



# Republic of Liberia Ministry of Agriculture

## COVID-19 FOOD SECURITY RESPONSE SITUATION REPORT #9

Reporting Period:  
June 15-July 11, 2020

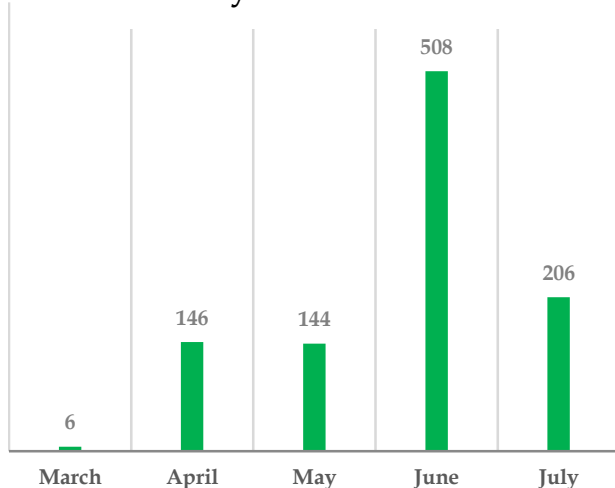
Release Date:  
July 12, 2020

Next Report: July 31, 2020

### Highlights

- Due to rising COVID-19 cases, on June 22, the President of Liberia, His Excellency George Manneh Weah issued a Proclamation to extend Liberia's State of Emergency for additional one month from the previous 60-day period that ended on June 21.
- Accordingly, President Weah reinstated dusk to dawn [18:00 to 06:00] stay-home -to contain the virus spread -which was initially readjusted from sunset to 21:00 hours.
- COVID-19 cases alarmingly increased from June to July which surpassed the previous months' caseloads since the first case was discovered on March 16 this year.
- Rising COVID-19 confirmed cases in a major crop producing Central Liberia create panic among farmers and hindering farming activities.
- Liberian agribusinesses and farms, engaging in COVID-19 lockdown home deliveries of food, complain of transport logistics challenges.
- Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) makes significant progress in the procurement circle of basic agro equipment, inputs and seeds covered under its World Bank's funded Contingency Emergency Response Component (CERC) to mitigate food security shocks.
- The Government of Liberia (GOL) introduces and enforces compulsory nose masks wearing with key messages: "NO MASK, NO RIDE" for public transport systems; and "NO MASK, NO ENTRY, NO SERVICE" for commercial centers.
- In order to ensure availability and affordability of masks, the GOL now funds the national umbrella group of tailors to produce one million fabric masks.
- With strict adherence to COVID-19 protocols, Liberia's main international airport reopened on June 29 with the arrival of Brussels Airlines from Europe while on the

### Monthly Cases Statistics



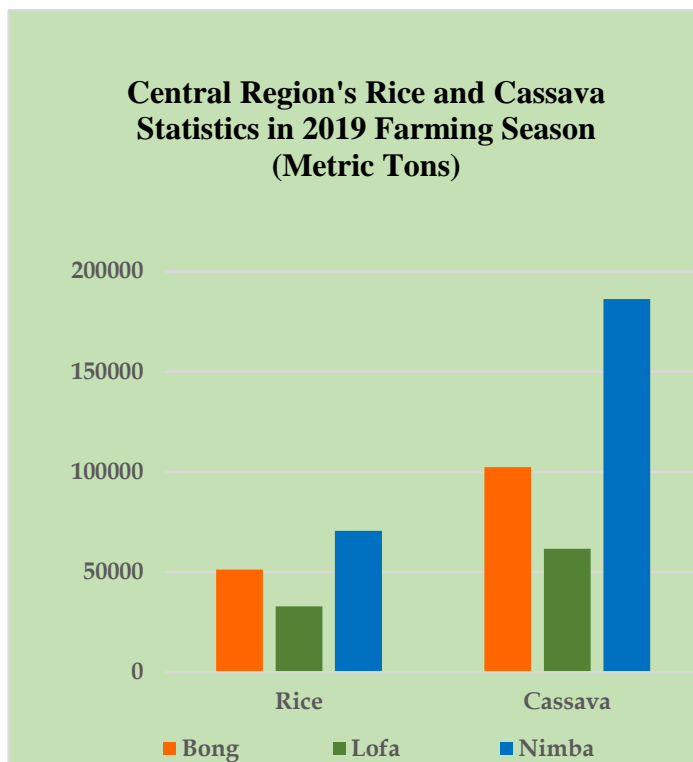
### Total Cases Statistics as at July 11

|                 |              |
|-----------------|--------------|
| <b>1010</b>     | <b>536</b>   |
| Confirmed Cases | Active Cases |
| <b>423</b>      | <b>51</b>    |
| Recovered       | Dead         |

same day, final-year secondary schools' students returned to classes to prepare for their exit examinations.

## Situation Overview

- The farming population in Central Region, not a political map demarcation, but an agricultural zone for intervention purposes, is at high risk due to increasing cases there. The region comprising Bong, Lofa and Nimba Counties produces the highest quantities of Liberia's staple food, rice.
- Fifty-four percent of Liberia's 1.2 million farmers are from that region.
- Farming activities are slowed in that region because of the increasing case loads.
- As from the last report issued on June 15, the cases in Bong County went up from six to 34, while Nimba County climbed from 12 to 45 cases.



- Thirty positive cases are confirmed in Lofa. During the last report, this food basket's cases were only four.
- Nimba is the highest producer of rice in the three-county Central Region with total metric ton of 70,604; while Bong is second with 51,242 metric tons, according to data from the MoA's Statistics Division.
- Cumulatively, Bong, Lofa and Nimba's total rice production constitutes 27.9% of Liberia's 552,880 metric ton rice output. The three counties are noted for high cassava outputs also.
- In order to prevent shocks on Monrovia's food supplies from that region and avoid low farming outputs, the MoA's Agriculture Coordinators there have been meeting with farmers to sensitize them on COVID 19 prevention measures and motivate them to do their farming.
- Farming groups - locally referred to as Kuu, are being streamlined. A group of 50 is being reduced to five at a time to maintain social distancing.
- The MoA is at 90% completion stage of procuring safety gears and wears for farmers under its multi donor-funded COVID 19 response plans.
- Rich in fishery products, cassava and oil palm, Grand Cape Mount County in the Western Region along the Sierra Leonean border, is the newest county hit

by COVID-19. Thus making 13 out of 15 Liberian counties having COVID 19 cases.

- Maryland and River Gee counties, in the heavily forested southeastern Liberia, noted for oil plam, rice and cassava productions, are also key places to watch as cases are increasing there.
- From the last report, Maryland and River Gee counties had one case in each. As it stands right now, Maryland now accounts for 17 confirmed cases, River Gee’s COVID 19 cases went up by 27 cases.
- During the reporting period, the Ministerial Coordination Committee on Transport, Logistics and Trade of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) recommended to the Authority of Heads of States and Governments – the highest decision making body -gradual reopening of member states’ borders for movements of essential supplies.



## Food Security

### *Agribusinesses*

- Resilient Liberian private farms owners identify two main hindrances to deliveries of food crops from farm to markets.
- Lack of structured nationally approved pricing system for crops and transportation. They are mostly constrained to use their private vehicles to serve food products during this COVID-19 pandemic.
- Agribusinesses unanimously agree that cost of transportation during home deliveries is high and adversely impacting their capacities to produce food items.
- In spite of those two cardinal constraints hampering their outputs, private farms are making more strides in ensuring food supplies during this pandemic.
- Makona River Farms in Lofa County near the triangular borderline among Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone; the Liberia Agriculture Incorporated in Nimba; Sumo Farms, Matameth Farms and Passion Farms in Bong County and the newly opened Logan Farms in Todee, Montserrado County, report progress in land clearing and preparations, planting and harvesting.

### *Poultry*

- Passion Farms says its poultry business is impacted by COVID-19 as equipment needed to expand production are being delayed in China.
- The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in its project with the GOL titled: “**Enhance Animal Feed Production through Maize Production in Liberia**” conducted distribution during the reporting period, the agency handed over 1, 500 kg of maize seeds to five communities in Nimba who are planting maize on 59.2 hectares.
- Moreover, FAO supplied seven communities in Bong, with a collective farm size of 137 hectares, were supplied 2,975 kilograms of maize seeds.

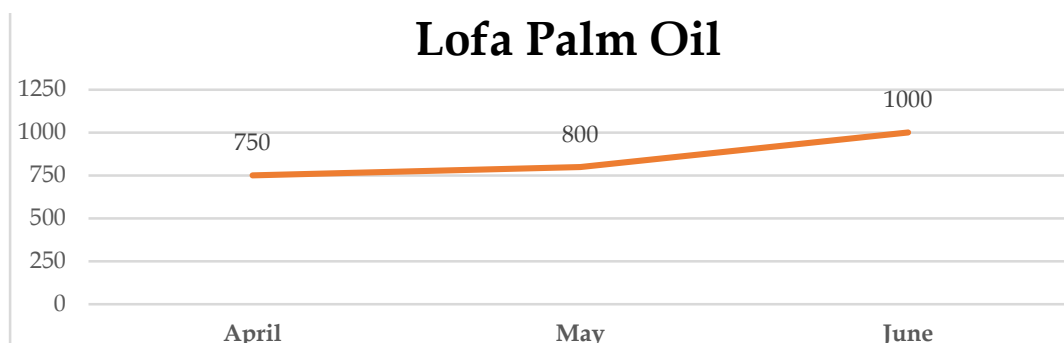
### *Rice*

- The Regional Agriculture Officer for Central Liberia, who has been spearheading the registration of farmers with surplus seed rice, reports that 69 metric ton of seed rice are available in Bong County, but no buyers. Farmers

fears that their paddy rice risk destruction. Similar registrations are still on going for farmers in Lofa and Nimba Counties.

### Food Prices

- Food prices are very stable in all parts of the country as monitored during the reporting period except for oil palm which continues to climb in Lofa County. However, Grand Bassa and Grand Kru Counties have the lowest price per gallon which is sold for LD\$450



- ZOA, in its food prices monitoring, reports, “there has been a noticeable increase in the monitored price of gari in several locations” especially in Barclayville (Grand Kru), Gbarnga [Bong], Greenville [Sinoe], Kakata [Margibi], Sinje [Grand Cape Mount] and Tubmanburg [Bomi]

### RESPONSE:

- **The MoA will update and harmonize agriculture products pricing scheme, to support farmers getting fair market values of their crops.**
- **During the reporting period, the MoA handed over power tiller to Makona Farms to enhance its production capacity.**



## Livelihood

- Following months of suspension, Liberia’s largest and oldest foreign-owned rubber plantation, Firestone, say it will start purchase of rubber on July 15 from smallholders’ who have been depending on the company’s purchases for years. The company limits the quantities to only 1.75 million dry lbs. (1,323 wet tons) for July.
- Solidaridad, an international NGO with support from the European Union now conducts an Alternative Livelihood Scheme for smallholder farmers in the oil palm and cocoa sector as an income generation means for them as the coronavirus pandemic continues to negatively affect their tree crops activities. The scheme now benefits over 230 smallholder farmers who have now harvested pepper, bitter balls, watermelon, cucumber, corn, cassava, groundnuts, cabbage, beans, and okra among others.
- On Friday, June 26, the International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD)’s funded Tree Crops Expansion Project (TCEP) under the MoA concluded a technical working session in the northern Liberian town of Voinjama, the main city in Lofa County near the Guinean and Sierra Leonean borders to expand intervention programs and synergies with stakeholders for improvement of cocoa farming and farmers.



























### RESPONSE

- **The TCEP’s project core mission is to “increase income and improve the livelihoods of poor rural households engaged in cocoa farming and to**

improve incomes and climate resilience of smallholder cocoa producers in Lofa County". About 15,000 households will benefit directly from the project of which 10,000 will be from the cocoa smallholder farmers and 5,000 farming households will also benefit from roads, input supplies, market linkages and positive spillover effects along the value chain. It will be implemented in the seven districts in Lofa County over a six-year period.



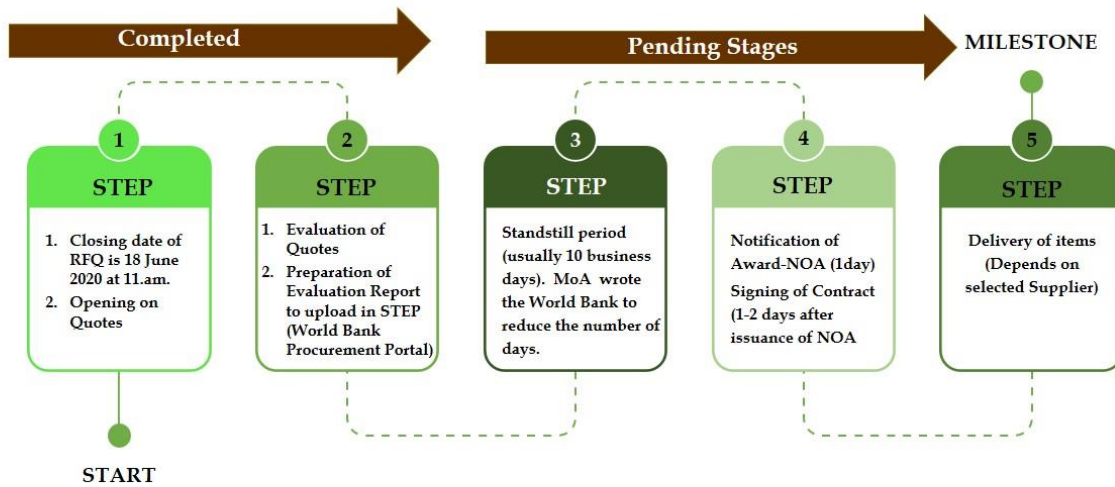
## Farming Support Services

|   | AGRIBUSINESSES DOING COVID-19 HOMES DELIVERIES  |   |   |  |  |
|---|---|---|---|--|--|
|   | Food Crops<br> | Vegetables<br> | Refined Oil<br> | Poultry<br> | Juice<br> |
| Sumo Farms<br>0777959359<br>0555372955                  |                |                |                 |  |           |
| Passion Farms<br>0777718016<br>0776732612               |                |                |                 |             |  |
| FEED Organics<br>0880555551                             |              |              |   |  |  |
| Matameth Farms<br>0770033000<br>0775517097              |              |              |   |           |  |
| Liberia<br>Agriculture Inc.<br>0777959230               |              |              |   |  |  |
| Evergreen<br>Natural Juices<br>0776057946<br>0770601030 |              |   |   |  |         |
| Logan Farms<br>0886510991                               |              |              |   |  |  |
| E.H.G Aago Oil<br>0777515198                            |   |   |               |  |  |
| Agro Money Farm<br>0776433289                           |   |   |   |           |  |



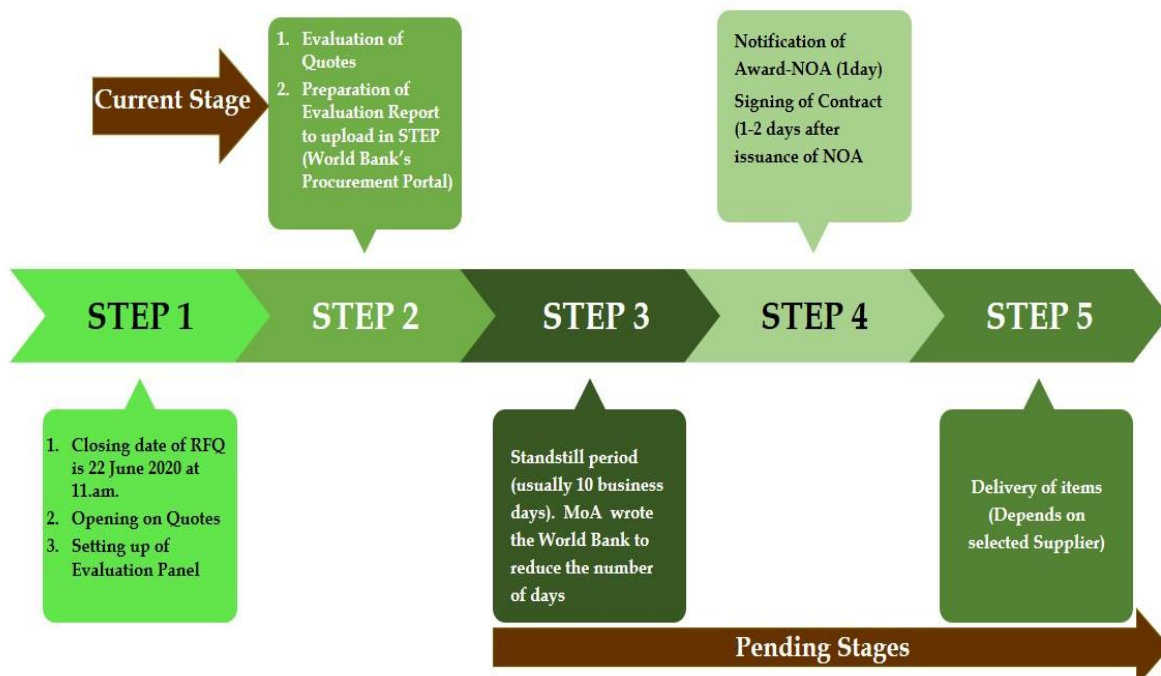
## STAGES OF THE PROCUREMENT PROCESSES ON THE PURCHASE OF PRODUCTION INPUTS

Fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides, compost, mulch etc. The equipment and items will be distributed free to farmers



## STAGES OF THE PROCUREMENT PROCESSES ON THE PURCHASE OF AGRO PROCESSING EQUIPMENT

They are meant to support post-harvest handling/losses [threshing, windowing, drying, de-stoning, seed-sorting and bagging]. Tractors and power tillers as well. The equipment and items will be distributed free to farmers



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