

# **Enhancing Urban and Peri-urban Agriculture in Liberia**

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**Implemented by**

**Welthungerhilfe**

**Co-financed by**

**European Union**

**Evaluation Report**

**On behalf of Welthungerhilfe Bonn**



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## I. Summary

### 1. Brief description of the project and framework conditions

The project “Enhancing urban and semi-urban agriculture in Liberia” (UPA 1) formulated five results to be reached during project implementation:

**Result 1:** UPA is accepted and actively supported by relevant ministries and municipal authorities

**Result 2:** Organization and formalization of UPA farmer groups is strengthened, UPA farmer groups have increased visibility and political influence

**Result 3:** Agricultural production is enhanced and diversified

**Result 4:** Beneficiaries process agricultural and other products and realize value adding activities and other income generating activities

**Result 5:** Marketing by UPA farmers and other beneficiaries is improved.

A follow-up project is already working, with an overlapping of nearly one year.

The direct target group was about 1,008 families: 785 beneficiary families participating in production, processing and marketing groups and about 223 backyard gardeners in Monrovia and Tubmanburg, what correspond to 5,040 family members as indirect beneficiaries. Additionally members of 8 institutional groups (schools, prison, orphanage and students) have been benefited. The majority of the target group are women.

The project is co-financed by the European Union and was implemented by Welthungerhilfe in partnership with the International Resource Centres on Urban Agriculture & Food Security Foundation – RUAF (result 1), HDF – Human Development Fund (result 3) and WOCHIDO (result 4). For two of the five planned results (result 1 and 5) Welthungerhilfe worked in cooperation with CARE.

#### **Framework conditions**

Since the end of 14 years of civil war in 2003, Liberia is experiencing a period of slow improvement, but it remains one of the world’s poorest nations with estimated two-thirds of Liberians living below the poverty line. During the war the population concentrated in the relatively safe capital Monrovia, whose population grew to more than 1/3 of the total population of the country. Urban and peri-urban agriculture offers large potentials to improve the situation of urban habitants, but there are also serious challenges, such as unsecure land rights or litter and waste water.

### 2. Relevance

The project is relevant for the target group (food shortage, increasing food prices and high unemployment), for Welthungerhilfe and their implementing partners and also for Liberia (Poverty Reduction Strategy) and for the European Union. Only the University of Liberia, one of the partners, did not give priority to the project measures.

Two important difficulties of the target group, lack of waste management and lack of irrigation possibilities in the gardens have not been considered in the project proposal.

### 3 Effectiveness

It can be summarized that in general the project purpose: “Small scale urban and peri-urban producers improve food security and increase income and UPA is officially recognized” was achieved.

It was possible to realize most of the planned activities, the activities of result 4 (processing) and some activities of result 5 (farmers market and marketing stand in Tubmanburg) have been realized with delay and their implementation needs to be completed during the follow-up project UPA 2. In the processing activities the delay was caused through difficulties of the local partner responsible for processing activities in the beginning of the project.

The process of organizing urban farmers in FLUPFA and TUPUFU has been an important step towards the representation of urban farmers in the Multi-Stakeholder Forums and towards advocacy, but these organisations are still new and need further support through project measures.

Extension service for the groups and backyard gardeners suffered from the fact that the Community Farm Trainers (CFTs) refused to provide voluntary training and extension work. In many cases it was not possible to accompany the groups and backyard gardeners closely enough to support them in resolving their production problems. Examples are pests in the gardens and the lack of fodder availability which is limiting the success of the animal husbandry component.

The establishment of Save and Loan groups has been a matter of particular interest of the target groups; they seem to be sustainable.

The cross-cutting themes gender and HIV / AIDS have not been considered sufficiently.

## 4 Efficiency

The project costs per family (more than 1,000.- € in three years) and per person are high, compared to their benefits.

Even considering the indirect benefits of improved knowledge and awareness about nutrition and UPA in the society and strengthening of the local partner organisations, the project remains expensive. For most of the participating families the activities do not produce benefits comparable to the costs per family.

Possible benefits in the future such as improvements through the weekly market, processing activities or results of the lobbying of the UPA farmer organisations FLUPFA and TUPUFU were not considered in this calculation and may improve the cost / benefit ratio towards the end of the follow-up project UPA 2.

### Quality of the internal project M&E system

The monitoring is a weak point of the project; the indicators of the logframe have not been measured in a systematic way. In the monthly reports of the staff there is information about the realized activities, but no information showing an overview of realized vs. planned activities or reached results.

## 5 Outcomes and impacts

The **agricultural and animal husbandry production** was diversified and improved to a more ecological and more market-oriented production among a part of the target group. The concept of low external input agriculture caused some positive environmental impacts, such as the conservation of soil fertility and positive impacts on human health and the environment through a reduced use of chemical pesticides. It can be estimated that about 60% of the target group (up to 500

families) which continued in project activities until the end of the project and some of the persons which did not continue improved and diversified their production. Additionally most of the eight institutional groups improved their production in different degrees.

At present, three **processing** groups which are not farming (135 families) and three processing groups composed of UPA farmers have initiated their work. The results are still in their initial stage but more improvements can be expected in the future.

**Market** links for many group members and backyard gardeners have been established and one market stand in Monrovia has been constructed where about three to four traders are selling fruits and vegetables. In Tubmanburg a second market stand started to be constructed.

Two **Multi-Stakeholder Forums** have been established in Monrovia and Tubmanburg and the importance of urban and peri-urban agriculture (UPA) is well accepted by **governmental institutions** and municipal authorities and first steps of active public support to farmers have been realized. However at this moment the concrete support is still limited.

Project trainings and other measures **strengthened** 45 UPA farmer **groups**. Processing and Save and Loan groups and two umbrella organizations of UPA farmer groups (FLUPFA and TUPUFU) have been founded. The **farmers' organizations** TUPUFU and FLUPFA are representing farmers' interests in the Multi-Stakeholder Forums and at other opportunities. This process is relatively new and did not yet produce many tangible impacts for the farmers.

Another relevant outcome are the **increased knowledge and skills** of the majority of the target group (more than 1000 persons) about agricultural and animal husbandry production, management, UPA and other topics.

Some beneficiaries also mentioned **increased solidarity and togetherness** among group members. Especially the Save and Loan groups increased the self-help potential of their members.

It can be estimated that about 60% of the target group increased their **income** through project activities.

**Food security** was improved clearly, in terms of stability or diversification, among up to 70% of the beneficiaries.

## 6 Sustainability

The sustainability of the individual gardens and partly also of the group gardens seems to be high, other results of project activities, such as FLUPFA and TUPUFU, the processing activities, the weekly market, animal husbandry activities and maybe the MSF at this moment are not yet able to continue without external advisory or financial support. The project UPA 2 is working to improve the sustainability of these activities and results during the next two years.

## 7 Recommendations

The most important recommendations for the follower project UPA 2 are:

- to use and actualize the monitoring system, including the indicators for results
- to improve the cost / benefit ratio of the project

- to elaborate exit strategies for the project elements which are not sustainable until now (processing groups, farmers' market, FLUPFA and TUPUFU, Farmer Resource Centre, animal husbandry)
- to train staff and include some information about the cross cutting themes gender and HIV/AIDS in the trainings
- to intensify trainings and extension service for the target group
- to leave the decision to the group members if they want to carry out the activities as group activities or individually
- to search for possibilities how FLUPFA and TUPUFU could get into a more intensive contact with their members and how to look for income generating activities
- to develop solutions for locally available and cheap animal feed with sufficient protein
- to elaborate strategies how to avoid hygiene problems through litter and wastewater

## **8 General conclusions and lessons learnt**

### **Complex implementation structures with several partner organisations**

Working with many project partners as implementing organizations increases costs and the dependency of the project on the quality of the performance of implementing organisations, but it also is able to develop local partner organisations and to bring together specific skills and approaches.

### **Multi-level approach**

The multi-level approach to work with political decision makers, UPA farmers and their organizations allows increasing the possibility to develop and find solutions in critical areas and maybe enhance also the sustainability of some activities.

### **Litter and waste water**

A critical factor which has to be considered in urban agriculture right from the start of project planning is the problem of litter and waste water requiring specific approaches.

### **Animal husbandry**

Animal husbandry without own fodder production is highly risky, especially in urban farming, because land to produce own fodder often does not exist. The necessity of affordable and available feed should be considered if support to animal husbandry in urban regions is planned.