships between the DMO and CORAD partners have been strained over such issues and negotiations with the DMO have not been fruitful.

### **Extreme Climate Conditions**

Early rains continued to impact project activities as well as the activities of the farming communities. The traditional preparation of upland farms (slash and burn) was affected by the early rains. Farming communities had to speed up the land preparation activities and modify the traditional farming calendar to avoid having improperly burnt farms.

### **Fluctuations in Cost of Food and Fuel**

The global food crisis affected the inability of community members to purchase the same quantity and quality of food prior to the crisis. The high fuel prices during FY 08 resulted in increased transportation costs for project supplies and higher expenses on travel line items than previously anticipated and budgeted for. This caused an overall reduction of funds available for direct implementation of field activities.

## **3.4 ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING**

### **Rehabilitation of community assets, roads, wells, and latrines using FFW**

Caution was taken in FY 08 to ensure the sites selected do not require clearing of forests in order to prevent cutting down trees unnecessarily—road work is even limited to rehabilitation to avoid felling large trees. Pits that were dug in the course of constructing assets were refilled to prevent stagnant water that could provide a breeding ground for mosquitoes. The communities also agreed to plant carpet grass around market structures to prevent erosion at the completion of construction work. The construction of fishponds potentially constitutes a major environmental impact as ponds are normally freshly excavated in existing perennial swamps. In some cases, this could result in the reduction of water from streams leading to a build up of silt and sand, potentially increasing mosquito rates by providing a still water body in which they can breed. To reduce this possibility, drainage was constructed around all ponds constructed in FY 08 to ensure there is no obstruction of water flow from streams feeding into the pond. Trees, including *Moringa oleifera*, have been planted in catchments areas.

### **Conducting farmer based extension through Farmer Field Schools**

The FFS consists of a small demonstration plot of 0.5 to one acre of land used for cultivation to investigate the potential of different farming practices. These plots are selected by community groups, but are always situated in areas that are either already being used for agriculture or have been slated by Chiefdom Development Councils for agricultural development. This means that the demonstration plots are not cut from old-growth forests. Soil conservation practices (such as mulching, zero/minimum tillage, and use of organic manure) are frequently introduced through the experiments conducted by the FFS, thus further reducing the possibility of negative environmental impacts. In some areas where the soil quality has been found to be problematic, communities have been encouraged to establish acacia nurseries. These trees are fast growing and nitrogen fixing, and can improve soil quality while simultaneously replacing the carbon-capture value of any trees damaged during the establishment of FFS experimental plots.

**IV. PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS TO THE M&E PLAN, IPTT, AND/OR WORK PLAN**

In May of FY 08, CORAD partners received feedback from USAID/FFP and FANTA regarding required steps to align the LEAD M&E system with current requirements. These changes were made and have been incorporated into the system.

Name of Evaluation	FY08 Cost	Total Cost	# USAID Mission Employees Involved	Submission Location	Submission Date
LEAD Mid-Term Review	\$2,500	\$2,500	1	USAID/FFP Dakar, USAID Freetown	11/17/2008

During FY 08, CORAD undertook a qualitative Mid-Term Review exercise. No major modifications are proposed to the program’s M&E systems, targets, or main activities; however, several key improvements to CORAD’s way of working will be incorporated into LEAD:

1. Enhance the integration between the various sectors of work to ensure the maximum impact and consistency of messaging.
2. Establish firmer consortium standards in areas such as capital grants, agribusiness, EBF support groups, and by-laws.
3. Conduct additional capacity building for staff on business management skills, particularly the evaluation of business plans to ensure that staff have the capacity to evaluate the quality of plans produced.

In addition to changes stemming from the Mid-Term Review, other changes that will be made by CORAD in the M&E systems under LEAD starting in FY 09 are captured in the table below:

Change	Justification for Change
Changing the definition of Economically Marginalized Youth	The definition will be changed from, “A youth (15-35) who lacks access to and control over economic resources-finance, capital, land” to “A youth (15-35) who has limited access to and/or control over economic resources-finance, capital, and/or land.” CORAD partners have noted challenges in finding EMYs that meet the prior definition, as Sierra Leone is now sufficiently post-war that most youth have some access to land and/or capital
Commencing monitoring of market prices	Under the LINKS program, CORAD agencies were tracking market prices; now that LINKS has ended, it will continue to do so under LEAD as market prices are integral to understanding food security
Commencing tracking rainfall	The rainfall in FY 08 was very erratic; CORAD believes that this may be the first tangible indicators of the impact that climate change will have. CORAD is partnering with the Sierra Leone National Meteorology Department, MAFS, and FAO to try to introduce better quality monitoring. CORAD will attempt to avoid doing this directly as it believes that working through GOSL partners is a more sustainable approach.

**V. SUCCESS STORIES**

**Matopie and Malempe villages, Gbonkolenken Chiefdom, Tonkolili District**

Matopie and Malempe are two villages of approximately 300 residents in the Yele Manowo Section, Gbonkolenken Chiefdom, Tonkolili District – Northern Province of Sierra Leone. Thirty community members are actively participating in the Village Savings & Loan Association (VSLA) from the two villages, and there is an active Community Health Club (CHC). Mabinty Kamara explains the impact that LEAD activities had on the life of her daughter, Mabinty Kanu.

“We have been taught in the Community Health Club (CHC) sessions the dangers related with home deliveries as most of the instruments used by our Traditional Birth Attendants (TBAs) are not sterilized or properly taken care of. Why should we continue keeping Mabinty here in this village as she has been in labor pain for the past 48 hours?” To raise funds in an emergency situation from such a small and impoverished community is typically impossible. This time;

however, the community had a plan: “We have contributed some money under the social fund which is about one hundred and fifty thousand Leones (Le 150,000), and we have agreed to use 50,000 leones as a loan to Mabinty Kamara, so that she might be able to take her daughter to the health centre. This social fund is the only means of access to money we have now.”

Mabinty was indeed quickly conveyed to the Yele Community Health center but she was later referred to Makeni by the Community Health Officer (CHO), Mr. Peter Konneh, for urgent further medical attention. Escorted by one of the MCH Aide Nurses from Yele PHU and some other relatives, they safely arrived at A.D.B hospital in Makeni where Mabinty successfully underwent surgery. The doctor who performed the operation said, “Thank you for your timely intervention in bringing this young lady for immediate medical attention. If you had waited for two more hours, it wouldn’t have been easy to save Mabinty’s life, let alone this beautiful baby.”

### **Bevehun village, Upper Bambara Chiefdom, Kailahun District**

Bevehun village in Upper Bambara Chiefdom, Kailahun District, started Positive Deviance/Hearth Model sessions in November 2007. In Bevehun, nine children who were moderately or severely malnourished participated in the initial Hearth session, which spanned six weeks from mid-November to late December. Typically, Hearth sessions are conducted with the assistance of volunteer mothers. However, the father of Morie Francis, a child in the program, decided to take part in the sessions, making him the first male to participate.

During the Hearth session, Francis and his wife Hawa both played a significant role in mobilizing caregivers. Their child, Morie Francis Junior weighed just eight kgs at 42 months of age, placing him in the “severely malnourished” category according to the normal growth curve. According to Morie and Hawa, their children were always ill, especially Morie Francis Junior, but they only realized it when CORAD staff came to assess their children. All the nutritious foods were available locally, but the couple did not know how and when to feed their children.



Showing CORAD staff a small basket with potato leaves and “paw paw” (papaya) that Hawa took from the family garden, she proudly reported that she will feed them to her children. The health of Francis Junior has greatly improved, indicated Hawa, as she pointed to her child playing with other children.

## **VI. LESSONS LEARNED**

### **What is working?**

- That participation of project participants in VS&L activities is very high as the methodology is user friendly. Even illiterate members state that it is very transparent.
- Farmers are adopting new ideas and farming technologies learned from FFS that lead to increased agricultural production.
- The PD/Hearth model is a socially acceptable, cheaper and effective practice of disseminating nutrition education messages and reducing malnutrition and mortality of children under five. This is appreciated by most mothers and child care-givers.
- Color-coded bracelets are distributed to children attending GMP sessions, according to their nutritional status (red beads for severely malnourished children, yellow for moderately malnourished, green for adequately nourished). This has enabled community members to know the status of their children at all times.

**What is not working?**

- As a requirement to be recognized as a legal and functional community structure, the chiefdom/district council is levying charges on the VDCs as registration fees.
- The under five cards should be given free to mothers; however, PHU staff often demand payment for these cards. CORAD continues to advocate with the MOHS on this point.
- Due to delays in the approval of the FY08 PREP, there was a pipeline break, which has meant that less FFA projects could be carried out this year.