

Chinese Agro Experts' Efforts Start Bearing Fruits

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Barely a year ago, the Governments of Liberia, China, and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) deployed 24 Chinese agro experts and technicians in Bong, Bomi, and Montserado Counties under the South-South Cooperation (SSC Project). Their mission purpose is to help fill

2. Level land at CARI Duty Station
3. Reclaim wastelands at Klay Station
4. Make grass ashes for potassium at CARI Duty Station
5. High standard demonstration site in CARI."

Positive effects of the Chinese interventions are now being felt among Liberian farming households. For example, Moses

site for hands-on practical skills. Today, Moses and his family have benefitted from the Chinese experts and technicians transfer of skills in nursery preparation, seeds sowing, planting methods, fertilizer application, harvesting among others. In addition, the Chinese team gave Moses and his family improved varieties of watermelon, eggplant, and Chinese pepper seeds. In a short period of time and with the Chinese pepper in



Mr. Moses Queapor, his wife and their four children on their farm near CARI in Bong County

capacity gaps through the transfer of knowledge to Liberian farmers, technicians, and extension workers.

Li Zhi, SSC Project Coordinator said: "We have attracted more than 500 local technicians and farmers to our vegetable gardens for visiting and learning. We have 38 national agricultural professionals working with us. These people represent the face of a sustainable Liberian agriculture for the future. The Chinese team members have also undertaken the following:

1. Reclaim wastelands in Center Songhai Duty Station

Queapor, his wife and their four children have squatted on approximately 1.5 acres of land near the Central Agriculture Research Institute (CARI) for nearly 17 years. On this land, the 43-year old farmer and his family have grown and survived on cassava, sugarcane, vegetables, corn and other crops. With little or no practical skills, the farmer has over the years grown very little to eat and nothing to sell for extra income.

With the coming of the Chinese experts at CARI, Moses engaged them, and they enthusiastically welcomed the farmer and his family to the demonstration/training

demand, Moses, for the first time, harvested and sold 25 kilograms of pepper from a small and well managed plot thus generating L\$2,040 or US\$28.

Mr. Queapor is anticipating higher yields from the second and subsequent harvests as well as from other crops planted on the lowland area. "I am very happy about the new ideas I have learned from the Chinese. This is just the beginning. I will grow more pepper and vegetables and teach other people do the same," said Mr. Queapor. ■