



Agri Journal Edition 006 October 2024

In this Issue:

- President Boakai Calls for Global Action on Food Security
- Female Farmer Wants Support for Liberia Coffee Sector
- IFAD Concludes Field Evaluation Mission to Liberia
- IECD Empowers Smallholder Farmers in Agro-ecological Practice
- Agriculture Minister Dispels Rumors on Matching Grant

Contact Us: agrijourna@gmail.com / +231 770 127 075
Paynessville City, Montserrado County, Liberia

President Boakai Calls for Immediate Global Action on Food Security

President Joseph Nyuma Boakai, Sr., has called on the global community to take swift and decisive action to address the growing food insecurity crisis, particularly in Africa.



Delivering the keynote address at the World Food Forum to an audience of heads of state, development leaders, and international organizations, President Boakai highlighted the alarming rise of hunger and malnutrition, stating that the time for endless discussions has passed, and the world must now act.

“One in five people in Africa go to bed hungry,” President Boakai alarmed, warning, “We cannot wait for another summit or another meeting. The time for action is now, and we have the means to make a real difference.”

The President outlined Liberia’s ambitious plan to drive agricultural transformation, positioning the country as a key player in the fight against global hunger. [Read more on the president’s statement from Rome.](#)

IFAD Concludes Field Evaluation Mission to Liberia

The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) have embarked on a week-long field mission across Bong, Lofa, and Nimba counties. This mission aims to assess the implementation progress and impact of key IFAD-funded agricultural projects under the Tree Crop Extension Projects (TCEP I & II) and the Building Climate Resilience Project (BCRP).

The delegation began its visit in Bong County, engaging with 20 enthusiastic farmers, including eight women from the Sustainable Development Farmers group in Gbondoi. With support from the BCRP, these farmers have transformed their fields and lives by intercropping plantains with vibrant crops like watermelons, cucumbers, peppers, and cabbages. With high-yield seeds, innovative tools, and training in organic fertilizer production, the group has seen remarkable results—harvesting over 52 bags (25kg) of pepper between July and October, generating an impressive L\$486,000.



The farmers praised a power tiller introduced by the BCRP, which has improved and revolutionized their land preparation process, cutting the time needed from weeks to just a few days. Plans for a free energy irrigation system are also underway, promising enhanced year-round production and sustainability. [Read more on this story](#)

IECD Empowers Smallholder Farmers in Agro-ecological Practices

In partnership with local agriculture stakeholders, the European Institute for Cooperation and Development (IECD) is making strides to empower smallholder farmers in Liberia with sustainable agro-ecological practices. These practices aim to improve food security, enhance soil fertility, and ultimately create a pathway to sustainable food production across the country.

The French-based agriculture development organization recently hosted a two-day interactive learning session at the Central Agriculture Research Institute (CARI) in

Suakoko, Bong County, engaging smallholder farmers in sustainable agroecological practices to foster resilience to climate change.



The event focused on hands-on demonstrations and collaborative learning, where farmers explored essential topics like soil health improvement, organic pest management, water conservation, and crop rotation. IECD's experts guided farmers through practical exercises, allowing them to experiment with techniques and share insights from their own experiences. [Click the link to read more on this story.](#)

Female Farmer Wants Support for Liberia Coffee Sector Development

The acting chairperson of the Tunekpan Farmer's Cooperative in Sanoyea District, Bong County, Madam Mariama B. Fofana calls for consolidated efforts towards Coffee production in Liberia.



According to Madam Fofana, coffee is a valuable tree crop that provides huge financial and health benefits. She emphasized local farmers in other African Countries specifically Uganda where she recently visited are making tremendous investments in the Coffee sector thus leading to their livelihood improvements.

Madam Fofana lamented that Liberia was progressing in Coffee production years back but the Country has drastically declined in the crop's production due to limited interest from Liberian farmers who have downplayed the importance of the crop. [Read more on this development](#)

Agriculture Minister Dispels Rumors on Matching Grant

The Minister of Agriculture, Dr. J. Alexander Nuetah, has dispelled recent rumors suggesting that his administration is stalling the agricultural matching grants program.

At a press briefing at the Ministry of Information on Tuesday, Dr. Nuetah clarified that the program's temporary suspension is not a result of internal policy changes but rather a necessary response to a request from the World Bank.



This request, according to him aims to conduct a comprehensive review to ensure that the program aligns effectively with the National Agriculture Development Plan (NADP). [Read on this story.](#)

MoA Provides Support to Urban Lowland Rice Production Project

The Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) has announced its support for urban lowland rice production to bolster local rice production and strengthen food security in urban areas. The rice project is situated in the Zubah Town Community, Paynesville, on the outskirts of Monrovia.



The project is one of the several initiatives being supported by the Ministry to scale up rice production under the Emergency Rice Production Offensive (ERPO) Initiative.

The farm covered 8 hectares cultivated with improved rice seed varieties established by a group calling itself the Liberia First Conservation Agriculture Initiative (LFCAI). [Read more on this story.](#)

Regional Coffee Supervisor Concludes Visit to Liberia

Larry Attipoe, the regional supervisor for the EU—ACP Business Friendly Coffee Value Chain Project, has concluded a week-long visit to Liberia.

The visit was intended to understand the progress made for the EU-ACP Business Friendly Coffee Value Chain project in the country and to encourage the stakeholders' continuous collaboration.



With funding from the EU, the International Trade Centre (ITC) is implementing the coffee project in the country in partnership with the Farmer Union Network of Liberia (FUNL) and other relevant stakeholders. [Read more on this story.](#)

Purupeh Farm Wants Government Support More SMEs in Value Addition

Liberia's agriculture has experienced growth over the years, but the limited capacity of many agribusinesses to promote value addition is impeding the incomes of many smallholder farmers.

To help address the gap, particularly within the cassava and vegetable value chains, Purupeh Agriculture Farm, a local farming organization has embarked on promoting value addition and marketing.

Purupeh, which means in the Kpelle vernacular an end to hunger is a local NGO established by former LBS Director, Estelle Liberty Kemo



Madam Kemoh who has transitioned to agriculture leaving broadcasting believes that priority to value addition will not only serve as the beacon of hope for farmers for the market but also improve the economy. [Read more on this story](#)

NaFAA Makes Commitment to Collaborative Management Associations

The government of Liberia through the National Fisheries and Aquaculture Authority, NaFAA has officially committed to ensuring that the established CMAs are financially empowered and technically equipped to carry out their responsibilities in the various fishing communities.

Speaking over the weekend when NaFAA signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the seven different Collaborative Management Associations, (CMAs) at its Corporate Headquarters on Bushrod Island, the Deputy Director General for Technical Services Hon.

William Y. Boeh disclosed that the CMAs are pivotal to the fisheries sector.



The Environmental Justice Foundation established the seven different CMAs in 2022 and 2023 under the EU-funded Communities for Fisheries Project in four coastal Counties, including Grand Cape Mount, Margibi, Grand Bassa, and Grand Kru. [Follow the story to read more.](#)

FAO Engages Legislators to Promote Responsible Investment in the Agriculture Sector

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) had a two-day knowledge-sharing workshop to promote Responsible Agriculture Investment (RAI) and food systems among Liberia's lawmakers.



Held from October 3-4, 2024 at the Farmington Hotel in Harbel, Margibi County, the workshop aims to deepen the legislative branch's understanding of responsible agricultural investments and their vital role in Liberia's sustainable development. [Click the link to read more about this development.](#)

Rural Women Farmers In Maryland Amplify Call For Storage Facility

Maryland County Rural Women Farmers Association, an auxiliary of the National Rural Women Organization of Liberia has sent out a passionate call to the Government of Liberia, partners, and philanthropists, stressing the urgent need for the construction of storage facilities along with a processing plant in the county to add commercial value to their products.



Making remarks at the observance of the Rural Women Advocacy Day held on September 28, 2024, in Maryland County, the Maryland County Rural Women President, Phelecia Twalid stated that despite the increased production of cassava, cocoa, cabbage, rice, eddoes pineapples, and other vegetable crops, the lack of storage facilities and processors to transform their crops into finished products have over the years caused members of her organization huge financial losses. [Click the link to read more](#)

FAO/USAID Donates 30 Brand New Yamaha Motorbikes to Enhance Animal Health Surveillance in Liberia

To enhance the work of community animal health workers, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations has handed over 30 new Yamaha motorcycles along with laboratory and surveillance equipment to the Ministry of Agriculture in Liberia.

The donation, made possible through support from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), aims to enhance the

work of community animal health workers across the country.



During a dedicatory ceremony on Tuesday, October 1, 2024, in Gardnerville, USAID Mission Director, Jim Wright, noted that the donation is part of the “One Health” approach, designed to improve animal health and build a sustainable system. [Follow this link to read more about this story](#)

ITC Concludes 6 Days Extension Services Training for Coffee Farmers and Agriculture Technician

The International Trade Center (ITC) has successfully wrapped up a six-day refresher training program aimed at enhancing the skills of field extension officers, support staff, and lead farmers involved in the European Union/ACP Coffee Value Chain Project.

The training, which began on Monday, September 23rd, 2024 provided clear insight and introduced new skills necessary to enhance coffee production and improve the livelihoods of farmers.



The event brought together over 68 participants from various regions including Bong, Nimba, Lofa, Bomi, and Montserado Counties,

providing them with updated knowledge and practical skills to better support local coffee farmers. [Click the link to read more on this story.](#)

Kunian Farm Cultivates 50 Acres of Farmland in Bong County

As part of an effort to support the national quest of ensuring improved food security over the next few years, Mr. Whounhele Tokpah Wheeler, the General Manager of Kunian Farm has embarked on cultivating 50 acres of farmland in the Sinyan, Suakoko District, Bong County.



Kunian Farm is an Agricultural Cooperative operating in Bong County along the Kpatawee route engaged with cultivating both lowland and upland farms including Cassava production and poultry farming. [Click the link to read more](#)

Agriculture Ministry Commissions Lowland Rice Harvest in Bong

The Ministry of Agriculture, in collaboration with the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the Office of Bong County Superintendent, has officially inaugurated the harvest of a lowland rice farm located in Gbaylaykpala, Jorquelleh District Three, Bong County.

This initiative was carried out by the Rice, Cassava, and Vegetables Producers and Processors Union of Liberia, a local farming cooperative established by Christ’s Vision International Ministries in the county.



The cooperative is dedicated to improving agricultural productivity and food security in Bong County, and by extension, the entire country of Liberia. [Read more by clicking the link](#)

CDRA Boss Urges MOA to Enhance Food Security Amid Climate Challenges in Liberia

The Executive Director of the Community Development and Research Agency (CDRA), has underscored the immediate need for the Liberian government through the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) to strengthen its efforts in promoting food security across the nation.



His remarks come in the wake of growing concerns over the impacts of climate change, which have worsened agricultural challenges and threatened the livelihoods of many Liberians particularly local farmers. [Click the link to read more](#)

Cuttington University Lecturer Advocates for Sustainable Forest Management in Liberia

Emmanuel Weah II, a lecturer of the Natural Resource Department at Cuttington University is urging Liberians to embrace sustainable

forest development practices if Liberia must transform to another level.

Already, Liberia is rich in biodiversity and vast forest resources under threat from rampant deforestation, it's from this background Mr. Weah is emphasizing the urgent demand for a collective transformation towards responsible environmental stewardship by every Liberian.



In a chat with the [Liberia Agricultural and Environmental Journalists Network](#) in Gbarnga recently Mr. Weah stressed the essential role forests play in the lives of Liberians and the overall health of their environment. [Click to read more.](#)

Minister Moses R. Gbanyan Unveils Ambitious Five-Year Development Plan to Boost Lowland Farming in Liberia

In a move aimed at transforming Liberia's agricultural landscape, the Deputy Minister for Regional Development Research and Extension at the Ministry of Agriculture, Moses R. Gbanyan has announced a comprehensive five-year development plan focused on enhancing lowland farming across the country.



[Click the link and read more on this article.](#)

Editorial: The Need to Tackle Post-Harvest Hunger as a Nightmare for Smallholder Farmers in Liberia

As Liberia joined the global observance of the 2024 World Food Day last October, it is imperative to shine a light on one of the most pressing yet often overlooked challenges facing the nation's smallholder farmers—post-harvest hunger. This phenomenon, caused by the significant loss of crops after harvest, has become a recurring nightmare that undermines the food security and livelihoods of farmers who are critical to the country's agricultural sector.

Post-harvest losses in Liberia are staggering, with estimates suggesting that up to 40% of crops like rice, cassava, and vegetables are lost due to inadequate storage, poor transportation, and a lack of preservation techniques. For smallholder farmers, the implications are severe. After months of hard work cultivating their crops, these losses can plunge them into hunger and poverty, perpetuating a vicious cycle of food insecurity.

The theme of the year's World Food Day highlights the importance of sustainable food systems, but for smallholder farmers in Liberia, the concept of sustainability must include addressing post-harvest losses that directly lead to hunger. When so much of what is produced is lost, not only do farmers struggle to generate income, but they are also left without enough food to sustain their own families.

In rural Liberia, the post-harvest period, which should be a time of plenty, is often marred by hunger. Smallholder farmers, who lack access to proper storage facilities, are forced to sell their produce immediately after harvest when prices are low. However, even after selling, a large portion of their yield goes to waste due to inadequate transportation infrastructure and poor preservation methods. This cycle forces many farmers to buy back food at inflated prices later in the year, contributing to chronic hunger and food insecurity in farming communities.

While development partners play a critical role, the government of Liberia must take a leading position in addressing post-harvest hunger. Strategic policies that support agricultural development, encourage investments in storage and transport infrastructure, and promote food processing can greatly reduce post-harvest losses.

Government help is essential in providing an enabling environment for smallholder farmers to thrive. Additionally, there must be a concerted effort to ensure that post-harvest management is seen as an integral part of the country's food security strategy.

We at the **Liberia Agricultural Journalists Network** think it is now time to acknowledge the pressing need to tackle post-harvest hunger in Liberia. Smallholder farmers are the heartbeat of the nation's food system, and yet, their efforts are being undermined by preventable losses. With greater attention to infrastructure, storage, training, and market access, Liberia can turn the tide on post-harvest hunger and build a more resilient agricultural sector.

Liberia's smallholder farmers must be empowered to move beyond survival to prosperity. Reducing post-harvest losses is key to breaking the cycle of hunger, ensuring food security, and driving economic growth in the nation.