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**TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE
SERVICES IN SUPPORT OF
THE MINISTRY OF
AGRICULTURE (TASMOA)
QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORT
APRIL–JUNE 2010**

JULY 2010

This publication was produced for review by the United States Agency for International Development. It was prepared by ARD, Inc.

FOREWORD

The expected outcomes of the Liberia Technical Assistance Services in Support of the Ministry of Agriculture (TASMOA) Project are a well-established foundation for private sector-led agricultural and economic growth and the expertise to achieve reform. The task order (TO), under the Rural and Agricultural Incomes with a Sustainable Environment (RAISE Plus) Indefinite Quantity Contract (IQC), was signed in March 2008. Subsequently, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) extended the original Task Order (TO) from the original end date (June 15, 2009) to December 31, 2010 and expanded the scope of work (SOW).

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Implemented by:

ARD, Inc.
159 Bank St., Suite 300
Burlington, VT 05401

**LIBERIA: TECHNICAL
ASSISTANCE SERVICES
IN SUPPORT OF THE
MINISTRY OF
AGRICULTURE (TASMOA)
QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORT
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DISCLAIMER

The author's views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|--------|--|
| ACC | Agriculture Coordination Committee |
| AEDE | Agency for Economic Development & Empowerment |
| AfDB | African Development Bank |
| ADWG | Agriculture Donors' Working Group |
| ADRA | Adventist Development and Relief Agency International |
| AGRA | Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa |
| ARC | Africa Rice Centre (formerly WARDA) |
| ASRP | Agriculture Sector Rehabilitation Project |
| A2N | Africa 2000 Network |
| CAADP | Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Program |
| CARI | Central Agriculture Research Institute |
| CDA | Co-operative Development Agency |
| CHAP | Christian Hope & Agriculture Project |
| COMESA | Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa |
| COP | Chief of Party |
| CRS | Catholic Relief Services |
| CSA | Civil Service Agency |
| DPD | Department of Planning and Development (Ministry of Agriculture) |
| DRDE | Department of Regional Development and Extension (Ministry of Agriculture) |
| ECOWAP | Regional Agricultural Policy for West Africa |
| ECOWAS | Economic Community of West African States |
| FAO | Food and Agriculture Organization (United Nations) |
| FAPS | Food and Agriculture Policy and Strategy |
| GC | Governance Commission |
| GDP | Gross Domestic Product |
| GFRP | Global Food Security Response Program |

| | |
|--------|---|
| GOL | Government of Liberia |
| HR | Human Resources |
| HRM | Human Resources Management |
| ICT | Information Communication Technology |
| IFAD | International Fund for Agricultural Development |
| ILO | International Labour Organization |
| IQC | Indefinite Quantity Contract |
| IRC | Internal Reform Committee |
| IP | Implementing Partner |
| JWAG | Johnsonville Women's Agriculture Group |
| LASIP | Liberia Agriculture Sector Investment Plan |
| LIPA | Liberia Institute of Public Administration |
| LISGIS | Liberian Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services |
| M&E | Monitoring and Evaluation |
| MT | Metric Tons |
| MOA | Ministry of Agriculture |
| MOF | Ministry of Finance |
| MOU | Memorandum of Understanding |
| NERICA | New Rice for Africa |
| NFB | National Fisheries Bureau |
| NGO | Non-governmental Organization |
| NSC | National Seed Committee |
| PCU | Project Coordination Unit |
| PME | Personnel Mapping Exercise |
| PMP | Performance Monitoring Plan |
| PRS | Poverty Reduction Strategy |
| RAISE | Rural and Agricultural Incomes with a Sustainable Environment |
| RU | Reform Unit |
| R&R | Rice & Rights Foundation |
| SES | Senior Executive Service |
| SOW | Scope of Work |

| | |
|--------|---|
| STF | Seed Bank Task Force |
| SP | Samaritan's Purse |
| STTA | Short-Term Technical Advisor |
| TASMOA | Technical Assistance Services in Support of the Ministry of Agriculture |
| TO | Task Order |
| TOR | Terms of Reference |
| TOT | Training of Trainers |
| USAID | United States Agency for International Development |
| UN | United Nations |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Program |
| VIA | Visions In Action |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report constitutes the ninth Quarterly Report for the Technical Assistance Services in Support of the Ministry of Agriculture (TASMOA) project. It covers the period April – June, 2010.

Awarded to ARD in March of 2008, the TASMOA project was originally a 15-month Task Order (TO) issued under the Rural and Agricultural Incomes with a Sustainable Environment (RAISE) Plus Indefinite Quantity Contract (IQC). Based on solid progress and good performance, two extensions were made to the original TO, through to December 31, 2010. To facilitate overall capacity building of the MOA and assist in revitalizing the agricultural sector, TASMOA has focused on the following three major tasks:

- Assess the roles and responsibilities of the agriculture sector in general and determine the core functions of the MOA and non-core functions of the other various stakeholders in the sector (government institutions, civil society groups, commercial entities, farmers' organizations, and others).
- Conduct a thorough analysis of the capacity of the MOA and of its related institutions and, based on this analysis, strengthen the institutional and human resources capacity of the MOA.
- Develop a comprehensive agriculture sector policy and strategies, taking into consideration the macro-economic sub-sector and sector specific policy environment.

In spite of various institutional and management challenges encountered during the course of project implementation, a lot has been accomplished within this quarter; including the following:

- The MOA has been implementing the results of a Personnel Mapping Exercise (PME) that ascertained the current (actual) staff strength of the MOA, including roles and responsibilities of each department, division and staff; and with respect to any planned organizational changes within the Ministry. In order to build a sustainable foundation for the planned performance management system, TASMOA has been working with MOA to (a) develop an establishment chart, and (b) define performance indicators for each department.
- The MOA Internal Reform Committee (IRC) has been actively providing guidance on MOA reform and decentralization process. Supported and facilitated by a dedicated Secretariat, the IRC continues to provide assistance to the Minister of Agriculture to effectively drive the reform and decentralization process. Through technical support provided by TASMOA, an IRC operations manual has been drafted to guide the work of the IRC and its Secretariat.
- The recruitment process for all key staff positions of the Project Coordination Unit (PCU) has been completed. Contracts for staff funded by either AfDB or IFAD have been finalized and signed; and staff have reported for duties. This notable achievement addresses concerns raised by both the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), and complements the tenets of the CAADP compact with regards to supporting development of the agriculture sector in Liberia. The PCU will ensure proper implementation of all donor funded projects and compliance with terms of their agreements.
- TASMOA has continued to assist the MOA to fulfill various donor conditions precedent to project effectiveness and disbursement of the grant for the Liberia Agriculture Sector Rehabilitation Project (ASRP). The fact that the ASRP was officially launched through a series of workshops conducted

within the first week of April, 2010, is yet another notable achievement because TASMOA ensured smooth project launch and take-off.

- TASMOA has provided technical assistance to Minister Chenoweth to roll out the decentralization process to counties such as Grand Bassa, Lofa, Bong, River Gee, Nimba, and Grand Gedeh.
- Substantial progress has been made on the Rice Seed Chain program. Field operations for the three IFAD-funded IPs are in progress. Meanwhile, the peri-urban Improved Rice Demonstration Farms initiative was formally launched in Zubah Town, Monrovia, on April 13, 2010. Prior to the launch, a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the MOA and the Christian Hope & Agriculture Project (CHAP) was signed on April 8, 2010 by Acting Minister Richilieu Mitchell and Rev. Robert Bimba. This agreement commits both parties to establish and manage a 10.12 hectare rice demonstration farm in Zubah Town. The field work plan and operations budget were prepared prior to project launch. Subsequent MOUs were signed with the ELWA Community Group and Johnsonville Women's Agricultural Group (JWAG) in May 2010.
- In order to strengthen MOA's human resource management capacity at the centre, TASMOA has continued to facilitate the development of HR and general management policies and procedural guidelines; and these are contained in various management manuals.
- In response to Minister Chenoweth's request, TASMOA has provided technical assistance to conduct an in-depth assessment of agro-communications within the MOA and with its stakeholders. The capacity needs assessment resulted in the development of a Communications Strategy and Action Plan for MOA.
- Within this quarter, TASMOA has facilitated/conducted eleven (11) workshops and, as a result, 479 people were trained. Furthermore, a local consultancy firm (Agency for Economic Development & Empowerment) completed the provision of training support for decentralized county officers and technicians who are expected to provide expanded services to farmers. The training was well received by the participants who believed this level of training will certainly improve their effectiveness in day-to-day service delivery of agriculture programs within their counties.
- During this quarter, the revised LASIP was validated by the CAADP compact stakeholders. The TASMOA team facilitated/participated in the LASIP/CAADP Validation Workshops. Subsequently, TASMOA has provided direct support to the CAADP Team (Assistant Minister, Ousman Tall; Consultant, Dr. Quan Dinh; Consultant, John Wessah McClain) to complete the final draft document prior to its submission to CAADP for technical reviews sessions in Dakar. Minister Chenoweth reported that the presentation and reviews were well received and Liberia received the number one ranking out of eleven countries that presented investment plans.

1.0 PROGRESS ON WORK PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

1.1 OVERVIEW

This report covers the period April-June, 2010, and constitutes the ninth Quarterly Report for the Technical Assistance Services in Support of the Ministry of Agriculture (TASMOA) project. Awarded to ARD in March of 2008, the TASMOA project was originally a 15-month Task Order (TO) issued under the Rural and Agricultural Incomes with a Sustainable Environment (RAISE) Plus Indefinite Quantity Contract (IQC). Two extensions have so far been made to the original TO, through to December 31, 2010, in view of good performance and progress.

The TASMOA technical personnel are based at MOA Gardnesville office complex, on Somalia Drive. During this quarter, long-term technical personnel included the Project's Chief of Party (Dr Wilbur G. Thomas) who provides a wide range of technical expertise and oversees project coordination; an Institutional Development Specialist (Beenwell Banda); and a Policy and Planning Specialist (Ms Hawah Zinnah). During this quarterly period, permanent staff were complimented by two short-term technical assistance personnel; Mr. Waldo Mazelis (Institutional Reform/Decentralization Specialist), and Mr. Morris Dukuly (Communications Specialist). Project administrative support services are provided by Ms Mafar Bright. Annex 1 contains details of TASMOA project personnel during the period April-June, 2010.

1.2 TASK 1: ASSESS ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR IN GENERAL AND DETERMINE CORE FUNCTIONS OF THE MOA AND NON-CORE FUNCTIONS OF OTHER VARIOUS STAKEHOLDERS

The assessment activities set forth under this task have been completed. The project has assessed roles and responsibilities and determined core and non-core functions of the MOA and other agriculture sector stakeholders. This included in-depth assessments of all departments within the Ministry—that is, the Departments of Administration; Planning and Development; Regional Development, Research, and Extension; and Technical Services. The assessment also covered the National Fisheries Bureau (NFB) and Central Agricultural Research Institute (CARI), as well as selected non-governmental organizations (NGOs)—namely: Samaritan's Purse (SP), Adventist Relief and Development Agency (ADRA), Visions In Action (VIA), and Africa 2000 Network (A2N). The TASMOA project has further specified/categorized the MOA's services/functions and costs/resource requirements and achieved broad consensus for proposed change through workshops.

Following acceptance of the strategic assessment phase of the MOA, and in light of subsequent project extensions through December 31, 2010, the TASMOA project team had an opportunity to initiate support for the implementation of selected recommendations from the analyses.

During this Quarter, TASMOA has continued to provide technical support in the implementation of activities relating to Task 1 above, including the operationalization of (a) the Project Coordination Unit (PCU) (b) the MOA Internal Reform Committee (IRC), and (c) the roll-out of the reform/decentralization process; as indicated below.

1.2.1. The MOA Project Coordination Unit (PCU)

Establishment of the PCU was part of a process towards fulfilling the conditions stipulated by the African Development Bank (AfDB) for disbursing an approximate \$23 million sector support grant. Through technical support provided by TASMOA, the MOA has been able to fulfill these conditions.

During this Quarter, TASMOA has provided assistance in the review of the draft PCU operations manual. A major challenge to the operationalization of the PCU is capacity-building of its staff and ensuring availability of office equipment and supplies, as well as transportation.

Table 1 below presents a summary of the current status relating to this activity.

Table 1: Establishment of the PCU in MOA

| Key Activity | Status | Remarks |
|---|---------|---|
| Conceptualize and design the PCU | Done | Facilitated by TASMOA STTA |
| Facilitate the adoption, by MOA, of PCU organizational structure, functions & management arrangements | Done | Approved by Minister Chenoweth, after a series of workshops with MOA. PCU to be mainstreamed into the MOA structure |
| Draft the PCU operations manual | Done | Manual drafted by Dr Manny Morga |
| Develop job descriptions and short-listing/selection criteria for all PCU positions | Done | Job descriptions & selection criteria finalized |
| Using job descriptions and selection criteria, facilitate recruitment of PCU staff | Done | See Table 4 for details |
| Review and finalize the draft PCU manual | Done | The manual acts as an umbrella document; however, each project operates on the basis of detailed guidelines issued by the sponsoring donor (eg, IFAD, AfDB) |
| Assess skills of PCU staff in areas relating to project planning and management, project monitoring & evaluation, negotiation skills and skills with respect to management of the consultancy process | Pending | Activity planned to be carried out within the period Sept-Oct, 2010 |
| Design/develop training modules for PCU staff | Pending | Amongst others, training modules to be designed in Sept-Oct, 2010, will include Project Planning and Management, and Project Monitoring and Evaluation |
| Train PCU staff members | Pending | Apart from providing training in change management, other modules will be delivered within the period Oct-Dec., 2010 |

1.2.2. The MOA Internal Reform Committee (IRC)

According to the Government of Liberia (GOL) Civil Service Reform Strategy (CSRS), every Ministry is required to establish an Internal Reform Committee (IRC). Accordingly, on December 16, 2009, Minister Chenoweth issued an Order establishing the Ministry's IRC. Since its inception, the IRC has helped the Minister of Agriculture to drive the reform process, especially with regard to capacity building.

Therefore, immediately after appointment of members of the IRC, TASMOA helped to conduct the first IRC workshop on April 1, 2010. The purpose of the workshop was to formalize the work of the IRC, review and update the previously validated MOA assessment report for a subsequent review with representatives from the Civil Service Agency, the Governance Commission, and the Liberian Institute of Public Administration (LIPA). The workshop also focused on issues relating to MOA reform and decentralization within the context of the Civil Service Reform Strategy. Since then, several workshops have been conducted by MOA under the auspices of the IRC in order to enhance ownership.

Even though the IRC is operational, a lot still needs to be done to build its capacity. Therefore, during this Quarter, TASMOA has facilitated the development of a draft operations manual to guide the work of the IRC. Current status in the implementation of activities pertaining to the IRC is summarized in the table below.

Table 2: Establishment of the IRU/IRC in MOA

| Key Activity | Status | Remarks |
|---|---------|--|
| Establish the Internal Reform Unit (IRU) or IRC in MOA in line with the CSRS | Done | Minister Chenoweth issued an Order establishing the IRC. |
| Develop terms of reference for the IRC | Done | The GC & CSA had already developed generic ToR for agency IRCs |
| Recruit or designate an officer to coordinate IRC matters (ie, the secretariat) | Done | TASMOA facilitated the recruitment of Ms Ara Chea to this position, through the Senior Executive Service (SES) program |
| Appoint members of the MOA IRC | Done | Order issued by Minister Chenoweth appointing 6 members of the IRC |
| Draft a IRC operations manual | Done | Draft prepared by STTA Waldo Mazelis |
| Finalize the IRC operations manual and seek Minister's approval | Pending | To be accomplished within the period Oct-Dec, 2010 |
| Assess skills of IRC members with regard to project planning and management, project monitoring & evaluation, negotiation skills and skills with respect to management of the consultancy process | Pending | To be accomplished within the period Oct-Dec, 2010 |
| Develop training modules for IRC staff | Pending | As per remarks above |
| Train IRC members in change management and other areas reflected above | Pending | As per remarks above |

1.2.3. The MOA Decentralization Process

In an endeavor to operationalize the decentralization action plan, Minister Chenoweth has decided to move the decentralization process forward in spite of severe budgetary constraints. During this quarter, the roll-out of the decentralization process to counties such as Grand Bassa, Lofa, Bong, River Gee, Nimba, and Grand Gedeh, has also been complimented by capacity-building interventions through staff training. .

The table below summarizes key activities that have been undertaken – including planned activities – in order to deepen the reform/decentralization process.

Table 3: Implementation of the MOA Decentralization Process

| Key Activity | Status | Remarks |
|---|---------|--|
| Undertake a situation analysis to identify issues relating to decentralization of agricultural functions and activities at county and district levels | Done | The issues identified informed the drafting of the decentralization plan of action |
| Prepare and present a draft report detailing issues and strategy process for decentralizing the MOA | Done | Presented to the Minister and senior management staff of MOA. |
| Refine report; taking into account comments made during presentation, & obtain Minister's approval | Done | Revised draft report presented to the Minister for review and approval. Approval granted. |
| Assist the Minister as she rolls out planned reform, and develop systems and institutional arrangements that will facilitate the reform process | Ongoing | This activity is ongoing. Minister's priority is to build operational capacity of selected counties, subject to resource availability. |
| Design & conduct seminars focusing on the gradual roll-out of the decentralization plan | ongoing | A series of seminars were conducted during this quarter for county Ag. staff (see next section) |

1.3 TASK 2: ANALYZE AND STRENGTHEN INSTITUTIONAL AND HR CAPACITY OF MOA AND ITS RELATED INSTITUTIONS

Following the completion of the capacity assessment process, various capacity-building interventions were instituted and implemented at multiple levels: ongoing discussions with the GC and CSA on the MOA reform process and deliverables within the context of the civil service reforms; development of HR policies and procedure manuals; and training of MOA staff. Furthermore, the TASMOA project made available two short-term experts to provide specialized support to build capacity in the areas of internal reform/decentralization, and agro-communications.

Major initiatives implemented under Task 2 include:

- Completion/implementation of the ‘personnel mapping’ exercise;
- Capacity building through development of HR policies and management manuals;
- Capacity building through training and development; and,
- Development and implementation of the MOA Communication Strategy and action plan.

Details relating to the above programs and activities are indicated in the sections which follow.

1.3.1 Completion/Implementation of the “Personnel Mapping” Exercise

The personnel mapping exercise (PME) was completed; and the remaining major task is to develop an establishment chart for MOA. This activity is in progress, and TASMOA has continued to provide guidance to both MOA and the CSA on the strategy and process of developing the chart. In view of the fact that Cabinet is yet to approve the new functions and structure of the MOA (as proposed in the assessment report), the chart will remain in draft form. The aim is to ensure consistency with the reform initiatives being implemented by the Civil Service Agency across government ministries and agencies.

To ensure ownership of the PME process and deliverables this activity is being championed by Ms. Ara Chea (Principal Director of Administration). Major activities relating to the personnel mapping process are summarized in the table below.

Table 4: The MOA Personnel Mapping Exercise

| Key Activity | Status | Remarks |
|---|-------------|---|
| Develop terms of reference for the PME | Done | This also included detailed implementation arrangements |
| Get buy-in from the senior management team, general staff, and the Minister | Done | This was achieved through a series of workshops |
| Secure human and financial resources necessary for implementation of the exercise | Done | TASMOA made available the required financial resources to carry out this task. |
| Train the personnel mapping team | Done | Each department released one officer for the exercise. Seven staff members were trained. |
| Conduct the PME | Done | The “mapping” covered MOA headquarters (including Bureau of Fisheries & CARI) and selected counties |
| Prepare MOA “Establishment Chart” | In progress | To be finalized in due course |
| Develop job descriptions for all positions represented in the “Establishment Chart” | In progress | Over 60 job descriptions already done |
| Compare “Establishment Chart” against results of the PME and propose re-deployments, re-training, etc | Pending | To be done once the Establishment Chart has been finalized & approved. |

1.3.2. Capacity Building through Development of HR Policies and Management Manuals

Development of HR policies and manuals for MOA is an ongoing process. The challenges associated with human resource management (HRM) in the Liberian civil service are many; predominant among them being:

- **Outdated enabling legislation:** The Civil Service Law of 1973 lacks a clear policy framework for human resource management.
- **Eroded merit system:** In Liberia’s recent past, the majority of appointments into the civil service have been based on the “spoils systems” of ethnicity, factionalism, partisanship, nepotism and social contacts. Recruitment, selection and placement rules and processes are either unavailable or outdated. In most cases—for example—because of damage and loss of documents due to protracted conflict, there are no procedure manuals and no job descriptions or specifications to guide action on the various HR-related actions and activities.
- **Low levels of discipline and motivation:** Discipline at work has been seriously eroded. Management expectations are low, and most civil servants are either late or absent from work on a regular basis. Work ethics are generally poor largely due to poor supervision and low remuneration levels.
- **Lack of a framework on training and development:** A key issue in this respect is the lack of a training policy and strategy which would inform, direct and guide HR development. As such, there is no shared vision of how training and development activities are to be organized, managed, financed, implemented, monitored and evaluated. Human capacity development has, therefore, been ad hoc, intermittent, and not provided on a sustained basis.

During this quarter, the four manuals which were completed have been printed, ready for hand-over to the MOA in the next quarter. The TASMOA project has facilitated the development of policies and manuals in order to ensure, amongst others, the following:

- To set out the strategic context for the delivery of merit-oriented training and development, as well as the recruitment and selection process in line with the provisions of the Standing Orders for the Liberian Civil Service.
- To set out the policy intent and guidelines relating to the day-to-day management and development of HR, including processes and quality assurance checks to ensure that all those involved in the planning and implementation of HR activities have a clear understanding of the main issues covering the service they provide.
- To be a reference source for staff involved in the management of HR and financial resources in the Ministry of Agriculture. It also exemplifies one of the Ministry’s core values—that the MOA shall recruit, develop, and manage its staff in a transparent and accountable manner, with due regard to the merit principle.

Progress so far achieved in the development of HR policies and management manuals is indicated in the table below.

Table 5: Development of HR policies & management manuals

| Key Activity | Status | Remarks |
|---|--------|---|
| MOA Staff Recruitment and Selection Manual | Done | 500 copies printed, to be handed over to MOA soon |
| MOA Staff Training and Development Policy and Procedures Manual | Done | As above |

| Key Activity | Status | Remarks |
|---|-------------|---|
| MOA Staff Induction, Deployment and Exit Manual | Done | As above |
| Management of Meetings Manual | Done | As above |
| The Personnel Handbook | In progress | Draft in progress |
| The Job Description Manual | In progress | As above |
| The Performance Appraisal Handbook | Pending | Initially liaising with CSA on status of civil service-wide appraisal framework |

1.3.3. Capacity Building through Training and Development

Since the TASMOA project was launched, a lot of emphasis was placed on capacity building through training and development. Through support provided by TASMOA, 72 workshops have been conducted and 1,553 participants have gone through the various training programs. Out of these, 85.3% of participants (ie, 1,325) are male employees whilst 14.7 participants (ie, 228) are female employees.

Within this quarter alone, eleven (11) workshops were conducted and, as a result, 479 people were trained. Some of the key training initiatives are indicated below.

A. Training of staff at Decentralized Levels

As part of a process to build the Ministry's HR capacity at county and district levels, the TASMOA project engaged the services of a local Liberian firm, Agency for Economic Development & Empowerment (AEDE) to provide training support. AEDE provided training to staff of the Department of Regional Development, Research & Extension (including all staff serving at county and district levels) as well as selected staff serving in the Department of Technical Services. The training enhanced staff capacity to deliver services to the people of Liberia, especially farmers. AEDE successfully concluded the second phase of generalized training sessions conducted in three sessions that grouped five counties from April 12-23, 2010. The final session was held in Grand Cape Mount County from April 20-22, 2010. In total, 130 MOA staff were trained. Key topics covered during the training program are:

- Overview of Agriculture Policies and Operational framework: This covered: Overview of major agricultural policies and strategies; Managing change at the MOA; Policy formulation – concepts & processes; Overview of the Liberia PRS; and, Reform & decentralization of the MOA.
- Strategic Programming & Project Management: This covered: Introduction to the project management framework; Stages of the project cycle framework; Management of the project cycle; Good practice principles for managing the project cycle; and, Good governance for partnership.
- Report writing and Financial Management Skills: This covered: Report writing skills; MOA reporting format; and, Introduction to financial management.

In the closing session held in Grand Cape Mount County which was also attended by the County Superintendent and her Assistant (responsible for Development), participants expressed their gratitude to USAID-ARD for what they termed as “empowerment” for better service delivery to their clients (farmers), and also thanked AEDE for effective training modules especially designed “from within”.

B. Induction & Orientation Training for MOA Employees

In response to Minister Chenoweth's request to conduct induction and orientation workshops for all MOA employees stationed in Monrovia (including Deputy and Assistant Ministers), TASMOA provided the required technical support, leading to the implementation of the induction and orientation workshops on April 15 and 16, 2010 at the Ministry's two locations – 19th street and Gardnersville, Somalia Dive. Although most staff have been in employment for several years, however, due to the civil disturbance, no

induction and orientation was given. The workshop covered several topics, including: The new thrust of the MOA in terms of its mandate, vision and mission – including its operating principles. In addition, the workshop covered best practices in service delivery; the change process at MOA and staff expectations; Work ethics; the Civil Service Standing Orders; Dress code; Hygiene, grooming, sanitation and health, and HIV/AIDS. During the official launch of the induction and orientation workshops Minister Chenoweth advised her staff to take full advantage of opportunities offered by the training. She also informed staff that the institutional reform (including decentralization) of the MOA is not a matter of choice but a GOL directive. Therefore, subject to exigencies of the service, some staff currently serving at MOA central offices will have to move to counties. Apart from the MOA (especially Ms Ara Chea), facilitators also came from the GC, CSA, National Aids Commission and Monrovia City Corporation. In total, 139 MOA employees participated in the workshops.

C. Retirement Planning Workshop

As part of the ongoing government-wide personnel reforms (linked to the personnel mapping exercises in MOA), retirement notices were issued to 35 employees who met the mandatory retirement ages and/or years of service. The MOA Internal Reform Committee (IRC) working with the Civil Service Agency (CSA) took the lead in ensuring the implementation of the second MOA pre-retirement motivational workshop to better inform employees of the retirement processes and planning for life in retirement.

Through the auspices of the IRC, a day-long set of modules were presented that addressed GOL policies on retirement; social security payments; development of enterprises, health screening, time management; etc. COP, Wilbur G. Thomas, presented the module on time management in retirement whilst Beenwell Banda presented the module on images of retirement. The workshop concluded with greater appreciation from MOA staff about retirement planning and greater understanding of opportunities post retirement provides, including the quality of life while in retirement. The CSA remarked that the MOA is the only ministry in Liberia which prepares its staff for retirement, an initiative which is highly commendable.

D. Induction & Orientation Training of Quarantine Officers

In response to a request from Minister Chenoweth, TASMOA provided technical support in the training of Quarantine Officers. The training was held from June 24-25 and was attended by 12 newly-recruited MOA Quarantine officers, including 17 serving MOA Quarantine staff and Customs officers from the Ministry of Finance. The two-day training was conducted under the auspices of the MOA Internal Reform Committee (IRC) and was officially opened by Minister Chenoweth. Workshop facilitators came from MOA (Division of National Quarantine & Environmental Services), Ministry of Commerce as well as Legal experts who presented modules on the history of national and international quarantine services and principles of phyto-sanitary measures; International code of conduct on the distribution and use of agro-chemicals; Pests risk assessment and identification of animal diseases and treatment; identification of agriculture commodities (live, active growth and processed); and challenges in the delivery of quarantine services within the context of Liberia.

The table below shows all the training conducted through, amongst others, workshops and seminars during this quarter.

Table 6: Capacity Building of MOA staff through Training & Development

| Title of Workshop/Training | No. of W/shops conducted | Participants | Remarks |
|--|--------------------------|--------------|--|
| | | Total | |
| Start-up workshops for ASRP | 1 | 32 | ASRP launch workshops: Presentation of procedure manuals |
| Pre-retirement motivational workshop for MOA staff | 1 | 35 | To prepare staff for retirement |
| CAADP Technical Review workshop | 1 | 70 | Participants included members of the ADWG. |

| Title of Workshop/Training | No. of W/shops conducted | Participants | Remarks |
|---|--------------------------|--------------|---|
| | | Total | |
| Decentralization Workshops for County Ag Coordinators, District Ag Officers & Technicians | 3 | 90 | To build capacity at county & district levels; conducted by TASMOA through AEDE |
| Workshop for the IRC | 1 | 17 | To review the MOA assessment report with the GC, CSA & LIPA |
| MOA Staff Induction & Orientation workshops | 2 | 139 | To orient staff on the new thrust of MOA, including work ethics |
| Workshop to validate the MOA Communication strategy & action plan | 1 | 67 | Presentation of the communication strategy by Mr Morris Dukly. |
| Training in Quarantine Services | 1 | 29 | Aim was to induct new officers and orient serving officers. |
| TOTALS | 11 | 479 | |

1.3.4 Development and Implementation of the MOA Communication Strategy and Action Plan

One of the key constraints identified during the capacity assessment phase of the MOA was lack of a robust communication strategy. When Minister Chenoweth assumed duties of her office, the need for a communication strategy to support the renewed thrust towards the achievement of national food security and promotion of agriculture development became compelling. It was also recognized that agricultural extension services could not be successfully undertaken without a complementary and robust communication strategy and action plan that supports such efforts.

Consequently, and in response to the Minister's request, TASMOA engaged the services of Phoenix Media Consulting firm (Mr. Morris Dukuly) to facilitate the development of an agro-communication strategy to achieve four objectives:

- Undertake a needs assessment to analyze communications systems within the MOA and between MOA and stakeholders, while reflecting MOA staff's and stakeholders' perceptions, expectations, and needs with respect to internal communications and communication between MOA and partners;
- Identify communication channels that could be utilized for advancing MOA's messages to its core constituency, especially the small Liberian farmers;
- Develop a communications strategy that contains a flow chart that clearly delineates lines of communications within the MOA and between the Ministry and its various stakeholders; prepare job descriptions for MOA communications director and staff, recommend effective implementation guidelines for the new Communications Strategy; and
- Develop an MOA Communications Action Plan in line with the Communications Strategy.

The consultancy process commenced on April 1, 2010; and a draft Needs Assessment Report for the Development of a Communications Strategy for the MOA was subsequently prepared and presented to the Minister and staff of MOA in a workshop setting. At the end of the workshop, Minister Chenoweth directed that there was no need for further validation of the report and action plan; rather – TASMOA should proceed to fine-tune it and facilitate its implementation.

1.4 TASK 3: DEVELOP A COMPREHENSIVE AGRICULTURE SECTOR POLICY AND STRATEGIES, TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION THE MACRO-ECONOMIC, SUB-SECTOR, AND SECTOR-SPECIFIC POLICY ENVIRONMENT

During this quarter, the TASMOA project has continued to provide technical support to the MOA in the implementation of activities relating to:

- The Rice Seed Chain Program
- The Liberia Agriculture Sector Rehabilitation Project
- The CAADP/AWDG Process
- The Agriculture Coordination Committee (ACC)
- Policy-related Support

Details of achievements in these areas are reflected in the sections below.

1.4.1. The Rice Seed Chain Program

During the entire period of the Task Order, TASMOA has worked with IFAD, FAO, and the African Development Bank to establish a Seed Task Force and focus on improving Liberia's food crop germ plasma. Among the early decisions by this joint body was to focus on improving seed availability for all food crops in Liberia, with particular emphasis placed on high priority food crops (rice, cassava) to improve food security for the vast majority of rural inhabitants. Several noticeable accomplishments have been achieved, as follows:

A. IFAD-funded Implementing Partners

Three IPs (Africare, Catholic Relief Services, Greenstar) received funding through the FAO/IFAD for multiplication of foundation seeds to develop pre-certified seeds. In order to facilitate quality assurance in seed production, TASMOA has continued to provide supervisory visits to all IP rice production sites. Accordingly, COP, Wilbur G. Thomas, accompanied by Assistant Minister for Extension, Paul Jallah, visited sites operated by CRS and Africare during a two-day period (June 11-12, 2010). Field operations were in full swing at all sites managed by CRS. All rice planted to date consists of lowland varieties (NERICA L19, FKR-19) and the most advanced plantings are at one site located in Montserrado. Field plots were generally well laid out but there were noticeable improvements necessary in bund construction including additional attention required in fertilization and pest control (subjects to be addressed in the next workshop). CRS predicts that the first harvest from their out growers fields will be late August/September 2010. All of the sites managed by Africare are being prepared for planting in late June. The largest site (15 hectares) will use NERICA-14 upland variety while two other lowland sites will use NERICA L-19 and FKR-19. Africare also plans to use their demonstration farm in Kpein to plant additional upland varieties of NERICA pending availability of seeds.

B. Improved Rice Demonstration Farms

The memorandum of understanding between the Ministry of Agriculture and the Christian Health & Agriculture Project (CHAP) was signed on April 8, 2010 by Acting Minister Richilieu Mitchell and Rev. Robert Bimba, Executive Director of CHAP. This agreement commits both parties to establish and manage a 10.12 hectare rice demonstration farm in Zubah Town. The formal launch of the Zuba Town peri-urban rice demonstration farm was held on April 13, 2010 presided by Acting Minister Richilieu

Mitchell and Rev. Robert Bimba. In attendance were the Mayor of Paynesville, Chairman of the City Council, Technical Director of the Africa Rice Center (ARC), senior MOA staff, and a host of other dignitaries. Since project launch, the Zubah Town site has taken shape. 500 kg of NERICA L-19 foundation seeds and 150 kg of Suakoko-8 foundation seeds were obtained from CARI. Transplanting of seedlings was done in May, 2010. In spite of achievements made, the water control situation at Zubah has not been resolved but efforts are being made to clear out the watershed below the irrigation perimeter to accelerate the water flow in the canals during heavy rains. A rapid solution to water control in the irrigation perimeter is to unblock clogged watersheds below the road culverts. However, the long-term solution is to deepen the outlet canals on the lowest end of the irrigation perimeter in order to increase the flow of water.

ELWA and Johnsonville Women's Group Projects are also advancing. The MOU for the Johnsonville Women's Group Project (JWGP) was finalized and signed by Minister Chenoweth and the Executive Director of the Group on May 28, 2010. The Group prepared their peri-urban demonstration site of 12 acres (4.86 ha) where Suakoko-8 improved rice will be cultivated over the next four month period. Seedlings have sprouted and transplanting has been completed both at Johnsonville Women's Group Project and the ELWA Project. Minister Chenoweth signed the MOU that calls for the ELWA Community Support Group to cultivate 8 acres (3.24 ha) of NERICA L-19 rice seeds. It is expected that 11.5 MT of pre-certified seed will be produced during the period May- August 2010. ELWA is the principal facility for the provision of care and support to HIV positive patients; and ELWA uses their agriculture plots to grow food to benefit patients and their support groups.

Table 8 below summarizes key activities relating to the rice seed chain program.

Table 8: The Rice Seed Chain Program

| Key Activity | Status | Remarks |
|---|-------------|--|
| Conceptualize the rice seed chain program | Done | The "concept" developed by the STTA |
| Through a competitive & transparent process, select IPs | Done | Three IPs selected (Africare, Catholic Relief Services & Greenstar) |
| Facilitate the negotiation & signing of MOUs between MOA & IPs | Done | Signing of MOUs graced by VP Joseph Boakai |
| Facilitate negotiations to secure IFAD funding | Done | Initial funding of \$405,000 secured |
| Procure & ship 50MT of seed rice from Africa Rice Centre | Done | Payment by USAID & FAO |
| Facilitate fund disbursement to IPs | Done | Amounts disbursed: \$150,000 each for Africare & CRS; \$105,000 for Greenstar. Substantial delays were encountered |
| Facilitate transportation of seeds from CARI to IPs | Done | Assistance provided to transport seeds (eg, Greenstar) |
| Procure & install seed processing equipment to process 100-200 MT of pre-certified seeds at CARI | In progress | Arrangements are in place to secure the rice processing equipment |
| Conduct training programs for operators and maintenance personnel of rice seed processing equipment | Pending | Pending acquisition of the rice processing equipment and recruitment of operators |
| Provide CARI & MOA senior management with training on rice seed chain management | Pending | To be delivered by Rice Seed Field Task Manager |
| Provide IPs with necessary technical rice seed production training | | To be delivered by Rice Seed Field Task Manager |
| Support improved rice production demonstration sites | Ongoing | Supervision visits are conducted every Wednesday |
| Assist MOA in conducting awareness programs through field days for potential investors/participants in improved rice production in lowlands | Pending | Planning work for the activity has commenced |

1.4.2 Support to the Liberia Agriculture Sector Rehabilitation Project

The Liberia Agriculture Sector Rehabilitation Project (ASRP) covers 30 districts located in four western counties (Grand Gedeh, River Gee, Grand Kru, and Maryland) and four south-eastern counties (Grand Bassa, Grand Cape Mount, Margibi, and Montserrado). The project is expected to restore the capacity of Liberia's agricultural sector and therewith enhance the sector's contribution to gross domestic product (GDP), increase food security and farmer's income. The project total cost is about US\$23.3 million (\$18.3 million from AfDB and \$5 million from IFAD).

A. The AfDB Component of the ASRP

TASMOA has continued to work closely with Dr Moses Zinnah (Coordinator of the ASRP) and the AfDB missions lead by Mr. Rogers Lubunga (Task Manager) to assist the MOA to fulfill conditions precedent to fund disbursement and avert the risk of delay in project implementation.

Following the official launching ceremonies of the ASRP held towards the end of March and in the first week of April, 2010, a series of technical start-up workshops were held at MOA offices in Gardnersville. Through these workshops, an annual work plan and budget for April 2010 to June 2011 was jointly developed with MOA stakeholders and approved by the AfDB. Contracts for all PCU staff (both AfDB & IFAD funded) were finalized and signed. All but two of the PCU staff began work on April 5, 2010. Memoranda of Agreements (including contracts, annual work plans and budgets) between IPs and PCU have been finalized for implementation of IFAD-funded components of the ASRP in Grand Bassa, Bomi, Grand Cape Mount and Montserrado Counties as follows: Africare for Grand Cape Mount County; ActionAid for Montserrado County; Concern World Wide for Grand Bassa County; and GAA for Bomi County. Other initiatives currently in progress include (a) Development of terms of reference (TORs) for service providers for the AfDB funded components of the ASRP: (CARI, CRS, GAA, R&R Foundation and ILO); (b) Development of procurement plans for the period April 2010 to June 30th 2011; (c) Drafting tenders for feeder roads; (d) Setting up of the ASRP Steering Committee; and (e) Integration of PCU staff into the MOA HR system.

Other key activities worth noting under the ASRP are as follows:

- Joint Assessment Mission to the South-East was carried out by representatives from the PCU and the Implementing Partners (IPs), including CRS, Rights & Rice Foundation, Welthungerhilfe and ILO, from July 13-26, 2010. This has provided the IPs and PCU better insights for determining the specific areas in the 4 AfDB-funded ASRP counties (Grand Gedeh, River Gee, Grand Kru and Maryland).
- Preparation of the Memoranda of Agreements between the IPs and PCU is nearing completion. The draft Agreements will be completed and sent to AfDB for "no objection" and finalized for signing by mid July 2010.
- Recruitment of last batch of support staff for the PCU is in progress. Short-listing will be completed by July 9 and names of short-listed candidates sent to AfDB for "no objection" for conducting the interview.
- The selection/recruitment process of qualified MOA staff for the 18 AfDB scholarships under ASRP for post-graduate studies in selected fields related to the ASRP is very slow and far behind schedule. If this process is not completed the end of July, it may be difficult to find admission for the qualified candidates into good universities in Africa.
- The AfDB has given "no objection" for the replacement of the Gender and Community Development Specialist who abandoned his post. Plans are underway to re-advertise the position.

- Slow pace of the procurement process for services, goods and works is a major challenge of the AfDB-funded component of the ASRPS.

B. The IFAD Component of the ASRP

The ASRP components financed by IFAD will be implemented in the Grand Cape Mount, Bomi, Montserado and Grand Bassa Counties. At least 10,080 vulnerable farmers will benefit from this project.

The TASMOA project team has provided technical advice to Dr Moses Zinnah and the various IFAD missions to Liberia during project negotiations. As a result, the MOA has been able to reach consensus with the 4 NGOs or implementing partners (IPs) selected to assist the Ministry to implement the IFAD component of the ASRP in four counties: Grand Bassa County (Concern Worldwide), Montserrado County (Action Aid), Bomi County (German Agro Action), and Grand Cape Mount County (Caritas Monrovia). The MOA has also worked with the 4 IPs to conclude memoranda of understanding (MOUs), work plans and budget for the 3-year contract for submission to IFAD for a “no objection.” In view of CARI’s strategic role in this project, provision has also been made to clarify CARI’s role in the ASRP (eg, in terms of the need to construct a seed laboratory at CARI; provision of quality control services to the IPs contracted to provide seed multiplication services; and re-stocking of small ruminants and poultry).

Technical support provided by TASMOA during the recruitment phase has made it possible for MOA and IFAD to complete the recruitment process for all PCU staff positions to be financed by IFAD (M&E and Gender Officer; Accountant; Agriculturist (with agronomy & livestock experience), and 4 Young Agriculture Professionals to be assigned in the 4 IFAD project counties).

In summary, current status and updates with regard to the IFAD component of the ASRP is as follows:

- Assessment Mission by PCU staff to IFAD-funded project sites in Grand Bassa, Montserrado, Bomi and Grand Cape Mount Counties was conducted. The 4 IPs (Concern Worldwide, ActionAid, Welthungerhilfe and Africare) have begun implementation activities, but the delay in disbursement of funds may limit project impact in this 2010 farming season.
- Ms Anta Sow (IFAD Financial and Administrative Consultant) visited Liberia from June 27 to July 1 on an IFAD-funded Project Implementation Support Mission. She expressed satisfaction with the management and start-up activities of the IFAD project in spite of the delay in the commencement of the project, especially the late disbursement of funds. She provided strategic suggestions for project improvement.
- The bidding process for procurement of two vehicles (1 Jeep and 1 double-cabin pickup) for the IFAD-funded component of the ASRP has been concluded. The vehicles will be supplied in the second week of July 2010. Two drivers have already been recruited to operate the vehicles.

1.4.3 Support to CAADP Post Compact Implementation Process

Since formal signature of the CAADP Compact by Vice President, HE Joseph Boakai, the TASMOA team has participated actively in several consultative sessions with senior MOA and relevant stakeholders to implement the Liberian Agriculture Sector Investment Plan (LASIP). The LASIP pillars, by order of priority, are (i) Food and Nutrition Security; (ii) Competitive Value Chains and Market Linkages; (iii) Institutional Development; and (iv) Land and Water Development.

During this quarter, the revised LASIP was validated by the CAADP compact stakeholders on May 28, 2010. The entire TASMOA team facilitated and participated in the technical review sessions and LASIP/CAADP Validation Workshop. The workshop drew approximately 65 persons from an invitation

list of over 150 sent to the ADWG, Line Ministries, ACC partners, Civil Society, Private Sector representatives, and NGO representatives. Minister Chenoweth opened the workshop and urged the participants to finalize the LASIP document and make sure that the MOA and GOL would be proud to present to the ECOWAS regional meeting in Dakar. ECOWAS representatives also participated in the validation exercise.

Subsequently, TASMOA has provided direct support to the CAADP Team (Assistant Minister, Ousman Tall; Consultant, Dr. Quan Dinh; Consultant, John Wessah McClain) to complete the final draft document prior to its submission to CAADP for technical reviews. Following the technical review sessions in Dakar, TASMOA facilitated the Consultant's review of comments/recommendations and prepare the presentation for the CAADP/Donors' meetings held from June 14-17, 2010. Liberia's delegation comprised of twelve persons representing all of the stakeholders who are signatories to the CAADP compact signed on October 16, 2009. Minister Chenoweth reported that the presentation and reviews were well received and Liberia received the number one ranking out of eleven countries that presented investment plans.

Following a successful outcome in the Dakar meetings, the ADWG will be convened to solicit pledges towards investment priorities to be established by the Ministry of Agriculture. Various technical analyses and project designs will be necessary and TASMOA will provide necessary support to ADWG activities upon demand. Key activities that TASMOA will continue to support include the following:

- Facilitate monthly ADWG meetings; and
- Provide technical and analytical support to donor design teams.

1.4.4 Support to Agriculture Coordination Committee (ACC) Meetings

The ACC meeting is one of the important instruments the MOA uses to coordinate activities in the agriculture sector, particularly with regard to the NGO community. The meetings bring together all NGOs operating in Liberia, as well as international and bi-lateral donors. COP, Wilbur G. Thomas & IDS, Beenwell Banda, regularly attend the monthly ACC meetings. In total, some 60-70 participants attend this meeting which is becoming a consummate forum for information sharing and discussions on policy-related issues in the agriculture sector.

During this quarter, presentations were made by the cocoa sub-working group, methods & standards working group, and the private sector working group. An update was also provided on the status of the LASIP investment plan and participants were urged to review the final draft and offer further comments as they pertain to their focus areas in the sector.

The ACC also agreed that other technical working groups that should be fully operational in the next quarter include: Cassava Sub-sector Technical Working Group; and Vegetables Technical Working Group. TASMOA will continue to support the ACC and will, in particular:

- Provide operational support to the ACC secretariat
- Participate in and provide technical support to the cocoa, private sector, and approaches & methodologies technical working groups

1.4.5 Policy-related Support

As an ongoing activity, TASMOA will continue to provide technical support in this area, and, in particular:

- Participate in the cocoa sub-sector working group and assist in re-drafting the cocoa development strategy; and
- Work with the MOA (Department of Planning & Development) to organize a workshop to validate the rice sub-sector policy.

With regard to the rice sub-sector, several donors have made investments to improve seed production in Liberia's principal food crop; however, there is no general seed policy to regulate importation, multiplication, and marketing of improved seeds to farmers. A national seed policy has been drafted through the assistance of the FAO which requires inputs from donors, MOA technicians, and legislative leaders prior to enactment into law. In view of the critical importance of the rice sub-sector, TASMOA will, as necessary:

- Support periodic working sessions of the National Seed Task Force to review and finalize the draft seed policy.
- Organize consultative meetings with various members of agriculture committees in the national legislature to present the national seed policy.
- Organize a validation workshop and present final draft seed policy for enactment into law.

During this Quarter, TASMOA has also continued to respond to tasks or activities which are demand-driven, mostly from the Minister's office. Most of the support has to do with assisting Minister Chenoweth and her deputies to conduct rapid policy analyses; drafting technical papers, position papers; preparing presentations, organizing workshops or briefings and the like – all of which pertain to various policy matters.

2.0 PROJECT OUTPUTS AND DELIVERABLES

Key project outputs and deliverables are indicated below. Further details relating to outputs and milestones as measured by indicators under the Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP) are provided in Annex 3.

2.1 TASK 1 DELIVERABLES

For the most part, Task 1 has already been accomplished. TASMOA completed a detailed assessment of the MOA in January, 2009. Recommendations were made regarding core and non-core functions; and these have been accepted by the MOA.

Since completion of the MOA assessment, the TASMOA team has focused on implementing some of the most salient recommendations and activities aimed at building the capacity of the MOA, beginning, for the most part, at the central level. Major accomplishments include:

- Establishment and operationalization of the MOA Project Coordination Unit (PCU)
- Development of the PCU operations manual (final)
- Establishment & operationalization of the MOA Internal Reform Committee (IRC)
- Development of the IRC operations manual (draft)
- Development of the Decentralization plan (final)
- Rolling out 6 counties through decentralization process
- Assessment of MOA Agro-Communication Needs and development of a MOA Agro-Communications Strategy

2.2 TASK 2 DELIVERABLES

Major accomplishments in building the institutional and human resource capacity of the MOA include the following:

- Development & printing of four management manuals for MOA (MOA Staff Recruitment and Selection Manual; MOA Training & Development Policy; Staff Induction, Deployment & Exit; Management of Meetings)
- Development of Job descriptions for 60 positions
- 72 workshops conducted
- 1,553 MOA employees trained
- MOA Communication strategy & Action plan developed & approved for implementation

- Financial Management Manual drafted

2.3 TASK 3 DELIVERABLES

The TASMOA project team has provided technical assistance in the review and development of the following:

- The National Food and Agriculture Policy and Strategy (FAPS)
- Update of the original 2008 version of the ASIP Road Map
- The LASIP in partial fulfillment of the CAADP compact
- The Rice Seed Chain Workshops for IPs and MOA Staff
- Report on the proceedings of the CAADP Donors' Conference (Ethiopia)
- Revised Liberian Agriculture Sector Investment Program (LASIP) in fulfillment of the of the post CAADP compact donors forum (June 14, 2010).

In terms of project preparation/negotiation/implementation, TASMOA has provided support to MOA to successfully negotiate the following:

- Enhancing Women's Empowerment through Agriculture (DANIDA project, signed 2008)
- IFAD/Italian Trust Fund project for vulnerable farmers (Managed by Africare) signed on 3rd September, 2009
- The Liberia Agriculture Sector Rehabilitation Project (ASRP) jointly funded by AfDB and IFAD, signed on May 14, 2009;
- AfDB emergency project for caterpillar outbreak containment signed on May 11, 2009

TASMOA has also supported MOA in these priority activities:

- Establishment of the Agricultural Donors Working Group
- Management of the CAADP implementation process
- Procurement of 50 MT of foundation rice seed from Africa Rice Centre
- Support to IPs (Rice seed chain program)
- Establishment of the Peri-urban improved rice seed demonstration plots

3.0 PROJECT ISSUES AND LESSONS LEARNED

Project issues and challenges raised in this section of the report are not new. They have been raised and discussed at various forums. The magnitude or severity of challenges may have changed within the project life-span; but the issues remain the same. Since the commencement of the TASMOA project, the TA team has been challenged by the systemic failure of the MOA which is truly seeking to rebuild itself after several years of conflict. Most MOA departments (eg, Department of Planning & Development; Department of Regional Development, Research & Extension) have not been fully operational and few staff are really competent, motivated and dedicated to work. For service-oriented departments (eg, Extensions), transportation is severely limited; office equipment and other facilities are either archaic or non-functional; and electricity power is, at times, intermittent. Without the unwavering support of Minister Chenoweth – the situation could have been worse. In a nutshell, some of the strategic challenges faced by TAMOA in the course of project implementation in MOA include the following:

3.1 LEADERSHIP

Under the direction of the Minister, considerable efforts were being made to restructure administrative systems while validating policies and programs. While some of the new policies and programs have been recommended through TASMOA's analytical successes, secondary or follow-on activities are taking more time to take root. This lull is due in part to the MOA's limited competent staff and in part due to operations in an austere budget situation that places limits on staffing, transportation, office equipment, and other facilities. To ensure effective service delivery and sustainability of reforms, the Minister's leadership shall remain critical. Without strong and directional leadership, the impact of MOA reforms will be minimal and will not address the major structural issue of top-heavy non-functioning management. MOA departments continue to suffer due to limited leadership capacity at that level. A number of changes have recently been made at Deputy and Assistant Minister levels (for instance, MOA has three new Deputy Ministers responsible for Administration, Extension Services, and Technical Services. The Director of Extension Services has also been elevated to Assistant Minister). It is hoped that the new leadership changes will embrace the Minister's vision.

3.2 RESOURCES

To achieve sustainable reform at MOA, there is an increasing demand for more resources than less – as demanded by the Government of Liberia's austerity plan. While donors have signed up, funds are not yet flowing adequately to provide the needed human and financial resources for reform, including a larger, multifaceted team active both at the center and the decentralized levels. In the meantime, donor expectations are very high and are often not met. On the other hand, the few Ministry staff that are conscientiously focused on meeting expectations are stretched to their limits. The majority of MOA staff are not as committed and, hence, often moonlight or seek potential projects or donor funded activities to make ends meet.

3.3 SUPPORT FOR REFORM

Institutional reforms are very difficult to implement especially in a highly charged political environment like Liberia. While a substantive decentralization plan has been developed, implementation of the entire plan will be forestalled by Cabinet deliberations on recommended reforms in senior staff positions. The GC and CSA mandated that the MOA be used as a model of the reform for all government agencies and ministries. The MOA embraced and began the process. However, the MOA's low-level internal support for the reform program (particularly amongst political appointees—Deputy Ministers and Assistant Ministers) and the corresponding high-level support from the GC and CSA continues to present a challenging situation for TASMOA. In spite of this, the TASMOA team has been able to build a constituency of support for reforms amongst key professional staff and helped the MOA fulfill various reform-related conditions precedent to fund disbursement by donors, including the AfDB. However, with the exception of some of the anticipated support by the AfDB, support from other donors does not address overall reform and capacity-building; rather, the additional project burden increases the urgency of institutional reform.

3.4 COUNTER-PARTING ARRANGEMENTS

The prospects for successful change, and change management process within MOA depends, crucially, on the understanding, involvement and commitment of all senior staff, including counterparts. The TASMOA team recognizes the necessity to fully engage MOA staff in order to facilitate empowerment, ownership, and commitment to the reform process and deliverables. However, due to pressure for ensuring that deliverables are met within agreed (usually tight) timeframes, and the necessity to “front-load” key tasks and outputs, there is an inevitable trade-off: building local capacity through active involvement in the process (action learning) versus getting the job done with minimal attention to local capacity building. The situation is further exacerbated by the fact that counterparts are either not available or not motivated to work, or already fully engaged with other ongoing tasks. Faced with such a situation, the team had to find responses by creating and working through a small MOA technical team composed mainly of senior executive service (SES) staff and, at the same time, ensuring that mechanisms are in place to help move the capacity-building process forward.

3.5 THE OPERATING ENVIRONMENT

The TASMOA team is based at the MOA office complex at Gardnersville (Somalia Drive), about 20 kilometers from the office of the Minister of Agriculture (including the Department of Administration)—situated on 19th Street, Sinkor. This physical separation of offices hinders sustained interaction among key staff on spur of the moment issues and problems. Furthermore (and especially in the initial stages of project implementation), the reliability of services such as electricity and internet is quite limited. It is expected that this situation will be vastly improved when all management and implementation units are housed in the new MOA offices in Gardnersville.

Given TASMOA's limited resources, the TA team focused on achieving deliverables as per the Task Order SOW, including the following:

- Establishing appropriate institutional and management strengthening frameworks (including the PCU; the RU/IRC & the Decentralization architecture for county agriculture offices), and facilitating staff recruitment.
- Strengthening MOA leadership and advocating work through designated focal points towards the creation of strong technical teams among the major sub-sectors within the Ministry.

- Attracting additional projects/funding to the MOA.
- Building capacities in a few selected areas (Rice seed chain, HR, finance, policy, etc).

The team recognizes that capacity building is a long-term institutional process. Rebuilding the MOA or any other ministry is likely to take four to five years and requires more resources. During the course of the project, the TASMOA team has continued to advocate for moving from the abstractions of paper proposals and plans to the practical realm of real work (office, in-field activities). This has been amply demonstrated through a very difficult but worthy Rice Seed Chain Program. Further development of new projects by the MOA will allow for a significant level of “on-the-job training” with increased donor funding, as a part of project implementation, thus providing a crucial pillar to capacity building—a real understanding of how to plan together and collaborate with other stakeholders in the sector to improve service delivery to Liberia’s agricultural producers.

The process of preparation and bringing staff on board is time consuming. The institutional strengthening initiatives allow the MOA to function if the right person is in the right place. It is pleasing to note that progress continues to be made by Minister Chenoweth in this and other areas. She has exerted her leadership in such a way as to ensure that the MOA is in the “driver’s seat” of policy development, program planning and implementation. With support from stakeholders and development partners through the CAADP process, there is hope that the MOA will once again rise to the challenge of revitalizing the agricultural sector towards increased economic growth and food security.

4.0 WORK PLAN UP-DATE (JULY-SEPTEMBER)

In spite of the fact that the MOA Assessment report is yet to be formally adopted by the Government of Liberia, targeted capacity building initiatives recommended in the report are being implemented as planned. Therefore, during the next quarter, the TASMOA project team will continue to provide technical support to the MOA in the implementation of the following major tasks and activities:

4.1 TASK 1 ACTIVITIES

4.1.1 MOA Assessment:

- Obtain approval of CG and CSA of revised assessment report and recommendations
- Obtain Cabinet approval of the MOA Assessment report

4.1.2 PCU Activities

- Ensure effective functioning of the PCU through provision of ongoing technical support
- Assist the MOA to identify/select 18 qualified applicants for training, under AfDB sponsorship, at selected leading universities in Africa

4.1.3 IRC Activities

- Ensure effective functioning of the Internal Reform Committee by providing ongoing technical support:
- Recruit IRC Administrative Assistant

4.1.4 Decentralization Process

- Continue the provision of technical support to the implementation of the decentralization plan.
- Assist the Minister as she rolls out planned reform, and develop systems and institutional arrangements that will facilitate the reform process.

4.2 TASK 2 ACTIVITIES

4.2.1 Completion/Implementation of the Personnel Mapping Exercise:

- Finalize the development of the MOA establishment chart, and seek the approval of the Minister, CSA and the GC
- Compare proposed establishment chart against available positions/staff; and place personnel where they best fit in the new (proposed) establishment chart
- Continue to draft job descriptions for each position in the establishment chart
- Assist the MOA carry out a rapid job evaluation process to assess job relativities and grades
- Continue to provide technical guidance to the HR team in the development and implementation of the above initiatives

4.2.2 Management Manuals

- Continue to provide technical guidance to the Department of Administration (especially the HR division) in the implementation of management manuals.
- Draft a Job Description Manual
- Draft a Personnel Handbook

4.2.3 Capacity Building through Training and Development

- Provide technical support to the MOA in the operationalization of the Training & Development policy.
- Assist MOA review available literature and, through a participatory process, identify critical capacity gaps and develop a three year training plan for MOA

4.2.4 Communication Strategy and Action Plan

- Finalise the Communication Strategy & Action plan to facilitate implementation

4.3 TASK 3 ACTIVITIES

4.3.1 The Rice Seed Chain Program

- Support improved rice production demonstration sites (Zubah Town, ELWA, & Johnsonville Women's Group)
- Provide IPs with necessary technical rice seed production training and training in post-harvest processing of pre-certified seeds.

4.3.2 Support to the Liberia ASRP

- Provide technical support to the AfDB & IFAD-funded components of the ASRP
- Assist MOA to select qualified staff/candidates for the 18 AfDB scholarships under ASRP for post-graduate studies in African universities

4.3.3 Support to the CAADP/AWDG Process

- Facilitate monthly AWDG meetings
- Provide technical and analytical support to donor design teams.

4.3.3 Support to the ACC Meetings

- Provide operational support to the ACC secretariat
- Participate in and provide technical support to the cocoa, private sector, and approaches & methodologies technical working groups

4.3.4 Policy-Related Support

- Participate in the cocoa sub-sector working group and assist in re-drafting the cocoa development strategy.
- Work with the MOA (Department of Planning & Development) to organize a workshop to validate the rice sub-sector policy.

4.3.5 Support to the National Seed Task Force & National Seed Committee

- Assist MOA in finalizing the draft national seed policy for enactment into law.
- Provide CARI and MOA senior management training on rice seed chain management (processing), marketing and storage including certification and private-public-partnership issues
- Ensure procurement, shipping, installation and training on improved rice seed processing equipment for CARI

Project activities as per work plan are covered in Annex 2.

ANNEX 1: PROJECT STAFF

| NAME | ARRIVAL | DEPARTURE | POSITION |
|-------------------|----------------|----------------|--|
| Dr Wilbur Thomas | Sept 9, 2009 | Dec. 31, 2010 | COP |
| Mr Beenwell Banda | April 18, 2008 | Dec. 31, 2010 | Institutional Development/HR Specialist |
| Ms. Hawah Zinnah | May 1, 2009 | Dec. 31, 2010 | Policy & Planning Specialist |
| Ms. Gbeh Nimene | May 25, 2009 | April 13, 2010 | Office Manager/Accountant |
| Mr Waldo Mazelis | March 3, 2010 | April 11, 2010 | Public Administration/ Decentralization Specialist |
| Mr Morris Dukuly | April 1, 2010 | May, 2010 | Communications Specialist |
| Ms Mafar Bright | May, 6, 2010 | Dec 31, 2010 | Office Manager/Accountant |
| John Duo | June 13, 2008 | Dec. 31, 2010 | Driver |
| Charles Norris | Oct 1, 2009 | Dec. 31, 2010 | Driver |

ANNEX 2: PROJECT WORK PLAN: MAY 1– DECEMBER 31, 2010

| Tasks | Activities | Responsible | Quarter 1 May-Jul 10 | Quarter 2 Aug-Oct 10 | Quarter 3 Nov-Dec 10 | Comments/Output |
|--|---|-------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| Task 1: Assess roles & responsibilities of the agriculture sector in general and determine core functions of the MOA and non-core functions of other various stakeholders | MOA Assessment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obtain Cabinet approval of Assessment. Obtain approval of CG and CSA of revised Assessment and recommendations. | CoP CoP | X X | | | The assessment was revised in April 2010 and will be forwarded to CSA and GC for their approbation prior to presentation to the GOL Cabinet for ratification. |
| | IRC Activities Ensure effective functioning of the Internal Reform Committee by providing ongoing technical support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruit IRC Administrative Assistant. Finalize and obtain the Minister's approval of the draft IRC manual. Build the IRC capacity (through workshops) in key priority areas, including: Change Management; Negotiation skills; and Management of the consultancy process. Train IRC members on reform areas/directions, role and responsibilities of the members, plans for decentralization and appropriate capacity building. | IDS | X X | X X | X X | Decentralization and Internal Reform activities will be supported by STTA in two phases. Phase I STTA will finalize PCU/IRC manuals and develop a plan of action for training programs. Phase II STTA will assist with the roll-out of training programs. Content of the training for RU to be ongoing during the duration of the extension period and modules will be developed, mode of training (number and duration of trainings) will be established. Training is likely to be ongoing, as membership may change during the course of the time. |

| Tasks | Activities | Responsible | Quarter 1 May-Jul 10 | Quarter 2 Aug-Oct 10 | Quarter 3 Nov-Dec 10 | Comments/Output |
|-------|--|-------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| | <p>Decentralization Process</p> <p>Continue the provision of technical support to the implementation of the decentralization plan. In particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist the Minister as she rolls out planned reform, and develop systems and institutional arrangements that will facilitate the reform process. Design and conduct MOA internal seminars focusing on the gradual roll-out of the decentralization plan. These seminars may take place at the central and/or county and district levels. | IDS + COP | X | X | X | The gradual roll-out of the decentralized plan will be synchronized with Phase II of the STTA. |
| | <p>PCU Activities</p> <p>Ensure effective functioning of the PCU through provision of ongoing technical support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist the Ministry to identify and select 18 qualified applicants for training at selected leading universities in Africa Assist MOA build PCU staff capacity (through workshops) in key priority areas, including: Project cycle management; Concepts and Strategies for Donor Coordination; Negotiation skills; and Management of the consultancy process. | IDS + COP | X | X | X | Content of trainings for PCU to be determined, mode of training (number and duration of trainings) to be established |

| Tasks | Activities | Responsible | Quarter 1 May-Jul 10 | Quarter 2 Aug-Oct 10 | Quarter 3 Nov-Dec 10 | Comments/Output |
|--|---|-------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| Task 2: Analyze and strengthen institutional and human resource (HR) capacity of MOA and its related institutions | Completion/Implementation of the Personnel Mapping Exercise: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalize the development of the MOA establishment chart, and seek the approval of the Minister, CSA and the GC. Compare proposed establishment chart against available positions/staff; and place personnel where they best fit in the new (proposed) establishment chart. Develop job descriptions for each position in the establishment chart. Assist the MOA to carry out a rapid job evaluation process to assess job relativities and grades. Continue to provide technical guidance to the HR team in the development and implementation of the above initiatives. | IDS | X | X | | Establishment chart is a complete staff structure indicating the title of each of the anticipated MOA positions planned to be filled by 2012. |
| | Management manuals Finalize/develop the following management manuals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial Management and Accounting Manual. | IDS + STTA | | | | |
| | | | | | | As of May 1, 2010 the last manuals are in various states of completion and approval. |

| Tasks | Activities | Responsible | Quarter 1 May-Jul 10 | Quarter 2 Aug-Oct 10 | Quarter 3 Nov-Dec 10 | Comments/Output |
|-------|--|-------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal Reform Committee (IRC) Operations Manual Job Description Manual <p>Continue to provide technical guidance to the Department of Administration (especially the HR division) in the implementation of management manuals.</p> | | X | X | X | |
| | <p>Capacity Building through training and development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide technical support to the MOA in the operationalization of the Training & Development policy. Implement a series of management development programs (trainings) for MOA. These will address capacity gaps identified in the Training & Development policy (including areas such as Financial planning, budgeting and management). <p>Review available literature and, through a participatory process, identify critical capacity gaps and develop a three year training plan for MOA</p> | IDS+STTA+CO | X | X | X | |

| Tasks | Activities | Responsible | Quarter 1 May-Jul 10 | Quarter 2 Aug-Oct 10 | Quarter 3 Nov-Dec 10 | Comments/Output |
|--|---|------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| | Finalize communications Strategy and Action Plan | CoP + Consultant | X | | | |
| | Develop an Financial Management System: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assess the MOA financial management systems and institute a reformed financial management system; • develop and implement financial training modules for central and decentralized financial management units; • identify specific individuals to be trained under the newly designed financial management system; • develop a model/pilot decentralized administrative and financial management staff; • Review and finalize the draft financial management manual for validation. | Consultant | X | X | | |
| | | | X | X | X | |
| | | | X | X | X | |
| | | | | X | | |
| Task 3: Develop comprehensive agriculture policy & strategies | Support to the Establish Agric Donors Working Group and assist the group in implementing monthly donor meetings focused on funding the LASIP and supporting the CAADP framework. | IDS+CoP | X | X | X | Objective of monthly agriculture donor working group meetings will be to share information on progress of existing donor-funded projects and solicit funding for yet unfunded projects/ activities listed in the LASIP. |
| | Provide operational support to the ACC secretariat. | CoP + IDP | X | X | X | |

| Tasks | Activities | Responsible | Quarter 1 May-Jul 10 | Quarter 2 Aug-Oct 10 | Quarter 3 Nov-Dec 10 | Comments/Output |
|-------|--|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|
| | Assist the MOA with the implementation of the LASIP by providing technical and analytical support to donor design teams investment program post approval meetings in Dakar, Senegal meetings (June 14-17, 2010). | COP | X | X | X | |
| | Assist MOA in analyses and finalization of various agriculture sector policies. | COP +STTA+Team | X | X | X | |
| | Assist MOA implement improved rice seed chain | COP+STTA+ Team | X | X | X | |
| | Support to the National Seed Task Force & National Seed Committee: Assist MOA in finalizing national seed policy for enactment into law. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist MOA in finalizing the draft national seed policy for enactment into law. Determine market prices of improved seeds | COP+Seed Task Manager+ Team | X | X | X | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set up Seed Task Force/ National Seed Committee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine price of improved rice seeds Support improved rice production demonstration sites. Assist the MOA conduct awareness programs through field days for potential investors/participants in improved rice production in lowlands. | | X | X | X | |

| Tasks | Activities | Responsible | Quarter 1 May-Jul 10 | Quarter 2 Aug-Oct 10 | Quarter 3 Nov-Dec 10 | Comments/Output |
|-------|--|-------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| | Support MOA during implementation of other LASIP projects (as requested) | CoP | X | X | X | Nature of support will depend on requests from MOA |
| | Advocate for stronger financial management systems throughout the MOA | CoP | X | X | X | |

ANNEX 3: PROJECT ACTIVITIES AS PER PMP

| Results Hierarchy | Indicator | Indicator Type | Source of Data | | Q1 FY10 | Q2 FY10 | Q3 FY10 | Q4 FY10 | Q1 FY11 | TOT |
|--|--|------------------------|------------------------|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-----|
| Task 1 | 1.1.By EOP, the number of recommendations (descriptions of core and non-core functions) adopted by the MOA | Milestone | MOA records to confirm | Target | 10 | | | | | 10 |
| | | | | Actual | 10 | | | | | 10 |
| | 1.2. Comprehensive Mapping and Categorization of Roles | Milestone | Actual document | Target | X | | | | | X |
| | | | | Actual | X | | | | | X |
| 1.3. Number of departmental assessments completed | Output | Actual documents | Target | 5 | | | | | 5 | |
| | | | Actual | 5 | | | | | 5 | |
| 1.4. Number of institutions/organizations undergoing capacity assessments as a result of USG assistance | FACTS | Project Records | Target | 5 | | | | | 5 | |
| | | | Actual | 13 | | | | | 13 | |
| Task 2 | 2.1. By EOP, the number of operating unit descriptions adopted by MOA departments | Result | MOA Records to confirm | Target | 10 | | | | | 10 |
| | | | | Actual | 14 | | | | | 14 |
| | 2.2. By EOP, the number of job descriptions adopted in MOA departments | Result | MOA Records to confirm | Target | 70 | | | | | 80 |
| | | | | Actual | 72 | | | | | |
| | 2.3. ASIP process started | Milestone | Actual document | Target | X | | | | | X |
| | | | | Actual | X | | | | | X |
| 2.4. Organizational Chart completed and adopted | Milestone | Actual doc. | Target | X | | | | | X | |
| | | | Actual | X | | | | | X | |
| 2.5. # projects (that feed into ASIP) developed and accepted for inclusion in ASIP (project notes) | Output | MOA Records to confirm | Target | 10 | | | | | 10 | |
| | | | Actual | 10 | | | | | 10 | |
| 2.6. Number of individuals (M/F) who have received USG-supported short-term agricultural enabling environment training | FACTS | Training Records | Target | 100 | | | | | 1,553 | |
| | | | Actual | 1,553 | | | | | | |
| Task 3 | 3.1. The number of donors engaged with MOA on support for new sector policies, strategies and objectives | Result | MOA Records to confirm | Target | 6 | | | | | 6 |
| | | | | Actual | 6 | | | | | 6 |
| | 3.2. NFASP, Food Crisis Policy response produced and approved | Milestone | Actual doc. | Target | X | | | | | X |
| | | | | Actual | X | | | | | X |

| Results Hierarchy | Indicator | Indicator Type | Source of Data | | Q1 FY10 | Q2 FY10 | Q3 FY10 | Q4 FY10 | Q1 FY11 | TOT | |
|-------------------|---|----------------|-----------------|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-----|---|
| | 3.3. Number of policy reforms analyzed with USG assistance (policy notes) | Output | Project Records | Target | 20 | | | | | 20 | |
| | | | | Actual | 23 | | | | | 20 | |
| | 3.4. Number of policy reforms presented for legislation/deGREE (in this case, cabinet approval) as a result of USG assistance | FACTS | Project Records | Target | 6 | | | | | | 6 |
| | | | | Actual | 2 | | | | | | |

U.S. Agency for International Development

1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW

Washington, DC 20523

Tel: (202) 712-0000

Fax: (202) 216-3524

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