



LWR & LWF/DWS Liberia
Rehabilitation of Liberia Food Production Capacity Project
USAID Grant #669-CA-0099-00303

STATE OF THE PROJECT REPORT
(February 1, 2001 – January 31, 2002)

With Cumulative Achievement
For the Period
October, 1999 – December, 2001



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I. INTRODUCTION.

Implementation of the Cooperative Agreement between the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Lutheran World Relief (LWR) commenced 1 October 1999. It was modified effective 1 July 2001 to extend the project period from 31 January 2002 to 30 June 2003, revise activities and increase total funding.

The focus of the project is to increase food security at household and community levels in order to improve the general living condition of rural inhabitants in the project areas of Bomi County and Tappita and now Yarwein Messonoh Districts, Nimba County by meeting the following objectives:

- Work with 8,100 farmers to establish the basis for increased production of diversified food crops.
- Work with 2000 farmers in 100 communities in livestock multiplication;
- Work with 3200 farmers to rehabilitate tree crop plantations and establish tree crop nurseries; and
- Support 35 community-based micro-development projects in support of food security benefiting an estimated 15,000 rural residents.

The Project was originally intended for implementation in Bomi and lower Lofa Counties. However, due to the outbreak of hostilities in Lofa County along the border of Liberia and Guinea in April and again in August 1999, USAID declared the area insecure and advised LWF/DWS to relocate project activities from lower Lofa elsewhere. LWF/DWS then selected Tappita District, Nimba County, where it had previously distributed seeds and tools in a project funded by USAID/OFDA. Activities in Bomi continued as planned.

A strategy of working with and building the capacity of local partners has been pursued. Two local NGOs, the Concerned Christian Community (CCC) and the Community and Human Development Agency (COHDA) were originally sub-contracted to implement project activities in Bomi and lower Lofa, respectively. With the shift from Lofa to Nimba, COHDA was brought down to work in Bomi – with the hope that Lofa would open up again in the near future. That did not happen. In Lofa, LWF/DWS first started working with Community United for Sustainable Development (CUSD), a community-based organization (CBO), as there was no LINGO readily available. Encouraged by its organizational skills and capacity, the project changed the nature of the partnership and began working with them as an NGO, contracting CUSD for work LWF/DWS was undertaking directly. COHDA was released.

The following report highlights activities carried out during the period 1 February 2001 – 31 January 2002, providing cumulative achievement to date. It also provides constraints encountered, lessons learned and prospects of the project.

Summary of achievements

Over the past year, the project added 8,000 farmers in 55 communities, bringing the total to 27,000 farmers in 135 communities. The project target is 30,000 farmers in 150 communities. These farmers, with LWF assistance, organized themselves into community-based organizations (CBO) and received inputs in the form of improved seeds, vegetative planting materials and tools to work communal plots.

Seed multiplication

60 CBOs cultivated 125 hectares of seeds (rice and legumes) and vegetative planting materials (root and tuber crops) during the project period. To date, this brings the total land cultivated directly by the

project for production of planting materials to 300 ha. The original project target was 189 ha. The dramatic increase in production of planting materials by CBOs can be attributed to:

- a. the high demand for planting materials among farmers most of whom had just returned to settle in their villages but had no seeds, cuttings or tools to begin their farming activities,
- b. the quality of high yielding planting materials provided by the project, and
- c. cash income realized by CBO members who are participating in food crop activities.

The CBO's engaged in seed-rice multiplication received the foundation rice from the LWF/DWS 7 ha seed-multiplication site in Tubmanburg, Bomi County. The CBO produce was either sold to the community at large or used by the CBO members on their individual farms. 4,500 farmers to date have received a total of 9 metric tons of foundation seed rice produced at LWF/DWS' seed multiplication site. These foundation seeds and cutting were obtained from:

- The West African Rice Development Association (WARDA) – which provided 57 varieties of breeders' seeds;
- World Vision Liberia - which provided 2 varieties of foundation seed rice and 25 bundles of improved cassava cuttings; and
- The Central Agriculture Research Institute (CARI) - which provided 3 varieties of foundation seed rice.

These agencies have collaborated with the project in the multiplication process to ensure quality planting materials reach the farmers.

In addition to the 300 ha. mentioned above, an additional 117 ha. of assorted food crops were cultivated by 23 of 40 CBOs previously supported by the project. Their continued production of planting material for sale to other farmers can be attributed to the profits realized from previous sales, and the continuous demands on planting materials created by farmers returning from refugee camps or from the harsh city life to settle in rural areas to undertake farming. Other CBOs previously supported carried on some activities in their groups but not in an organized manner, which made it difficult to track their performance.

Livestock Multiplication:

A total of ten (10) communities (6 in Bomi & 4 in Nimba) were restocked with small ruminants (goats). The project collaborated with Veterinarians Sans Frontier (VSF) who provided two (2) livestock management-training workshops for project field staff and community residents who had been identified to receive the animals.

Cash Crops:

Ten (10) hectares of existing tree crop farms were rehabilitated in Tappita District, Nimba County. To date, the project has rehabilitated a total of 34.5 hectares tree crops (4 ha in cocoa and 30.5 ha in coffee). Bomi County presented no request to rehabilitate farms, perhaps due to the absence of old tree crop farms. The project supported 21 tree crop nursery groups, which produced 86,500 seedlings during the year. These seedlings, which included 11,500 coffee, 65,000 cocoa and 10,000 plantain suckers, were planted on 78.6 hectares. In previous years, 12 nursery groups were supported to produce 206,120 seedlings. These were planted on 187 ha. To date, 33 nursery groups produced a total of 292,620 seedlings of cocoa, coffee and plantains - enough to plant 266 ha.

Community-Based Micro-Development Projects

The community-based micro-development projects included bridge rehabilitation that increased access of goods to market; local tools production and market shed rehabilitation, and technical and community development training. Over the reporting period, 13 micro-projects were successfully completed. These projects include 9 bridges, 2 blacksmith kitchens and 2 market sheds. Twelve (12) micro projects were previously completed.

2,645 farmers participated in training workshops offered in food production and seed multiplication techniques. This brings total participants in workshops to 5,975 farmers.

Major Constraints Encountered and Recommended Actions

CBO Management and Planning

Having identified in year 2000 a general weakness in the areas of organizational development, management, planning and leadership among most CBOs, the project expanded its training in 2001 to include a series of CBO Leadership and Community Development and Animation Training workshops. A total of 5 workshops were conducted for 51 CBOs for a total of 175 participants.

Tree Crops

The introduction of tree crop nurseries was not as successful as hoped. In Bomi County, an area not traditionally known for crops such as cocoa and coffee, these crops were introduced at the onset of project implementation without sufficient prior sensitization and awareness. Prices for the seedlings produced by the CBOs were considered high by the farmers expected to invest in crops with which they were unfamiliar.

In Tappita District, Nimba County, an area with a great deal of experience in these crops, farmers were primarily interested in oil palm due to the current declining prices of cocoa and coffee on both the local and the international markets and increasing domestic demand for oil palm. In Tappita District, there is scarcity of wild palms used to produce palm oil for consumption and soap making. The project did not get permission from USAID to include oil palm in the tree crops until the project modification of September 2001.

Based on the reaction to cocoa and coffee in both Bomi and Nimba, the project changed its tree crop strategy from centralized nurseries to more community owned and managed nurseries. In this latter strategy, interested farmers from a community or 2 were supported by the project to produce their own seedlings for transplanting on their individual farms. This new strategy proved successful among tree crop groups in the project area. In addition, tree crops were de-emphasized in Bomi in favor of more food crops. In Nimba, oil palm will be included along with along with the more decentralized, more individual farm-based tree crop rehabilitation.

Food Processing

The first mill, installed in Tubmanburg, experienced difficulties concerning technical installation, operation and maintenance; and the management by and off the CBO to which it was given. This has highlighted the need by the project for proper feasibility studies on the availability of raw materials, capacity of groups to produce raw materials, and capacity of groups to manage the mills. The second mill experienced a factory defect, which was later rectified by a local technician. These mills are now functioning properly.

To prevent a re-occurrence of these problems, representatives of CBO consortia operating the mills have received training in maintenance of mills and business management skills to make their operations more sustainable. In addition, the project is working with coordinating with other USAID partner NGOs (CRS and WVI) to acquire smaller, more efficient mills from neighboring West African countries.

Community Reception of Techniques and Methods

There was a far greater cohesiveness of groups in Nimba than in Bomi, thus they were more receptive to learning and working in groups. Nimba County has a tradition of working in groups or as a

community. This stems from either the traditional *Kuu* system of shared labor or having been the focus of development work from outside agencies over many years – or a combination of the two. Bomi County, on the other hand, does not have this tradition of shared labor and has had little in the way of community development inputs, thus farmers tend to be more individualistic. And both groups lacked the management and planning capacity to take them beyond meeting immediate needs.

To meet this challenge, the project strengthened its community development and animation training activity to train more CBO members in group leadership and management skills. Through the leadership and management training of CBOs, combined with the orientation workshops planned for local leaders, the project is looking to improve the attitudes of community residents in Bomi towards the project and avoid this issues to the extent possible in the new project district of Yarwein Mehnsnonoh, Nimba County.

II. ANALYSIS BY OBJECTIVE

Objective 1 **Establish the basis for increased production of food**

Seed Multiplication

In an attempt to boost food production in the project area, the project initially focused on production of seeds and vegetative planting materials. Sixty (60) CBOs cultivated 125 hectares of assorted food crops during the year. CBOs focused on rice, cowpea, root and tuber and groundnut seeds in response to high demand from their communities. Initially envisioning production of 3 tons over the course of the project, 4 tons were produced over the last 12 months. New rice varieties – including 57 varieties of breeder seeds obtained from the West African Rice Development Association (WARDA) and 3 varieties of foundation seeds obtained from World Vision–Liberia and the Central Agriculture Research Institute (CARI) - were tested under the LWF's Participatory Rice Varietal Selection scheme (PRVS). Twenty of these lowland varieties were selected with the participation of local farmers. Efforts are underway to multiply the seed rice through carefully selected CBOs – who will be trained to participate in a Community-based Seed System (CBSS) to produce high quality seeds for sale to their communities.

In addition to the sixty (60) CBOs who cultivated 125 ha. this year, 40 CBOs who were supported in previous years to cultivate 175 ha. assorted food crops continued some activities. Encouraged by the high yield of the seeds received and the income generated from the sales of their surpluses, 23 of these CBOs continued the activities during the year cultivating a total of 117 ha. in food crops. To date, a total of 417 ha. has been cultivated by 100 CBOs during the project period. Previous CBOs only receive training and extension services to continue project activities already started. The 17 CBOs received training and extension services as the others but activities carried on in their respective groups were not organized enough to enable management to track their performance. Group membership was not consistent, no production record were kept and their attendance at farmer training workshops was irregular.

Food Processing:

Following the installation of the first cassava grinder in Tubmanburg, Bomi County in 2000, the second mill, which is for rice processing, was installed in Lorplay, Tappita District, Nimba County. This mill initially had a factory defect, which resulted in high percentage broken grains. But this fault has since been rectified by an agro-technician. The mill is now functioning properly. The site for the third mill, also for rice, has been identified in Tubmanburg, Bomi County. This mill will be run by a CBO consortium of 75 members from 3 rice-producing CBOs. The group has already received training in leadership and management skills, record keeping and routine mill maintenance.

Objective 2 Multiplication of Livestock

Livestock activities in project area did not start as planned due to problems with the initial livestock situational study. Intended to provide direction for the livestock program, the consultants' report did not meet the project's expectations or standards and was thus rejected. This delay caused many of the communities initially mobilized for this project to lose hope. However, the project has begun the process of mobilizing required resources to provide animals to communities already identified. These resources included collaboration with Veterinarians Sans Frontier (VSF), an international NGO, to help train project staff and community residents engaged in the multiplication and distribution of animals. Under this agreement, VSF facilitated two (2) livestock management training workshops for the project extensionists and farming group leaders. The workshops were funded by the project.

A total of ten communities (6 in Bomi & 4 in Nimba) were re-stocked with 70 small ruminants (Goats & sheep). Participating farmers were trained in basic Livestock Management and PRA Methodology in community-based livestock programs. Twelve 12 other communities have been animated in Bomi County for re-stocking. Following a review of the livestock program with USAID consultants, it was decided that the program be emphasized in Bomi County since it was a high deficit area for small ruminants and chickens. The project is now animating more communities in Bomi County for restocking.

Objective 3 Rehabilitation of Tree Crop Plantations and Establishment of Nurseries

Marketing

The marketing of cash crop products continues to remain disorganized as there is no agency working to coordinate this on a regional or national level. The prospect for providing any assistance to market farmers' commodities is not encouraging. The Liberia Produce Marketing Corporation (LPMC), the statutory body responsible for cocoa and coffee marketing, continues to suffer financial constraints and therefore does not have the capacity to offer such service. As a result, the responsibility for produce marketing remains in the hands of private business entities.

The project plans to intervene during the extension phase by organizing tree crop farmers into associations at both clan and district levels. By organizing farmers into some form of association, they will be better positioned to bargain for better prices for their commodities. These association members will receive training in small business management, record keeping and warehouse management. They will be encouraged to maintain their own warehouses at various community centers to ease business transactions.

Rehabilitation of Plantations

Requests for assistance to rehabilitate tree crop plantations came largely from Tappita District, where farmers rely on cash crops as a major source of income. A total of 10 ha. were rehabilitated in Tappita District. Bomi County continues to show low response to tree crop rehabilitation and new planting.

Nurseries

The project originally envisioned the development of commercial nurseries established and run by CBOs for the production of coffee and cocoa seedlings and plantain suckers for sale to other farmers. This strategy did not prove very successful as CBOs showed a clear preference for planting the seedlings on their own farm. In the case of coffee and cocoa, this was facilitated by the CBOs' inability to sell their produce at a price the farmers could afford and still be sustainable. In Bomi, this was further exacerbated by the reluctance of farmers to engage in tree crops. Finally, the project noted that once the CBOs absorbed the nursery production into their own farms, they disbanded.

As a result of these lessons learned, the project has shifted from centralized, commercially run CBO nurseries to a community-owned nursery approach. In this approach, a group of farmers with interest in cultivating cocoa, coffee and/or plantains is supported on a one-time basis with required inputs to produce seedlings for planting on their individual farms and provided with the necessary training to continue these activities in the future. These groups are not considered CBOs as they disband with the harvest of seedlings. They could re-group for other activities if necessary. There will be no selling or buying of seedlings or suckers by CBOs.

During the extension phase of this project, the project shall not establish new nurseries of cocoa and coffee in project areas. It will focus instead on rehabilitation of existing farms through the approach noted above, and include oil palm in Tappita and Yarwein Mehnsonnoh Districts, Nimba County. During the year, a total of 86,500 assorted tree crop seedling were produced and planted on 78.6 hectares. These included 11,500 coffee and 65,000 cocoa seedlings and 10,000 plantain suckers.

Objective 4 Support to 35 Community-Based Micro Development Projects In Support Of Food Security

The project approved and completed 13 micro-projects. These included 2 blacksmith workshops, 2 market sheds and 9 bridges. To date a total of 25 projects have been completed against a target of 35 projects.

Bridges

The rehabilitation of bridges in Bomi suffered a setback due to the removal from the old Bomi iron ore-mining site of all I-beams promised by the county authority for use by the project and the reluctance of the communities to meet 50% of the project costs (this includes labor and locally available materials). In Bomi County, logs cannot easily be found to construct bridges. However, the problem of the I-beams has been resolved as the county authority has made available a sufficient quantity of I-beams required to construct 15 bridges in Bomi County. The project continues to use logs in constructing bridges in Tappita District, Nimba County. Under this project, community residents are required to make a 50% contribution in local materials and labor to the cost of each project. No difficulties were encountered over this issue in Tappita District, Nimba County. Participants in Bomi County balked at the contribution. This attitude has, however, improved after a series of leadership and management workshops for CBO members. Community residents in project areas including Bomi County are now making their 50% contribution to micro projects.

Blacksmith Workshops

Construction of blacksmith workshops and provision of essential production tools have begun meeting local farming tool needs in a number of communities. The two blacksmith workshops (one in Bomi and one in Nimba) were provided with production equipment and scrap metals and have begun producing farming tools for their communities. Twelve blacksmith workshops have been constructed so far. Blacksmiths in the project area have improved their skills through technical training workshops provided by the project in producing such specialized tools as shovels, axes, watering cans, and buckets, to name a few. The project plans to acquire as much of its tool inputs as possible from local blacksmiths during the project extension phase.

Training

Training of CBOs is considered an important element in the capacity building of local organizations involved in projects activities as these organizations are expected to continue their activities beyond the funding period. The project worked with 93 CBOs in various project activities. More CBOs are expected to participate during the extension phase. In addition to the technical agricultural training of

CBO members, the project embarked on the training of CBOs in leadership and management skills to enable them effectively run their organizations. This was established after the identification of two major issues:

1. The low level of literacy among women limited their involvement in male-dominated CBO activities. It is difficult to pull them from this back seat position in decision-making as the women do not have the confidence to contribute to decisions that affect the organization.
2. Numerous organizational problems faced by the CBOs in effectively managing their activities and making their organization sustainable can be attributed to the lack of training in leadership and management skills among the members. This is evidenced in their inability to resolve minor conflicts among themselves, organize their work effectively and ability to identify sources of assistance even at the community level. Groups with seemingly great potential to succeed were either breaking apart or performing poorly due to lack of capacity to manage their groups or even unable to organize their work effectively.

To effectively carry out the leadership and management training of CBOs, two (2) training teams comprising of project staff members have been established, one in Bomi and one in Tappita, Nimba County. These training teams organized as Community Development and Animation Teams (CODATS) are backed by external resource persons from other NGOs. A total of 5 CBO leadership and management workshops were held for 175 CBOs members from 51 CBOs in 2001. Of this number, 60 participants were women, representing 34% of total workshop participants.

CBO leadership workshops cover the following topics which have been evaluated and accepted as appropriate for the building of CBO capacity: 1) Building a learning community; 2) Life cycle of CBOs; 3) Clarifying vision; 4) Definition of development; 5) Gender and development; 6) Leadership; 7) Action planning; 8) Training evaluation; 9) Dealing with conflict; 10) Financial record keeping; and 11) Basic project evaluation skills.

III. TRACKING PROJECT IMPACT

At this stage and with the available resources, the project cannot readily provide a thorough assessment of the impact on the participating farmers, communities and LNGO partners. However, we can provide the following cursory conclusions drawing on the reports of the extensionists, LNGOs, and observations made by the management team.

Impact on the Project Area

The project continues to instill confidence and trust in community residents and returnees to remain in their villages/towns to begin reconstructing their lives. The presence of LWF/DWS as an international NGO in an area provides a sense of security that encourages other development partners to undertake activities in the area. For example, World Vision International (WVI) has established health delivery services in remote villages in project area in Bomi County. Also a sense of unity and team work in development has taken a positive turn since the inception of the project.

Impact on Food Security

Seeds/Planting Materials Production

By continuing to cultivate improved seeds (rice & legumes) and vegetative planting materials (cassava, yam and eddoes), the basis is being laid for production of seeds and other planting materials which will serve thousands of farmers in the coming years. These farmers will obviously increase food production, which is bound to have a positive impact on the food deficit situation, particularly in Bomi County. Past experience indicates that one of the limiting factors influencing food production at

household and community level is accessibility of improved planting materials (seeds & cuttings). This is seriously being addressed by the project. Therefore, the demand for improved seeds and cuttings is ever increasing with increase in the number of people escaping from the harsh city life and settling in rural areas, and those running away from fighting in western Liberia and settling in the project area.

Rice - More CBO's producing food crops participated in rice production. Each farm family in these CBOs crops 0.5 hectare twice a year. This will produce approximately 2 tons of paddy, which yields twenty bags of processed rice (20 bags @ US\$20.00) = US\$400.00/annual). This will increase the farmers purchasing ability in addition to satisfying their food needs.

Peanuts - Another major crop grown during the year was peanuts, which improves soil fertility. Each CBO with an average membership of 25 people cultivated five (5) hectares and are expected to realized 10,000 kg (135 bags) within three months. When sold at current market price of US\$100.00 a bag, the group will realize a gross income of US\$13,500. Each member will have a share of US\$540.00. This income could increase with crop rotation and inter-cropping. This will significantly impact food security in the near future in project area – if provided political stability.

Cash Crops

The impact of the cash crops being promoted by the project – cocoa and coffee – can only be viewed in the long - term as these are slow maturing crops. Despite the initial difficulties in introduction (Bomi County) and preference for alternative cash crops (oil palm in Tappita), response to this component has generally been positive. Due to the disorganized marketing of these products in Liberia, the low price for products and a demand for more immediate lucrative products, this component has been scaled down from original projections. Historically, however, coffee and cocoa have been an important source of income for Liberia's farmers and have the potential to be so again. This intervention lays the groundwork for that. The project's activities in cash crops has a long term impact on food security despite the initial low response to tree crops. With the rehabilitation of existing farms, farmers are ensuring the future productive capacity of their crops, which will in turn yield significant financial returns should the prices take an improved trends. CBOs previously engaged in seedling production continue to maintain their nurseries. A total of 78.6 hectares were planted during the year by some 190 farmers.

Each farmer in the project area is cultivating on the average 0.5 hectare of coffee and cocoa. The coffee farm, in full production, will yield 1000 kg of cherry per annum, producing US\$400.00 based on the current market price of forty cents (USD) per kilogram. Cocoa will yield 900 kg of bean per annum, producing US\$315.00 based on the current market price of Thirty-five cents (USD) per kilogram. These current market prices are currently at their lowest levels in recent production history in Liberia. However, it is anticipated that prices of cocoa and coffee will increase in the future.

Impact on the Project Beneficiaries

Twenty-three (23) CBOs previously supported by the project have continued their group activities without direct supervision from the project staff. Farmers are also applying the techniques learned in the CBOs to their own farms – without direct project supervision. However, the activities of 17 CBOs previously supported did not perform satisfactorily without project supervision. This was due to organizational problems within their groups.

The use of demonstration plots with each CBO is proving most effective. When Tynenba CBO in Tappita (Nimba County) - engaged in the production of roots/tubers - joined the project in 2000, they had 1.1 hectares of cassava under cultivation. To gain the acceptance by the farmers of a more labor-intensive yet more productive form of planting cuttings, part of the field (20 m x 20 m) was planted

on mounds using one cutting at a distance of 1.5 m x 1.5 m while another area of similar measurement was planted on flat ground (traditional method). The farmers realized at the end of the cropping year, the area planted on mounds yielded three times was realized from the traditional method of planting.

Women in project areas, previously they were considered to be listeners and silent participants, have begun to take active part in group decision-making. An example of this is that the number of women participating in CBO training run by the project has been gradually increasing. There were only 3 women in attendance at the first CBO training in November 2000. At the second CBO workshop held in Suehn/Mecca District in January 2001 there were 13. A total of 175 workshop participants were drawn from 51 CBOs in the project area. Of the 175 CBO members who participated in 5 CBO leadership and management workshops conducted by the project, 60 are women representing 34% of total participants. Similar increases in the level of female participation have been recorded in CBO membership. The increase in the number of female attendance is attributed to the removal of literacy as a requirement for participation in the workshops. Such a requirement prevented the majority of the women participants from attending the first workshop, since most of them could not read and write.

The *Kuu* system, a traditional system of cooperative labor practiced in most parts of Liberia, is not yet popular in Bomi County – where farmers previously preferred to work as individuals. The project has standardized group work among farmers and will continue to devote more time to training in group dynamics and group decision-making. This training is beginning to show results – primarily among the farming communities. There is some evidence that the *Kuu* system is slowly spreading into Bomi County. Farmers who are members of CBOs have realized that one can achieve so much with minimum effort in a group setting than is possible with an individual working alone. CBOs members are initiating the *Kuu* system in their communities to carry out farming activities.

Impact on Capacity Building

Community Micro Projects

Blacksmiths: With training provided by this project, blacksmith are now producing such special agricultural tools as rakes, pingalin, hand trowels and shovels in addition to their local farming tools. The production level has also increased since the inception of the project. Those engaged in this activity are earning income from the sales of their tools. Their respective communities are gaining confidence of accessing requisite farm tools in desired quantities. To further enhance the sustainability and stature of the blacksmith groups, the project plans to purchase a greater portion of its farm tools requirement from them. The groups will be pre-financed to purchase scrap metals to carry out the production of tools. The groups will be free to sell their surplus tools after project's request has been met.

Bridges: The rehabilitation of damaged bridges in project area is significantly impacting the lives of community residents. The civil war in Liberia left farm-to-market roads and bridges in deplorable condition, which made vehicle traffic in these areas impossible. With the intervention of the project, 10 bridges have been rehabilitated connecting over 30 towns and villages with an estimated population of 15,000. These communities are once again accessible by vehicles. Farmers can now take their farm products to market. They can also take their sick family members to nearby health centers and travel whenever necessary.

Markets: The project has renovated 3 market building in project areas (2 in Bomi and 1 in Tappita). These markets are positively impacting food security in communities where they are located. Over 12,000 community residents have access to these markets they are selling their farm products. The markets also serve as weekly meeting points for marketers and local business people to sell and buy

goods and services. The presence of these markets stimulates the production of agricultural commodities among small producers as they have opportunity to earn some each week.

CBOs Leadership and Management skills

The CBO leadership and management training has had a positive impact not only on the CBO members but also on the larger community. From field observations and interaction with CBOs/farming groups the following can be stated as positive impact of the leadership and management training; which have directly impacted the communities.

- CBO members who are in leadership positions in their communities (i.e. town chiefs, quarter chiefs or headmen) are transferring their leadership skills acquired in the management workshops to their communities. For instance, town chiefs who have attended CBO workshops, are observed to hold better meetings and encourage the participation of other group members in decision making. Conversely, CBO members have realized that being a community leader does not automatically qualify one to become a leader in the CBO.
- Female participation in CBO training workshops has increased by 34% over the years. Women in CBOs/farming groups previously considered "silent participants" are now contributing to decision making in their groups. One of the female participants at a workshop remarked. "This time I can question my husband on decisions I am not satisfied with. At first he used to get vex with me for asking him when he say something. But now we can understand each other. My husband now tries to ask my opinion when he wants to take decision in the home." Women have begun to realize their potential as they are getting more exposure through these workshops. Even the illiterate women in the groups are becoming vocal on issues affecting them.

Having attended the financial management workshops, CBOs have begun keeping records of their activities. For instance, the 10 blacksmith groups, 2 food processing consortia, and 15 of the food crop CBOs have records of their transactions. CBO members engaged in food processing have begun apportioning their income to various components of their operations. That is, some of the income is kept for replacement of the mill, some for fuel and lubricants and portion for wages of the operators, who may not be members of the group. The blacksmiths are keeping records of the cost of scrap metals and sales of tools to be able to determine whether they are making profits.

Impact on the Collaborating Partners

Local NGOs are better organized, and have better management structure than before. This is evidenced by the quality of decisions being made by the local partners, relative to project implementation and reflected in the reports from these partners to LWF/DWS. They require less daily oversight by LWF/DWS staff. Farmers training activities are increasingly being conducted by the partners.

CBOs have been strengthened through both technical agricultural training and leadership and management skills training workshops; and in the process, they have been exposed to more democratic and transparent decision making skills. This is an impact not only on the members but also on the county at large. CBOs are beginning to see themselves as vehicles for change and development in their communities. CBO leaders are taking on more community development initiatives.

IV. Collaboration with other development partners

The Project collaborated with other agencies in carrying out various aspects of its activities. These activities included the exchange of information, training and access to improved seeds and vegetative planting materials.

AGENCY	ACTIVITIES	ACHIEVEMENT/EXPECTED OUTCOME
VSF	Livestock management Training	Establishment of community-based livestock management system
WVI	Collaboration on environmental studies on lowland ecology; Preparation of Initial Environmental Examination (IEE); Provision of training and planting materials	Exchanged technical information through field visits. Increased distribution of improved planting material.
CRS	Networking group USAID	Completion of Environment Studies and IEE. Exchanged technical information through field visits.
	Training in undertaking baseline studies	Standardization of Monitoring and Evaluation System among partners
DEN-L	Training of project staff	Improved leadership skills of project staff
PSF	Net working among USAID partners	Exchanged technical information, collaboration on the settlement of vocational agricultural graduates.
ARC	Net working among USAID partners	Exchanged technical field visits; collaborated on the discussions of micro finance projects to funded by USAID.

V. Conclusions

The USAID funded project within the past 12 months has registered significant progress. By introducing new high-yielding crop varieties and improved farming practices, the project has already directly impacted the lives of some 27,000 project participants or indirectly about 48,000 residents of the project area. By cultivating 417 hectares assorted food crops (300 ha. by current CBOs and 117 ha. by previously supported CBOs) the farming communities already have access to good quality planting materials. The basis has been laid for increased production of seeds and vegetative planting materials to serve farmers in coming years. This has positively impacted food security in project area.

The challenges and weakness exhibited by the poor performance of CBOs in project area have been thoroughly discussed and project team members are diligently addressing the problems. The introduction of the CBO leadership and management skills training has strengthened the capacity of CBO members to effectively manage the activities of their organizations on sustainable basis. The training is also helping to move the farmers from an emergency mindset to one required for rehabilitation and development. There are adjustments in some activities, as for example, the change in strategy from centralized tree crop nurseries to community owned and managed nurseries.

Though the food processing component of the project has met with some obstacles, the management team is confident that they can turn this around during the extension phase of the project. The need for this component remains great. A recent FAO – WFP food assessment report on Liberia stresses that post harvest loss is a major bottleneck to the achievement of food security in Liberia today. Food processing is one way to deal with this problem. Food processing is a new area for many NGOs in Liberia. With the present problems already noted, consultations are being held with a wide range of partners, the European Union Food Security Unit, the French NGO ACF, and USAID-funded INGOs, among other partners, with the view to learning from their experiences and formulating a better and more proactive role to the challenges inherent in food processing.

ANNEXES

- VI. Output Achievement Table
- VII. Graphic Presentation of project Achievement
- VIII. Listing of CBOs/Local IP and their activities
- IX. Project Equipment Status

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Listing of CBOs/Local IP and their activities as at December 2001

I. BOMI COUNTY

NAME OF CBOs	Activities	LOCATION			MEMBERSHIP			Total Hectares Planted
		District	CLAN	TOWN	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	
Food crops and food processing								
1 SCRC (Sasstown)	Food crops	Dewoin	Gbarvon	Levuma	30	21	30	5.5
Rise (Karnaga)	Food crops	Dewoin	Gbarvon	Kenema	27	18	30	3.2
Kenema Youth Agric. Project	Food crops	Dewoin	Blugban	Behstown	13	17	30	3.3
Levuma Agriculture Project	Food crops	Dewoin	Lower Zor	Tulamu	20	10	30	2.5
Sadaya Agric. Project	Food crops	Dewoin	Upper zor	Boiwein	20	10	30	2
Zelekai Community Project	Food crops	Klay	Tehr	Mannor	20	15	30	48.7
Bola Agriculture Project	Food crops	Klay	Tehr	Sasstown	20	26	51	8
Folley Town Comm. Project	Food crops	Sueh/mecc	Gbojay	Butjeh	17	5	28	1.7
Folley Town (upper Zor)	Food crops	Sueh/mecc	Gbor	Levekai	7	11	30	4
Levekai (Nawienbegon)	Food crops	Sueh/mecc	Gbor	Kpakla	13	17	30	27.9
Managbokai Agric. Project	Food crops	Sueh/mecc	Gbojay	Gbojay	12	10	30	2.8
Butjeh Town Agric. Project	Food crops	Klay	Senjeh	Tubmanbu	14	16	8	3.6
Gbojay Swamp Development	Food crops	Klay	Senjeh	Borbortowr	8	8	30	0.6
Gibina Agric. Project	Food crops	Klay	Tehr	Kangar	11	9	45	0.8
Zallamu Agric. Project	Food crops	Klay	Gorblah	Jawajeh	22	18	35	0.5
Quinnie Agric. Project	Food crops	Klay	Tehr	Jorjorma	11	8	36	1.2
Gongor Town Agric. Project	Food crops	Klay	Senjeh	T-burg	12	8	25	1.7
Maflawa (Mazehn)	Food crops	Dewoin	Gbavon	Foday	11	17	50	1.2
Nikpa Agric. Project	Food crops	Klay	Senjeh	T-burg	12	12	15	0.8
Moila Development Project	Food crops				19	17		2.2
Wolala Agric. Project	Food crops	Dewoin	Blugbau	Weajor	10	12	25	5.4
Mbaloma Agric. Prject	Food crops	Sueh/mecc	Gbor	Suehtown	8	13	30	5.4
								1.33
Weadolo Dev. Association	Tree crop nursery	Sueh/mecc	Gbojay	Weadolo	20	10	30	
Menmen Town Dev. Assoc	Tree crop nursery	Sueh/mecc	Upper-Med	Menmento	15	15	30	
Beajeh Agric. Based Org.(BABO	Tree crop nursery	Klay	Senjeh	Beajeh	9	4	13	
Beakini Dev. Association	Tree crop nursery	Klay	Mannah	Beakini	10	17	27	
Gohnzipo Agric. Dev. Assoc.	Tree crop nursery	Klay	Kpo	Gehnzipo	18	7	25	
Livestock								
Tubmanburg community	Poultry brooding house	Klay	Senjeh	Tubmanburg				
Gbojay community	Livestock paddock	Sueh/mecc	Gbojay	Gbojay				
Micro Project								
Gohnzipo Community	Bridge rehabilitation	Klay	Kpo	Gohnipo				
Bowein Community	Blacksmith Kitchen	Dewoin	Upper zor	Boiwein				
Levekai Community	Blacksmith Kitchen			Levekai				
Gbai town community	Blacksmith Kitchen			Gbol town				
Sasstown Community	Black smith kitchen construction							
Klay Town Community	Market shelter	Klay						
CCC	Local IP-Supervision	All Districts	All Clans	-	12	2	14	
	Total				421	353	787	

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Listing of CBOs/Local IP and their activities as at December 2001
 Tappita District, Nimba County

NAME OF CBOs	ACTIVITIES	LOCATION			MEMBERSHIP		
		District	CLAN	TOWN	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
Food Crop/vegetable							
Delmanba	Upland Rice/Vegetable		Gbi		31	10	41
Leekoley	Upland Rice & Lowland		Yourpea		13	3	16
Vorpea	Upland Rice, Lowland & vegetable		Quilleh		22	16	38
Kpanakwado	Upland Rice		Quilleh		23	24	47
Largon Agriculture	Upland, Lowland Rice & Vegetable		Gblor		23	16	39
Doekwado	Upland		Gblor		26	20	46
Sehtoweh	Upland		Gblor		18	16	34
Loar Gbundia	Upland		Boe		12	3	15
Sokolay Village	Upland		Gbear		16	8	24
Yreah Kwado	Upland		Gbear		8	2	10
Deloyegy	Upland		Gbi	Camp one	15	10	25
Yeata	Upland		Gbi	Camp one	20	10	30
Woedo	Plantain		Gbear				
Lorseh							
Tenneba	Roots & Tuber		Gbear		13	12	25
David Gee & Robert Mah	Roots & Tuber		Kpeaplay				
Bear farmers			Yoelay No.2				
Tree Crops							
Liapewon	Tree crop nursery						
Sa cocoa & Coffee	Tree crop nursery						
Yourpea Farmer Association	Tree crop nursery						
CUSD	Local IP-Supervision	Tappita	All Clans		9	-	9
TOTAL					249	150	399

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STATE OF THE PROJECT REPORT (August 2, 1999 - December 31, 2001)

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OUTPUT ACHIEVEMENT TABLE

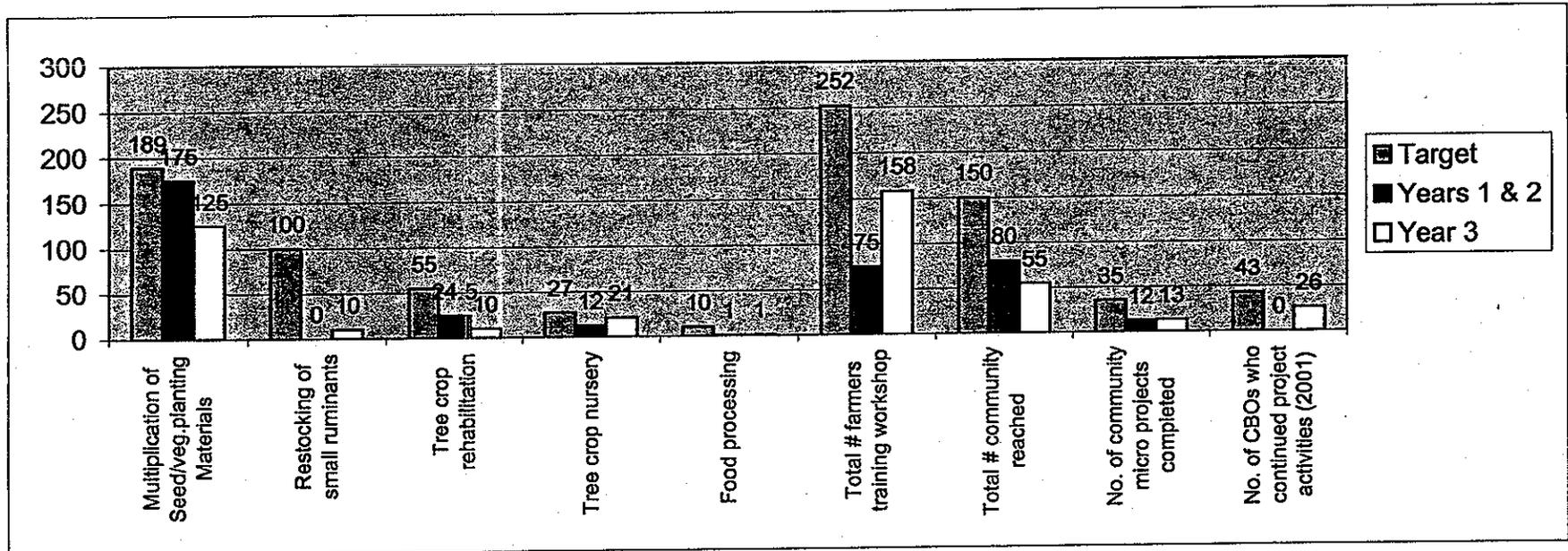
Major Activities	Output Indicators	Project 2 1/2 yrs Target	Project achievement to Date						Reason for Variations
			Aug. 1999 - Dec. 2000		Jan. 2001 - Jan. 31 2002		Cumulative		
			Target achieved	Beneficiaries	Target achieved	Beneficiaries	Target achieved	Beneficiaries	
Obj.1 Establish the basis for increased food production									
1. Multiply improved varieties of seeds vegetative planting materials	* # of improved varieties of seeds rice * Total area cultivated at LWF mult site * Quantity seeds produced	8 var 4 ha 20 mt	3 var 2 4mts	0 0 100	8 4 6 mts	0 150	11 6 10 mts	0 0 250	High demand from CBOs for high yielding rice varieties
1.2 Select CBOs and community groups for seed multiplication	* # of CBOs and community groups selected	27	40	1400	60	2100	100	3500	CBOs selected at community level as against clan level
1.3 CBOs and community groups provided with seeds/planting materials and tools	* Quantity of seeds distributed * # of tool sets distributed * Total area cultivated by current CBOs in food crops * Total area cultivated by previous CBOs in food crops	3 mts 27 189 ha	5mt 40 175 ha	3000 1400 9500	4 mts 60 125 ha.	2400 1800 3450	9 mts 100 300 ha.	5400 3200 12950	High demand for improved planting materials
1.4 Training in food crop production and seed multiplication	* # of training workshops in food production * # of training workshops in seed multiplication	150 (7500 parts.) 27 (540)	59 13	2955 375	77 10	2345 300	136 23	5300 675	
1.5 Select CBOs and community groups to manage processing units	* # of cassava mills procured & installed * # of rice mills procured	3 7	1 2	2000 6000	0 0	0 0	1 2	2000 6000	Delay in procurement and technical problems with mills ordered
1.6 Operations and management of processing units	* # of training in management of processing units	5 (40 parts.)	2	8	3	36	5	44	
1.7 Technical training of operators in routine maintenance and operation of mills	* # of training workshop	2 (20 parts)	1	6	3	8	4	14	

Major Activities	Output Indicators	Project 2 1/2 yrs Target	Project achievement to Date						Reason for Variations
			Aug. 1999 - Dec. 2000		Jan. -Nov. 30, 2001		Cumulative		
			Target achieved	Beneficiaries	Target achieved	Beneficiaries	Target achieved	Beneficiaries	
Objective 2: Multiplication of Livestock									
2.1 Select communities and families to benefit from Livestock program	*# of communities selected *# of families identified for livestock	70 350	- 175	- 1050	10	1200	10 175	1200 1050	Delay in starting livestock program due to late completion of livestock situation studies
2.2 Procurement of animals	*# of animals procured	330 ruminants/ 480 chickens	0	0	70	420	70	420	ditto
2.3 Distribution of animals to beneficiaries	*# of families benefited from livestock distribution	100	2000	0	10	50	10	50	ditto
Objective 3: Rehabilitation of tree crop plantations and establishment of nurseries									
3.1 Provide tools and technical supervision in support of tree crop farms for rehabilitation	*# of farms rehabilitated per tree crop typed: Cocoa Coffee # of tool sets provided farmer for rehabilitation	20 ha (50 farmers) 35 ha (85 farmers) 27	2 22.5 17	4 45 102	2 8 17	4 16 954	4 30.5 34	8 61 1056	Rehabilitation done only in Tappita. Nothing done in Bomi as previously planned. Hence, the reduction.
3.2 CBOs engaged in tree crop nursery establishment and management	* # of CBOs engaged in seedlings production * # of seedlings produced by typed Coffee Cocoa * # of plantain suckers supplied	27 1,100,000 440,000 20,000	12 80,000 121,350 4770	420 160 242 9	21 11,500 65,000 10,000	319 56 144 318	33 91,500 186,350 14,770	739 216 386 402	Nurseries established at community level as against clan level Declining interest in tree crops due to low prices
3.3 Provide tools and improved seeds to CBOs/farming groups	* # of tool sets supplied to nurseries * Quantity of seeds/suckers by typed supplied to nurseries Coffee Cocoa Plantain	27 330 kg 12,570 pods 5000 minsetts	12 150 kg 4800 pods 1800	12 360 0 0	21 100 kg 2000 pods 10,000 minsetts	319 126	33 250 kg 6800 pods 11,800 minsetts	739 486 375	ditto
3.4 Conduct farmer training workshop in nursery establishment and management.	* # of farmer training workshops * # of training/demonstration conducted by farms participants following the training they attended	27 (540 farmers) 48 (1440 farmers)	8 33	520 600	3 8	375 240	23 41	896 1240	
OBJECTIVE 4: Support for 35 community-based Micro development project in support of food security									
4.1 Select CBOs/community groups to participate in training workshops	* # of CBOs/community groups selected	27	20	600	6	180	26	780	

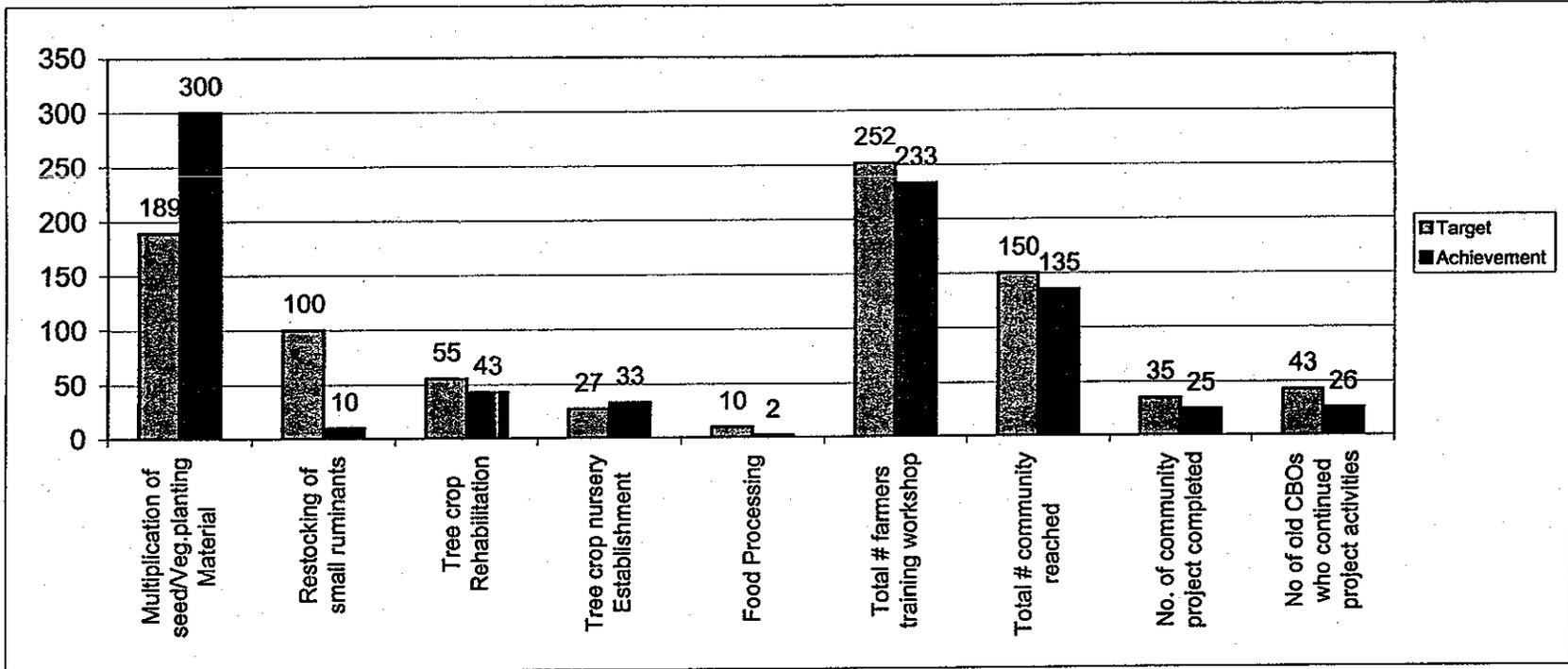
Major Activities	Output Indicators	Project 2 1/2 yrs Target	Project achievement to Date						
			Aug. 1999 - Dec. 2000		Jan. - Sept 2001		Cumulative		
			Target achieved	Beneficiaries	Target achieved	Beneficiaries	Target achieved	Beneficiaries	
4.2 Organize training teams and develop course contents	* # of teams organized and training courses developed	2	1	0	1		2		
4.3 Carryout leadership and community development training per district	* # of district workshops held	4	1	35	5	175	6	210	Trained CBO members at community level instead at district level
4.4 Appraise and approve requests for assistance to community micro projects	* # of requests appraised and approved for support	35	12	6300	13	3150	25	13,125	Delay in receiving community 50% contribution towards the project cost.
4.5 Provide material inputs and technical supervision to micro community projects	* Micro community projects supported by type:								
	Blacksmith kitchen	20	10	3000	2	6000	12	3600	ditto
	Bridges	7	1	2000	9	8000	10	15000	
	Markets	8	1	4000	2	8000	3	12000	

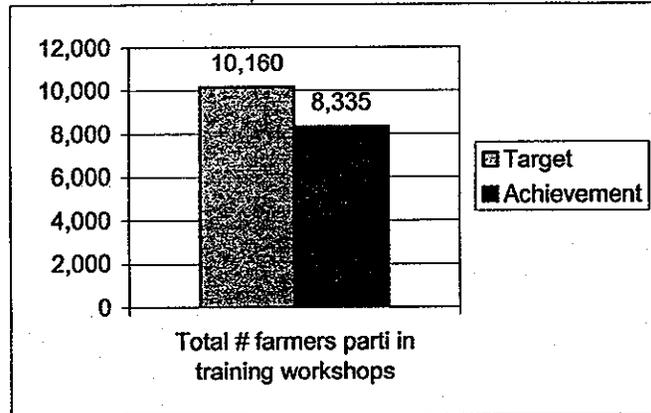
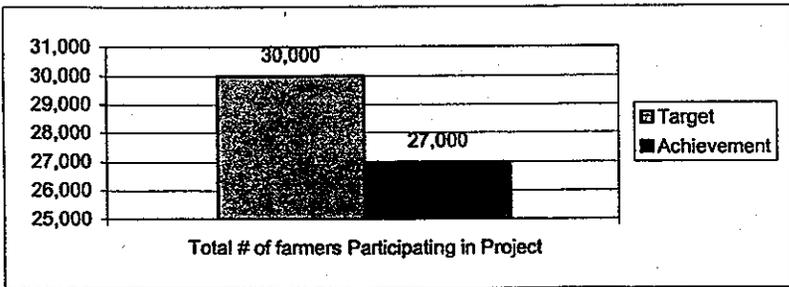
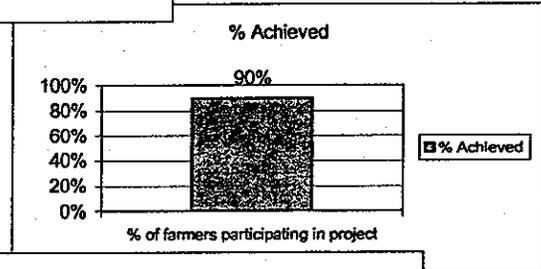
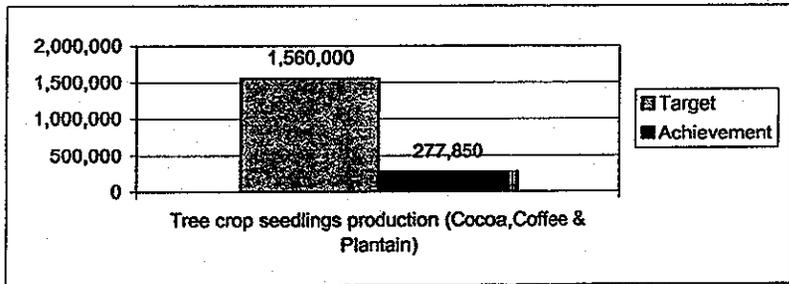
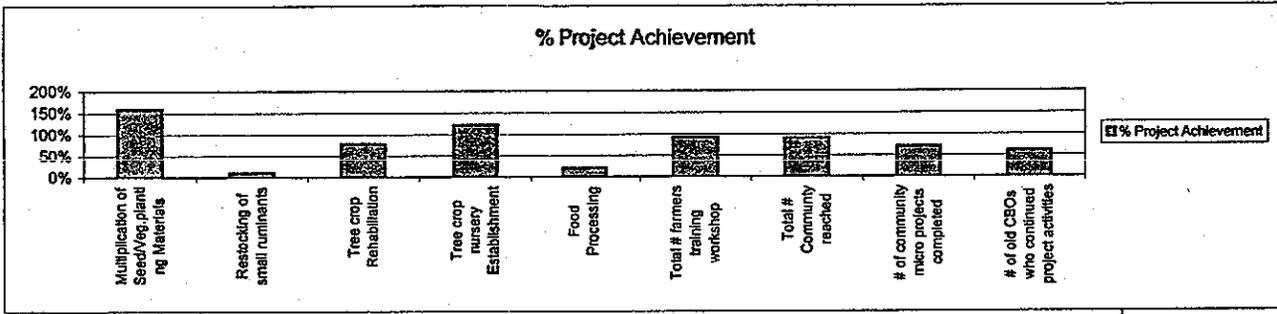
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GRAPHIC PROJECT TARGET AND YEARLY ACHIEVEMENT (Years 1 to 3)



Project Target & Achievement





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