## Recommendations

1. Hold national dialogue on CSA technologies.
2. Develop CSA policy document.
3. Mobilize financial support (i.e. through public-private-partnership) to scale up CSA technologies dissemination and adoption.
4. Institutionalize CSA.

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# CLIMATE-SMART AGRICULTURE STAKEHOLDERS DIALOGUE HELD IN THREE REGIONS IN LIBERIA

# POLICY BRIEF

## Executive Summary

Liberia regional Climate – Smart Agriculture (CSA) Stakeholders Dialogue is the third of the four (4) key activities of the African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (AFAAS) approved and financing project, titled "Scaling up Climate-Smart Agriculture in Liberia Agricultural Extension and Advisory Service (AEAS) Delivery System for Increase Farmers' access and Adoption Rate".

The main aim of the project third activity "Hold regional CSA stakeholders' dialogue to provide feedback and devise strategies for effective CSA dissemination and adoption" was to listen to wide range of views from some stakeholders acting as AEAS service providers disseminating CSA technologies and farmers who received the technologies and adopt them. They were stakeholders who participated and provided data collected on CSA technologies dissemination and adoption during the survey. Mainly, the dialogue was to confirm and ascertain level of CSA technologies disseminated, adopted and in practice in Liberia and assess the need to further enhance CSA technologies dissemination and adoption, as one of the means of diversifying the country contributions to the African continent fight against climate change phenomena, events and impacts for increase in agriculture productivity leading to food security and nutrition quality as well as poverty reduction.

The activity was implemented using participatory approach and stakeholders were selected based on convenient - that they participated in the survey. Further, the theme of the activity was developed along with four (4) subthemes for discussions by stakeholders as a mean of hearing views on feedback. Three (3) panelists were selected to discuss the activity theme. During the dialogue, participants were divided into four (4) groups for each group to discuss one of the subthemes in session. In group sessions, subthemes were discussed, consensus reached and agreed upon items presented to plenary.

## Implications and Recommendations

### Implications

Results gathered from the dialogue suggest the promotion and further spread of CSA awareness, knowledge, innovations and technologies selected, packaged into AEAS content, and disseminated by service providers as well as adopted by project beneficiary farmers and in use in the country. When CSA technologies are further spread to larger segment of the farm families, the farming system will start experiencing increase in yield of farm enterprises, the systems will be resilient to climate change phenomena, events and impacts as well as Greenhouse Gas emissions will be reduced.

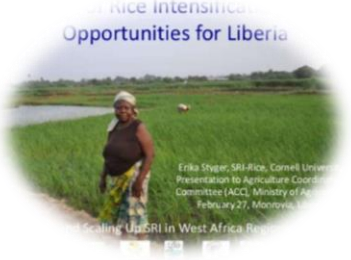
Over the past few decades, various farming models have proven globally that promoting further spread of CSA technologies effective and efficient delivery and adoption over larger segment of the farming population in a country would shift the farming systems to a more productive and resilient system that will support sustainable management and efficient use of the land, water, soil nutrients and genetic resources as well as farming inputs.

The process to scale up the dissemination and adoption of CSA technologies and innovations requires mobilization of technical and financial support to bring into being CSA policy, financing mechanisms to scale up the technologies dissemination and adoption, risk management schemes and institutional development.

The disseminated and adopted CSA technologies captured from the dialogue include:

1. Improved cassava varieties planting and processing into final products like flour, fufu, gari, etc.
2. Sourcing and use of NERICA series as planting materials for rice production during the wet and dry seasons.
3. Agroforestry; planting of tree crops such as oil palm, cocoa and rubber.
4. Production of vegetable crops using compost, manure and mulching.
5. Practicing System of Rice Intensification (SRI).
6. Intercropping and crop rotation.

**Conclusion:** Presently, in Liberia the level of CSA awareness, knowledge, innovations and technologies is very low. Only very few service providers mainly project-based are disseminating limited reported CSA technologies and equally few project beneficiary farmers have adopted them. Therefore, the need to scale up the technologies dissemination and adoption.






Plenary presentations confirmed that limited number of CSA technologies have been disseminated and adopted by some service providers and initiative beneficiary farmers in Liberia. CSA technologies in practice as confirmed by participants in plenary include; Conservation Agriculture (i.e. mulching, manure and compost application, minimal tillage), Agroforestry (i.e. tree crops planting like oil palm, cocoa and rubber). Others are; planting of improved varieties of cassava and rice.

## Introduction

Liberia is seated on an estimated total land space of 9.8 million hectares (ha) along the West Coast of the African Continent and is one of the sub-Saharan Countries. Out of its total land area, 4.02 million hectares (ha) is in use as farmland supporting cultivation of food and cash crops, rearing of livestock and farming of fish. Naturally, 600,000 hectares (ha) of the available farmland is endorsed as lowland giving the country the potential to diversify its farming systems.

The country depends largely on farming for food, feed, and fiber production, provision of livelihood for majority of the country population. Agriculture also generates foreign exchange and contributes to real GDP. However, agriculture productivity continues to remain low in the face of many investment efforts of national government and its development partners. This low productivity situation may be partly due to degraded soil, low inputs, weak agricultural extension services, climate change phenomena, events and impacts as well as lack of resources to support the country ability to implement adaptation and mitigation measures.

Among these factors, climate change poses the most difficult challenges to increase in agriculture productivity. Climate change phenomena and events like intensive prolonged rainfall pattern, flooding and frequency in the outbreak of pests have resulted in reduced crop yield, pre-matured fruit drop, crop flower abortion, etc.

To address these challenges, posed by climate change events and impacts, the African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Service (AFAAS) seeks and sourced funding and now financing climate – smart agriculture technologies project across the African continent including the Liberia project titled "Scaling up Climate-Smart Agriculture in Liberia Agricultural Extension and Advisory Service (AEAS) Delivery System for Increase Farmers' access and Adoption Rate". The project contains four (4) key activities which LIFAAS has completed the implementation of two (2). The third activity "Hold regional CSA stakeholders' dialogue to provide survey feedback and devise strategies for effective CSA dissemination and adoption" now concluded, and one of the expected outputs is this policy brief.

## Approaches and Results/Findings

### The Approaches

Liberia CSA stakeholders' dialogues were held in three regions (Tubmanburg, Gbarnga, and Buchanan). Stakeholders were drawn from AEAS providers acting in these regions, individual farmers and farmer cooperatives representatives, INGOs, local NGOs, MOA extension field staff, youth and women groups, Cooperative Development Agency (CDA), Ministry of Internal Affairs, and LIFAAS staff. About 75 participants from the three regions were invited, attended and participated in the dialogue activities, some of whom were selected and served as panelists and others were placed in groups. The dialogue gathered feedback on previously conducted survey from invited stakeholders through panel and group discussions of theme and subthemes respectively.

Participants were divided into four (4) groups and a subtheme was discussed by each group. Groups presented their agreed upon views on feedback in plenary.

Subthemes that were discussed, elaborated on and presented in plenary were:

1. Some CSA technologies adopted/practice in the regions.
2. Barriers for adopting available technologies.
3. Benefits of using CSA practices on farms.
4. CSA technologies/practices useful for climate change.

### Results/Findings

Climate change has exacerbated threats to increase agriculture productivity. This has led to undermining food security and nutrition as well as poverty reduction in Liberia and other parts of the world. It also influences reduction of shared wealth. However, to sustainably address challenges pose by climate change, a more productive and resilient farming system that is capable to transform present day farm management practices into sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources like land, water, soil nutrients and genetic resources as well as farming inputs is required. Shifting to a farming system that could also generate meaningful mitigation benefits by increasing carbon sinks and sequestering soil carbon as well as reducing emissions per unit of agricultural product seems appropriate. This farming system is considered Climate – Smart Agriculture (CSA). Enhancing smallholder farming systems to CSA is important for achieving food security, poverty reduction, aggregate growth, structural change and sustainable management of natural resources.

Views from stakeholders gathered through panel discussions and presentations to plenary by groups on consensus reached on subthemes discussed showed that the below listed CSA technologies have been introduced and disseminated by AEAS providers and adopted by beneficiary farmers acting in Liberia.