



INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR IN LIBERIA

**Promoting Economic Diversification and Inclusive Growth
through Agriculture, Agro-processing and Manufacturing**

By

**Dr. Moses M. Zinnah
Minister of Agriculture**

**Presentation at Liberian Private Sector Forum
11th January 2017 – Washington, D,C. USA**

AGRICULTURE AND LIBERIA'S ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

- ▶ In spite of our political and socio-economic differences, there is a consensus that agriculture is the foundation for the transformation of Liberia into a middle income country.
- ▶ Agriculture is the most effective means of reducing poverty and ensuring economic growth and development because the majority of the population depend on agriculture for their livelihoods.
- ▶ Agriculture sector is an untapped investment opportunity in Liberia.
- ▶ Our current strategy is to concentrate investment across commodity value chains from inputs to markets, associated with both staples and other high-value crops (**rice, cocoa, cassava, rubber, oil palm, fisheries, horticulture/vegetable; livestock/poultry**).

Our Current Execution Strategy

- 1. Concentrate investment on major value chains** (all economic activity, from inputs to markets, associated with both staples and other high-value crops that could accelerate GDP growth while raising income for smallholder farmers.
- 2. Promote close collaboration between the Government and the private sector** to ensure gradual export growth in an otherwise slow-growth agricultural sector.

3. Know our customers (*initiated and ongoing*)

- Provide information to potential investors (*this forum*)
- E-Registration of all farmers in the 15 counties of Liberia to create a database
- Nearly 300,000 farmers already registered.

4. Make access to finance easy

- Cost-sharing mechanism for agro-inputs (*initiated and ongoing*)
- Set up a holistic de-risking mechanism for commercial lending, including credit guarantee, technical support, insurance, bank incentive mechanism, bank rating, co-financing and grants to SMEs (*initiated and being planned*)
- Promote finance leasing and micro-finance institutions (*regulations adopted, some investors operating*)
- Attract and incentivize value chain investors (*incentives available*)
- Implement warehouse receipt system (*proposal under review*)

5. Reform the policy environment (*initiated and ongoing*)

- Liberia Agricultural Commodity Regulation Agency (*Act adopted*)
- Seeds, Fertilizers and Pesticides Act (*in process*)
- Land Rights Act (*being debated by Legislators*)
- Specific regulations and taxation regime per value chain (*in process*)

6. Promote private sector investment

- Fast-track investment proposals for LATA through strong Governmental leadership and coordination (*Presidential Task Force ongoing*)
- Set up a special scheme for incentives and business development support for Signature Investors at critical stages of the value chain (*in process*)
- Duty-free access for essential equipment, seeds, goods for agricultural development (*Executive Order 81 in place*)
- Targeted investment promotion and development of export markets (*ongoing*)

7. Doing business differently as a Government

- Redefining the role of the Ministry of Agriculture as a business enabler for strong private sector participation; government not an implementer (*institutional reforms adopted*)
- Provide clear strategic direction and targets (*LATA programming in process*)
- Strengthen coordination and collaboration across Government agencies to ensure objectives are met (*Task Force, Sector Working Groups ongoing*)
- Strengthen partnerships with all key stakeholders (*Public-Private, Government – Donor, Government - NGO mechanisms set up*)
- Increasing access to information and transparency (*online communication will be strengthened*)

We are looking for investors across value chains:

- ▶ **Rice production and processing** – Profitable investment opportunities for rice exist in the needs for certified seeds and inputs, transportation and aggregation, post-harvest handling and storage, and financing;
- ▶
- ▶ **Cassava production and processing** – Cassava are well-adapted to growing conditions in Liberia, quite resilient to pests; it can be processed into over 2 dozens products for the market (Gari, High Quality Flour, Glue, Starches, Industrial Alcohol, etc.).

- ▶ **Cocoa production and processing** – Cocoa is one of the best chances for investors to diversify incomes and access a world market with strong and growing demand; Export demand for cocoa is surging because of increasing consumption world-wide; world-wide supply shortages are expected to grow over the coming years – signaling another opportunity for investment in Liberia’s agriculture sector.
- ▶ **Horticulture production and processing** – market prices for many vegetables, including chili peppers, tomatoes, ‘bitter ball,’ eggplant, okra, and cabbage, are very profitable – two to five times higher during the rainy season.

- ▶ **Oil palm production and processing** – (e.g. palm kernel oil and cake is a value-adding agro-processing opportunity in Liberia that can be carried out profitably on various scales. By using palm kernels, oil palm producers will have another cash generating product to sell, and the oil extraction process produces a much-needed, low-cost livestock and fish feed ingredients;
- ▶ **Rubber downstream products** – Rubberwood, Ribbed Smoke Sheet and other downstream products.

- ▶ **Fisheries** – both (a) ***Aquaculture*** – inland fish ponds, especially of *Tilapia* species and catfish, represents an opportunity to produce low-cost, high-value protein and (b) ***Marine***.
- ▶ **Livestock/Poultry production and processing** (small ruminants – *goats and sheep*) and poultry are potential areas for profitable investments.

I wish to encourage fellow Liberians in the diaspora as well as interested investors to take advantage of the untapped opportunities in the agriculture sector this country.

Thank you for your kind attention.

Contact me for additional information and sector profiles

DR. MOSES M. ZINNAH
Minister of Agriculture of Liberia
E-mail: mzinnah@moa.gov.lr
Telephone: +231-886-420-955

Thank You!

**I am available to provide additional information
and sector profiles upon request**

DR. MOSES M. ZINNAH
Minister of Agriculture of Liberia

E-mail: mzinnah@moa.gov.lr

Telephone: +231-886-420-955