

Liberia
East Nimba Nature Reserve Forest Conservation Project
News from the Field (July 2021–June 2022)

August 2022
Conservation International



Project Monitoring

The CI Liberia Country Director and Technical Director conducted a field monitoring visit, where meetings were held with the two beneficiary communities (Yolowee and Gbobayee) to assess the results and sustainability of the project interventions.



Community meeting in Gbobayee (left), community meeting in Yolowe (right)
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Livelihood Improvement Activities (Pig Farming)

The two local communities decided to undertake piggery at the individual level and not as a group as was the case in the past. This is due to the shortage of food and medicines that led to the death of some of the pigs. As a result, there are currently 20 pigs (2 sows and 18 piglets) being reared on a free-range system. In the last fiscal year, two pigs were slaughtered and eaten by the local community and one pig sold for about 27,000 LRD. This money was used to fund the construction of a two-room house for teachers of Gbobayee Public School.



Sows and piglets in Yolowee ©CI Liberia/Photo by Jerome Bessman

Livelihood Improvement Activities (Vegetable Cultivation)

Local community members are still growing vegetables, increasing with the number of varieties in recent years to include red pepper, watermelon, bitter ball, and cucumber. In addition, paw paws, cassava, and sweet potato vines were planted to feed the pigs, and some were used for home consumption. These vegetables sold for about 18,000 LRD of which 3,500 LRD was spent on the construction of the two-room teacher's house and the balance of 14,500 LRD was deposited in the village savings and loans association.



Interviewing farmers at the vegetable garden (left), community member in a vegetable garden (right)
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Livelihood Improvement Activities (Lowland Rice Cultivation)

Lowland rice cultivation is still ongoing at individual farms. Three bags worth of rice were harvested in Gbobayee last year, of which two bags were sold for 2,300 LRD and one bag divided among the group members. Meanwhile in Yolowee, 20 bags of rice were harvested, of which 10 bags were sold for 15,000 LRD, and 10 bags were shared among the local community members. Currently, rice seedlings are being raised in nursery beds.



Community members at the rice nursery in Yolowee.
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Village Savings and Loans Association (VSLA)

The VSLA (microfinancing scheme launched as part of the project) is now operational and being run by women of the village. Currently, the VSLA has a total of 400,000 LRD

Frontline conservationists

Last year, three frontline conservationists (FCs) were incorporated to the Forestry Development Authority (FDA) as Forest Rangers. Currently, there are 18 FCs (10 in Gbobayee and 8 in Yolowee) who have continued to conduct forest monitoring with the FDA rangers on a pro bono basis. However, during the meeting with the FCs regarding patrolling with FDA, key challenges were brought up including lack of patrol gear, and limited food rations during patrols.

Borehole

The borehole that repaired by the project is still functional.

Gbobayee Public School

We visited Gbobayee Public School, which was renovated through the project. The school is currently functional with about 200 pupils and three teachers.



Public School renovated through assistance extended by the project
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Coordination Meeting with Main Partners

The CI Liberia Country Director also held a meeting with key actors in Nimba landscape including Forestry Development Authority (FDA), Community Forest Management Body, Nimba County Authority, Forest Forum Chair, and Co-Management Committee to coordinate on the support activities.



Meeting with main local partners
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