

## WORLD BANK COMPLETES ITS 2014 SUPPORT MISSION TO LIBERIA

*Labels the West Africa Agricultural Productivity Program (WAAPP) Liberia as Significant Improvement*

*By Elvis H. Sirleaf*



Partial View of the Participants of the World Bank Support Mission to Liberia

The World Bank has completed its support mission to the country, assessing the WAAPP Liberia project at the Ministry of Agriculture. The Team was led by the sitting Senior Agriculture Specialist at the Bank's Monrovia office Dr. Abimbola A. Adubi, and comprised of several key Bank staff.

According to Dr. Adubi, the bank was impressed with the level of work being done by the Project Implementation Unit (PIU) and the Ministry, even in the midst of the current Ebola outbreak in the region.

The World Bank's Executive named the over 64, 200 beneficiaries of which 63 percent are females, the 25,900 hectares of rice and 12,100 hectares of cassava cultivated under the WAAPP project, 270 Metric Tons

of improved seeds produced and distributed to more than 46,500 farmers, the 10 years Strategic Plan of the Central Agricultural Research Institute (CARI) already developed and printed, and Master Plan underway, the adoption of the ECOWAS Protocols and regulations on seeds and pesticides, and several other key achievements as milestones that have boosted the rating of the project and country.



**Dr. Abimbola A. Adubi**  
World Bank Co Task Team Leader

Dr. Adubi noted that since the last Mission in April of this year, the project has also made significant strides in its disbursement rate that is now at 86% and 72% for IDA and PHRD respectively.

He said in the midst of all these successes, the Bank was however concerned about the potential shortage of seeds in the country, and called on the Ministry to consider purchasing both up and low land seeds to meet the potential gap when the time comes.

Dr. Adubi named the inclusion of Maize or corn, the acceleration of the CARI Master Plan and a push for the autonomy of CARI by the Liberian Legislature among others, as key issues the Bank hopes to see the Ministry fast-track and achieve in the soonest possible time.

He also disclosed that the World Bank has plans to disburse about \$20 Million dollars to Liberia, which will be channeled through the current WAAPP intervention. But was quick to point out that the Ministry will have to convince the Government of Liberia and the Bank of the need for the funds and how such funding will positively impact the food security of the country before it can be disbursed. He recommended a clear investment plan covering seeds purchase, grants to local farmers and others as ways the funding can be wisely used when disbursed.

Dr. Charles McClain who represented Agriculture Minister Dr. Florence Chenoweth pointed out the Ministry's commitment to making Liberia food secure. He said, even in the midst of the Ebola outbreak in the country, the ministry was still engaged in farming activities. He lauded the brave farmers and extension workers who have continued to work in the fields and produce more food and farming materials.

According to the Deputy Minister for Planning and Development, Minister Chenoweth who was on official duties outside the country had



**Dr. Charles N. McClain**  
Deputy Minister, Agriculture

asked him to re-echo the Government's appreciation for having external interventions like the WAAPP project by world bodies and organizations like the Bank, that are geared towards improving the lives of the people of Liberia.



**William Marshall Presenting on Behalf of WHH**

The Support and Supervision Mission which was held from November 3 – 7 is conducted biannually by the World Bank to assess activities that are being implemented in various West African countries currently participating in the WAAPP Project. The mission also witnessed presentations from various implementation partners that are leading the process at the county level. ADRA, SAMJAC, WHH AEDE, CHAP and OXFAM are among those who made

presentations. Unlike other visits, the mission was unable to travel to project counties because of the current stay order on several activities in a drive to curtail the spread of the Ebola virus. Thus, most of the activities were held in the conference rooms of the Program Management Unit in Fendell and the Ministry of Agriculture in Gardnersville.