

Purchase for Progress - P4P Liberia



QUICK FACTS

Project start date:
March 2009

Number of farmers' organizations (FOs): 26

Number of members:
2,744 (70% women)

Sales to WFP:
US\$ 698,910 (1,291 mt)

Main commodities:
Rice and beans

Main P4P activities:

- Direct contracting
- Capacity development

Funding:
P4P Liberia has been supported by the Howard G. Buffett Foundation, USAID, the Government of Saudi Arabia and Irish AID. Food purchases are financed mainly through WFP's regular operations. P4P in Liberia is currently funded until September 2014. Additional funding is urgently required.

Figures as of March 2014

P4P in Liberia

In Liberia, P4P addresses constraints along the value chain, including production, post-harvest handling, marketing and quality control. WFP works in partnership with the government, NGOs and other UN agencies, linking its purchasing activities to a capacity development programme focused on increasing smallholders' market competitiveness and productivity. These activities help prepare Liberian smallholders for expansion to markets beyond WFP. The project also supports the active participation of women farmers, assisting them to benefit economically from their work, gaining confidence and voice in their communities and homes.

Background

Despite steady improvements in agricultural production in recent years, Liberia remains a food-deficit country and depends heavily on international imports. Farmers' organizations (FOs) and their members are in the process of rebuilding infrastructure after years of civil war, which means that they have limited storage, processing and marketing capacity. While 70 percent of the population relies on the agricultural sector for their livelihood, this lack of infrastructure makes it difficult for farmers to access major regional markets, and policies implemented by the Liberian government favour imports. This system disadvantages local producers and discourages surplus production. In addition, cooperatives do not have access to the financial services needed to effectively manage the agricultural value chain. The majority of smallholder farmers in Liberia are women.

Learning and sharing

P4P has emphasized an honest and transparent examination of what works and does not. After five years of testing various approaches on the ground, the pilot is currently being evaluated. Key lessons are being compiled and will be shared widely.

Achievements

- **Procurement:** In Liberia, P4P has evolved from just two FOs in 2009, to 26 in 2013. In 2013 the default rate for FOs selling to WFP was just 1.7 percent.
- **Training:** All targeted groups have received training in post-harvest processing and agricultural marketing. This has empowered farmers to identify and take advantage of market opportunities. Members of the Dokodan Farmers' Cooperative, for example, recently pooled their funds and purchased a truck for the transport of rice to the market.
- **Infrastructure:** WFP, in partnership with FAO and UNDP, has constructed and rehabilitated 14 warehouses, and provided 19 rice mills and accessories to participating FOs.
- **Gender:** Over 1,200 women have been trained in parboiling, post-harvest handling and financial management. To maximise the impact of capacity development programmes, women are also taught to train other women. Many of those who have received this training secured formal employment with agricultural cooperatives as a result. Six new women's groups joined the programme in 2013.



World Food Programme

For more information
wfp.p4p@wfp.org

Last update: August 2014



Fatu Namieh Nyen, respectfully known as Ma Fatu, led the Gbonkuma Rural Women Association (GRWA) to become a P4P producer in October 2012, writing a formal letter of request to participate in the programme. After being awarded a contract to supply 45 mt of paddy rice in November 2012, the group has earned US\$ 10,000 from paddy sales to WFP alone. In addition, a new rice milling machine and better storage and drying facilities have enabled the group to mill their own rice, increasing income and reducing post-harvest losses.

"Since P4P, we have to work together to sell our rice...P4P is not just helping us earn money; it is bringing us peace we have not had. It is rebuilding trust and community. This is what P4P is to me."

KEY PARTNERS

- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
- Ministry of Agriculture (MoA)
- Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs
- UNDP
- UNICEF
- UNMIL
- USAID
- World Bank

Challenges

- **Logistics:** In Liberia, P4P continues to endure unique logistical challenges, including a precarious road network and rainfall patterns that make it difficult for trucks to adhere to farmers' schedules.
- **Crop quality:** Commodities must be inspected by independent superintendents to ensure that quality standards are met. This is not always financially feasible for organizations aggregating low quantities of food, and farmers often compromise cereal quality to fill bags. Additional capacity development activities are needed to emphasize the importance of quality standards for procurement.
- **Funding:** Funding shortfalls for food procurement in WFP's regular programme serves as a disincentive for farmers to produce surplus, as the programme is unable to purchase all of it.

Partnerships

P4P in Liberia is implemented within the broader framework of the government and the UN Joint Programme on Food Security and Nutrition. FAO, UNDP, UNICEF, UNMIL, WFP and the World Bank are key participating agencies that facilitated the initial project implementation. The project is currently carried out in close partnership with NGOs as well as the Ministries of Agriculture (especially the Cooperative Development Agency), Gender and Development and Planning and Economic Affairs. These partners have brought their expertise and resources to the programme, assisting with the provision of technical support for farmers, storage facility management, training for women's groups, government capacity development and infrastructure building activities.



Read more about

[WFP in Liberia](#)

[Building relationships and growing businesses](#)

[Women growing both confidence and rice](#)

WFP ACTIVITIES IN LIBERIA

WFP works closely with the Government of Liberia to establish a sustainable national school meals programme as well as government-managed food security and nutrition monitoring programmes. Since 2010, WFP has been distributing locally-produced rice through P4P as part of a take-home ration programme for girls. This year, more than half of the take-home rations came from locally produced rice procured under P4P. Other Livelihood Asset Promotion activities, carried out under a Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation and Country Programme in Liberia, have also been integrated into P4P work, including Community Grain Reserves and lowland rehabilitation projects.