

**Liberia  
East Nimba Nature Reserve**

**News from the Field**

**January 2015  
Conservation International**

**Fiscal Quarter Activities**

While Liberia's health emergency has continued to hamper field operations in our target communities, we have continued to make significant impact in improving local livelihoods and protecting biodiversity. Funding from DAIKIN Industries to CI Liberia during the last quarter has enabled us to:

- a. Sustain its engagement with local communities on conservation agreements,
- b. Continue its public awareness and education activities for biodiversity conservation through its "eat some, leave some" campaign and against the spread of Ebola.
- c. Contribute to forests management and governance through the development of the ENNR management action plan.
- d. Continue, in collaboration with local partners, to improve farming practices through conservation agricultural programs currently being implemented in five-pilot sites around the ENNR to drive the concept of sustainable forest and resource management.

We have intensified our community work to highlight the links between consumption of wildlife products and the spread of Ebola and achieved this by providing awareness materials and supporting good hygiene practices in a number of communities located around East Nimba Nature Reserve.



CI worked with the Forestry Development Authority (FDA) and partners to develop an action plan for the implementation of the East Nimba Nature Reserve management plan. The one-week exercise in Sanniquellie, Nimba County brought together several stakeholders from civil society,

the private sector, and donor organizations to brainstorm on mechanisms for the implementation of the action plan. During the period of consultation, CI staff and partners were able to make significant inputs to the ENNR Action Plan through the representation of our local community liaisons, who worked with staff in Monrovia to develop responses and inputs to the management action plan. We expect that with the control of the Ebola Virus Disease epidemic, field activities will resume to implement key actions from the plan that will lead to the development of new local livelihood opportunities to strengthen conservation stewardship in and around the nature reserve.



## **Ebola and Our Activities**

The emergency situation created by the spread of the Ebola virus has affected our activities in the area. The virus prevented us from entering the area for about six months. Due to this, some community members and partners questioned our desire to carry out the activities. But over the past several months we have come to believe that visiting the area is possible and that we can help improve the situation.

Since October 2014, the Liberian government, with assistance from several donor partners, has increased its support to the health sector to control the spread of the deadly Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) that has ravaged the country. While Liberia has not been declared Ebola free by the Ministry of Health (MOH) and the World Health Organization (WHO), CI has always believed in early preparation to achieve results. It is against this background that we, along with our partners, are currently reviewing our work plans, developing strategies for reengagement with stakeholders, and developing project tools as well as new protocols for Ebola prevention. This process has involved several working sessions with our local partners convened here in our offices. We anticipate in the coming weeks to commence reengagement with partners and communities in the field.

## **Challenges**

With the recent appointment of new political leadership in Nimba, there is a need to build new support for this project with newly elected officials. The current Ebola outbreak has prevented us from directly engaging with the leadership except via telephone. We have developed a response mechanism to adjust to these changes and continue to pursue its work in Nimba.

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