



**GROWTH  
ACCELERATOR  
LIBERIA**



# IMPACT EVALUATION REPORT

## GROWTH ACCELERATOR LIBERIA PROGRAMME



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# Executive Summary

The Growth Accelerator Liberia Program (GALP), implemented by iCampus Liberia and Accountability Lab Liberia in partnership with UNDP Liberia and the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MOCI), has demonstrated significant economic and social impact across Liberia.

This comprehensive evaluation, which assessed program performance across three cohorts from 2021-2023 supporting 38 ventures, reveals compelling evidence of GALP's effectiveness in catalyzing enterprise growth, job creation, and sustainable economic development.

## GALP Evaluation Objectives

The GALP Impact Evaluation aimed to provide a comprehensive, evidence-based assessment of the Growth Accelerator Liberia Program's performance and results across its first three cohorts from 2021-2023. The evaluation had five primary objectives:

1. **Assess Program Relevance:** To evaluate how well GALP's design and delivery aligned with the needs of Liberian MSMEs and cooperatives, and with broader national economic development priorities.
2. **Measure Effectiveness:** To quantify GALP's success in achieving its core objectives of increasing commercial viability, revenue generation, and job creation among participating enterprises.
3. **Evaluate Efficiency:** To analyze how effectively GALP utilized program resources (financial, human, technical) in relation to the results achieved.
4. **Examine Broader Impact:** To assess GALP's higher-level and longer-term effects on participating ventures, entrepreneurial ecosystems, and socio-economic development in Liberia, including indirect beneficiaries.
5. **Assess Sustainability:** To determine the likelihood that GALP's positive impacts will be maintained and scaled after the program ends, and to identify pathways for program expansion.

## Methodological Approach

The evaluation employed a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative surveys of program beneficiaries with qualitative interviews of key stakeholders, to triangulate findings across the OECD-DAC criteria of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability. This methodology enabled the study to



not just measure whether GALP achieved its intended outcomes, but also understand how and why these changes occurred, leading to practical recommendations for program enhancement and scaling.

## Program Model and Implementation Approach

GALP employs an integrated support model targeting existing, revenue-generating MSMEs and cooperatives with growth potential. The program's theory of change addresses three critical constraints to MSME growth in Liberia: limited access to finance, underdeveloped business skills, and weak market linkages. Through a nationwide competitive application process, ventures are selected by independent expert judges and receive phased support including intensive business development training, personalized coaching, and co-financing grants averaging \$40,000 per enterprise.

**Figure 1: Cohort 3 Final Pitch and Grants Award Ceremony**



## Key Impact Findings

### Financial Performance

Participating enterprises achieved remarkable revenue growth, with average annual revenue increasing by 201.2% from \$5,796 to \$17,456. MSMEs performed exceptionally well, experiencing a 299.9% increase in annual revenue (from \$8,148 to \$32,584) and a 304.8% increase in sales revenue. Agricultural cooperatives showed a different pattern, with a 32.4% decrease in overall revenue but a 348.2% increase in sales revenue, suggesting a transition toward more market-oriented, sustainable business models.

### Employment Creation

The program generated 158 new jobs across participating organizations, increasing total employment by 14.2% from 1,111 to 1,269 positions. This job creation particularly benefited historically underrepresented groups, with 59% of new hires being youth under 35 years and 35% being women over 35. The relatively modest employment growth compared to revenue increases suggests significant productivity improvements, with enterprises generating substantially more revenue with proportionally smaller workforce expansion.

**Figure 2: BDS Trainer Exhibits Stabel Shoes' Product- BDS Training Activity- Cohort 2, 2022**





## Capacity Development

GALP catalyzed significant organizational strengthening, with 100% of enterprises reporting improvements in leadership structure and governance systems. Key changes included establishing formal departments, implementing financial management systems, developing clear roles and responsibilities, and transitioning to corporate structures. Notably, 72.2% of organizations subsequently provided training to their own employees, creating a multiplier effect that extends GALP's impact beyond direct program participants.

**Figure 3: Business Development Training Activity, Agro Lite Company- Cohort 2, 2022**



## Business Investment

Participants made strategic investments that transformed their operational capabilities. MSMEs invested an average of \$15,000-25,000 primarily in production equipment (40%), technology systems (25%), marketing and branding (20%), and facility expansion (15%). Agricultural cooperatives invested \$8,000-15,000 in farming equipment (45%), storage facilities (30%), processing equipment (15%), and administrative infrastructure (10%). These investments



significantly increased production capacity, product quality, and market competitiveness.

**Figure 4: Impact Study Data Collection Exercise conducted with one the businesses (Grace Diagnostics-Nimba County-Cogort 3)**



## Market Expansion

The median customer base increased by 170.7%, from 75 to 203 customers. Through improved product quality, brand development, and marketing strategies, enterprises successfully expanded their market reach. For example, Green Gold Liberia established sales points in 7 new communities, while Kpatolee Farmers Association increased rice production from 10 to 25 tons annually.

## Indirect Beneficiaries

Beyond the 1,269 individuals directly employed by GALP-supported enterprises, the program has positively impacted an estimated 7,614 indirect beneficiaries. Based on Liberia's average household size of 4.3 persons and accounting for

extended family networks, each direct job supports approximately 6 additional individuals through income sharing, improved household stability, and enhanced community services. These indirect benefits extend to suppliers, market vendors, and service providers in enterprise communities.

## Innovation Catalyzed

GALP has sparked remarkable innovation across participating enterprises. Notable examples include Green Gold Liberia's development of eco-friendly packaging from biodegradable materials, Naz Beauty's creation of skincare products using indigenous Liberian ingredients, and iFarm Liberia's establishment of Liberia's first automated animal feed production facility utilizing locally sourced materials. Additionally, 36% of enterprises adopted digital management systems, while 42% introduced new product lines or services previously unavailable in their markets.

## Stakeholder Perspectives

Ministry of Commerce and Industry views GALP as highly aligned with national economic development objectives and particularly values the program's transparent, competitive selection process as a model that enhances accountability and promotes a merit-based entrepreneurial ecosystem. MOCI is working to mainstream GALP practices into its Small Business Administration.

iCampus Liberia and Accountability Lab Liberia highlight GALP's effectiveness in addressing the unique challenges faced by Liberian entrepreneurs and fostering transformative mindset shifts. Their implementation strategies included establishing clear program frameworks, engaging stakeholders, building capacity, and leveraging partnerships with specialized service providers.

Business Development Service Providers emphasized the importance of their tailored, needs-driven approach in helping enterprises establish operational frameworks, implement financial management tools, clarify their market positioning, and strengthen organizational capacity. They observed significant positive changes in leadership approaches, including increased openness to learning and stronger emphasis on accountability.

## Pathways for Scaling GALP

Based on the evaluation's findings, five strategic pathways for scaling GALP have been identified:

1. Geographic Expansion with Contextual Adaptation: Extending GALP's reach to additional counties in Liberia, particularly Bomi, Margibi, and River Cess counties, with careful adaptation to regional economic

opportunities and cultural dynamics. Bomi County offers significant potential due to its proximity to Monrovia markets and untapped agricultural processing opportunities in palm oil and cassava production. Margibi County presents strong growth prospects with its established rubber sector value chains that could benefit from diversification and value-addition enterprises. River Cess County, despite being historically underserved, shows promising opportunities in sustainable forestry products and fishing value chains that align with GALP's existing expertise in supporting resource-based enterprises. These counties represent strategic expansion targets based on their complementary economic profiles, existing enterprise clusters, and potential for cross-border trade opportunities.

2. **Sectoral Deepening and Value Chain Integration:** Focusing on high-potential-earning sectors including cassava processing, cocoa value-addition, sustainable forestry products, recycled materials manufacturing, and digital services, and developing comprehensive interventions that address constraints across entire value chains. The evaluation identified these sectors based on their strong growth trajectories among GALP participants, significant market opportunities, alignment with national development priorities, and potential for inclusive job creation. Cassava processing and cocoa value-addition showed particularly promising returns on investment among agricultural enterprises, while sustainable forestry products demonstrated export potential. The emerging recycled materials manufacturing sector addresses both environmental and economic objectives, and digital services represent an untapped opportunity for youth entrepreneurship and cross-sectoral support.
3. **Financial Innovation and Capital Mobilization:** Developing more sophisticated financing mechanisms beyond the current grant model, including blended finance approaches and investment readiness programming.
4. **Institutional Anchoring and Public-Private Partnership:** Institutionalizing GALP within Liberian governance structures while maintaining operational flexibility, to ensure long-term sustainability and broader policy influence.
5. **Digital Enhancement and Platform Development:** Leveraging digital technologies to enhance efficiency, reach, and impact through enterprise support platforms, virtual mentorship, and data-driven guidance.



These pathways can be implemented in strategic combination and sequence to maximize impact and sustainability over the short-term (1-2 years), medium-term (2-3 years), and long-term (3-5 years).

## Recommendations for Future Programming

### Immediate Actions (0-6 months)

Develop structured post-program support with quarterly check-ins; establish a dedicated GALP coordination unit within MOCI; standardize coaching frameworks; launch advanced financial management training for MSMEs; and develop specialized agricultural business management support services for cooperatives.

### Medium-Term Actions (6-12 months)

Design MSME-friendly financial products including flexible loans with extended repayment periods (24-36 months) and business asset collateralization options, low-interest working capital facilities tailored to seasonal business cycles, and purchase order financing instruments that allow enterprises to fulfill larger contracts; establish simplified loan application processes; develop investment readiness programs; create digital marketplace platforms; and implement preferential procurement policies.

### Long-Term Strategic Actions (12-24 months)

Review and update the MSME policy framework; develop sector-specific growth strategies; plan technology infrastructure improvements; establish a permanent GALP secretariat; and create sustainable funding mechanisms.

## Conclusion

The evaluation provides compelling evidence that GALP's integrated approach of combining grant funding with intensive business development training and personalized coaching effectively addresses the critical constraints facing Liberian MSMEs and cooperatives. The remarkable revenue growth, meaningful job creation, significant organizational strengthening, and catalyzed innovation demonstrate that the program has fostered sustainable growth trajectories and a more vibrant national entrepreneurial ecosystem.

With appropriate refinements based on lessons learned and strategic scaling pathways, GALP represents a promising model for entrepreneurship development in Liberia that warrants continued investment and expansion. By addressing both enterprise-level capacity and broader ecosystem constraints, the program has demonstrated its potential to contribute significantly to

inclusive economic growth, job creation, and poverty reduction throughout Liberia.



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## Acronyms

Abbreviations	Definitions
BDS	Business Development Services
GALP	Growth Accelerator Liberia Program
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
MOCI	Ministry of Commerce and Industry
MSME	Micro Small and Medium Enterprise
OECD-DAC	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme



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We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the Growth Accelerator Liberia Program (GALP) team, the entrepreneurs and business owners who shared their experiences, UNDP Liberia for financial backing, and iCampus Liberia and Accountability Lab Liberia for technical guidance.

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# 1. Background and Context

The Growth Accelerator Liberia Program (GALP), implemented by Accountability Lab Liberia and iCampus Liberia with funding from UNDP Liberia, aims to catalyze the growth and impact of Liberian micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and agricultural cooperatives.

Through a combination of rigorous business development training, co-financing grants, and tailored mentorship, GALP has supported 38 ventures across three cohorts from 2021-2023 to scale their operations, create jobs, and contribute to sustainable economic development in Liberia.

## 1.1 GALP Model

GALP targets existing, revenue-generating MSMEs and cooperatives with demonstrated potential for growth, job creation, and contribution to wider economic development. The program is open to ventures across sectors, with a particular focus on agribusiness, clean energy, and technology-enabled businesses.

The program's theory of change posits that by addressing key constraints to MSME growth - namely access to finance, business skills, and market linkages - the program can accelerate the commercial viability, revenue generation, and employment impact of these enterprises.

## 1.2 Implementation Approach

GALP is implemented through a partnership between UNDP, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, and iCampus Liberia. Key elements of the model include:

- a. Nationwide competitive application process: Annual public calls for proposals
- b. Independent selection by expert judges: Transparent eligibility criteria and review
- c. Phased support package: Intensive training and mentorship followed by grant funding
- d. Ecosystem development: Strengthening local business development service providers
- e. Hands-on management: Continuous coaching and adaptive program delivery

## 1.3 Evaluation Methodology

### 1.3.1 Evaluation Objectives

This impact evaluation assessed GALP's performance and results across five key criteria:

1. Relevance: Alignment with beneficiary needs and country priorities
2. Effectiveness: Achievement of objectives and factors influencing performance
3. Efficiency: Conversion of program resources into results
4. Impact: Higher-level and longer-term effects on people and systems
5. Sustainability: Continuation of benefits after program completion

### 1.2.2 Research Design

The evaluation employed a mixed-methods approach, combining:

1. Quantitative component: Survey of program beneficiaries
2. Qualitative component: In-depth interviews with key stakeholders

### 1.3.3 Sample Size and Selection

The GALP impact evaluation used a mixed-methods approach with two distinct sampling strategies. For the quantitative component, the study aimed to survey all 38 MSMEs and cooperatives that participated in GALP across three cohorts (2021-2023), but ultimately collected data from 16 organizations (42% response rate), all from Cohort 3 (2023). This comprised an equal distribution of 8 MSMEs and 8 agricultural cooperatives.

For the qualitative component, the study employed purposive sampling to capture diverse stakeholder perspectives, interviewing 14 key informants from six distinct categories. This included 2 representatives from UNDP leadership, 2 from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, 2 from iCampus/Accountability Lab, 4 from business development service providers, 2 from the independent selection committee, and 2 community stakeholders. The achieved sample size fell within the target range of 10-20 key informants, ensuring sufficient data for thematic saturation while remaining logistically feasible.

The mixed-methods design enabled triangulation of findings between quantitative metrics and qualitative insights, strengthening the evaluation's validity despite the limited quantitative sample. The equal representation of MSMEs and cooperatives allowed for meaningful comparative analysis between these distinct enterprise types.



Table 1: Sample Stratification and Sample Size Calculation

Method	Population	Target	Actual
Quantitative Survey	All GALP MSMEs and Cooperatives (2021-2023)	38	16
	Cohort 3 (2023) MSMEs	8	8
	Cohort 3 (2023) Cooperatives	8	8
Qualitative Interviews	Key Informants	10-20	14
	UNDP Leadership & Program staff	2-3	2
	Ministry of Commerce & Industry	2-3	2
	iCampus Liberia/Accountability Lab Liberia	2-3	2
	Business Development Services/Coaches	4-6	4
	Independent Selection Committee	3-4	2
	Community Stakeholders	2-6	2

## 1.2.4 Data Collection and Analysis

The evaluation utilized:

- Structured surveys with Likert scale and open-ended questions
- Semi-structured key informant interviews
- Secondary document review of program records
- Descriptive and inferential statistics
- Thematic content analysis
- Triangulation across data sources

## 2. Findings

### 2.1 MSMEs and Cooperatives (Program Participants)

#### 2.1.1 Organizational Distribution

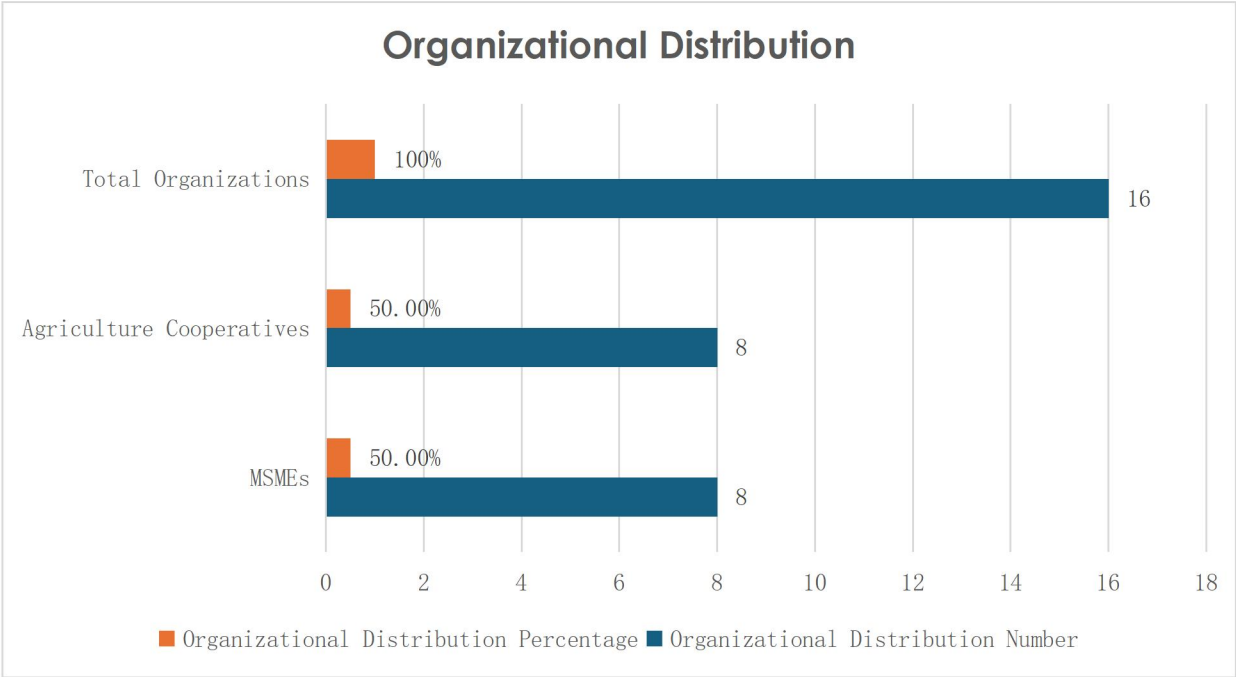
The organizational distribution data shows an even split among the participants in the Growth Accelerator Liberia Program (GALP) impact evaluation study. Out of 16 total organizations surveyed, exactly half (8 organizations, or 50%) were Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), while the other half (8 organizations, or 50%) were Agricultural Cooperatives.

This balanced sample distribution is significant as it provides equal representation of both business types, allowing for fair comparisons between how MSMEs and agricultural cooperatives experienced and benefited from the GALP interventions. The equal representation helps ensure that the evaluation findings reflect the program's impact

across different organizational structures and sectors, rather than being skewed toward either MSMEs or cooperatives.

The balanced nature of this distribution also strengthens the credibility of comparative analyses between these two distinct types of enterprises, particularly when examining differences in how they utilized program resources and the varying outcomes they achieved, as shown in other sections of the report.

Figure 5: Organizational Distribution



### 2.1.2 Financial Impact

The financial impact data reveals a dramatic improvement in the economic performance of organizations participating in the Growth Accelerator Liberia Program (GALP). Before joining the program, the average annual revenue across all participating enterprises was \$5,796. After receiving GALP support, this figure jumped to \$17,456, representing a remarkable 201.2% increase.

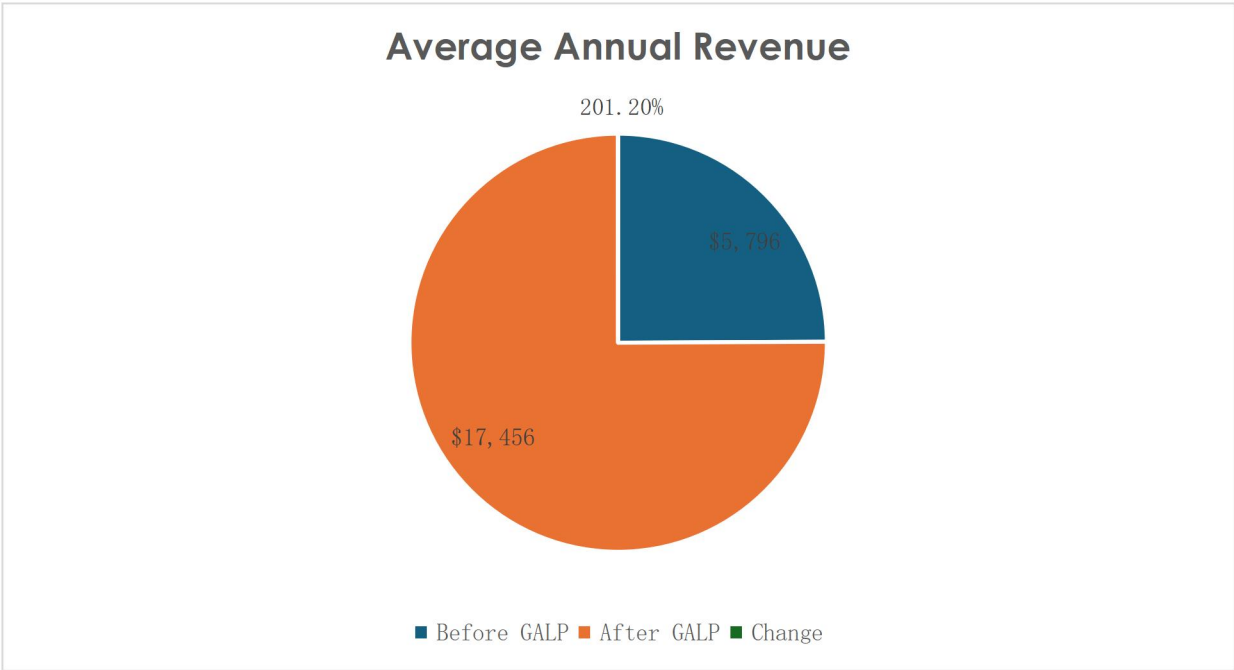
This substantial growth in average annual revenue demonstrates the powerful economic impact of GALP's integrated approach to enterprise development. The more than tripling of revenue suggests that the combination of grant funding (averaging approximately \$40,000 per enterprise), business development training, and personalized coaching effectively addressed critical constraints that had been limiting the growth potential of these Liberian businesses.

This finding is particularly significant when considering the challenging business environment in Liberia, where access to finance, infrastructure limitations, and market constraints often restrict MSME growth. The magnitude of this revenue increase

indicates that GALP's interventions successfully helped enterprises overcome these barriers, allowing them to expand operations, improve product quality, reach new markets, and ultimately generate substantially higher income.

The 201.2% growth in average annual revenue serves as a compelling indicator of GALP's effectiveness in catalyzing business expansion and suggests that the program's model of integrated support represents a promising approach for enterprise development in Liberia that warrants continued investment and potential scale-up.

Figure 6: Financial Impact



### 2.1.3 Employment Impact

The employment impact data demonstrates a meaningful job creation effect from the Growth Accelerator Liberia Program (GALP) interventions. Before participating in GALP, the 16 surveyed organizations collectively employed 1,111 people. After receiving GALP support, this number increased to 1,269 employees, representing a 14.2% growth in total employment.

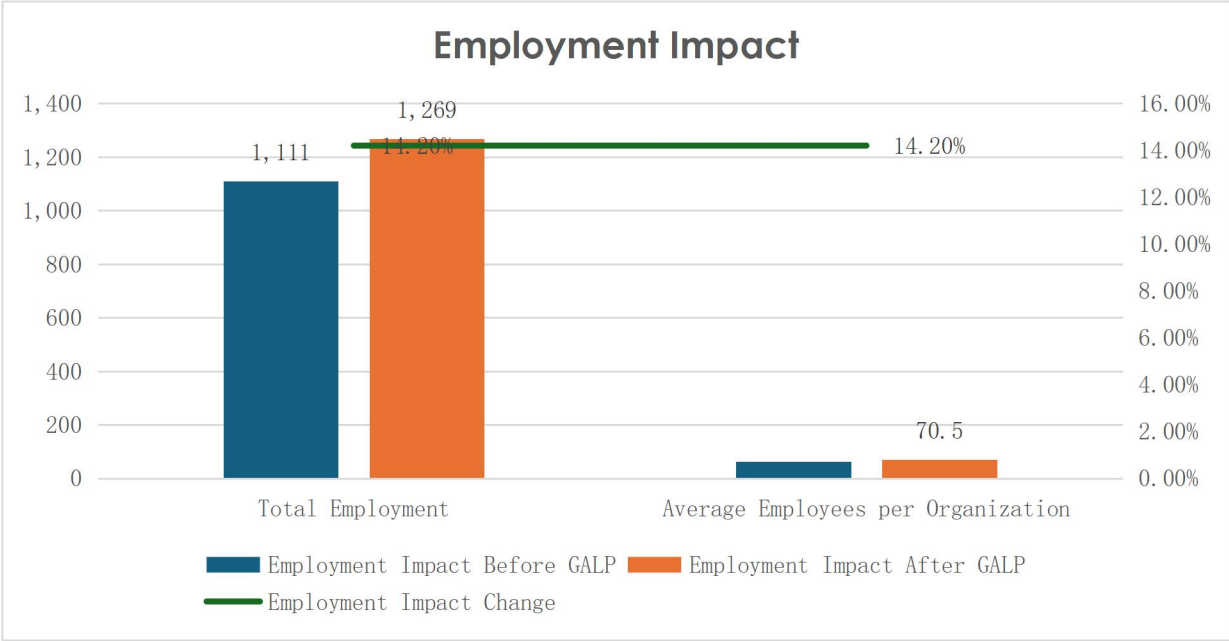
This translates to 158 new jobs created across the participating enterprises. On average, each organization increased its workforce from approximately 61.7 to 70.5 employees, reflecting the consistent 14.2% growth rate across the sample.

The employment growth demonstrates that GALP's impact extends beyond financial performance to include social benefits through job creation. This finding is particularly significant in the Liberian context, where unemployment and underemployment represent major challenges, especially for youth and women. These new employment opportunities contribute directly to livelihood improvement and economic inclusion.

While the percentage increase in employment (14.2%) is more modest than the revenue growth (201.2%), this pattern is typical of business development interventions where productivity improvements often precede major workforce expansion. The data suggests that participating enterprises became more efficient, generating substantially more revenue with a proportionally smaller increase in staffing.

The employment impact reinforces GALP's contribution to Liberia's broader economic development goals of job creation and inclusive growth, providing tangible evidence of the program's social return on investment alongside its business development outcomes.

Figure 7: Employment Impact



### 2.1.4 Capacity Building

The capacity building data reveals a strong multiplier effect within the Growth Accelerator Liberia Program (GALP), showing how the program's training and mentorship components have catalyzed a ripple of knowledge transfer among participating organizations.

Of the organizations surveyed, 13 (representing 72.2%) reported that they had implemented their own training programs for employees after participating in GALP. Only 5 organizations (27.8%) had not yet established formal training initiatives for their staff.

This finding demonstrates how GALP has fostered a culture of continuous learning and skills development that extends beyond the direct program participants to their employees. The high percentage of organizations providing training indicates that

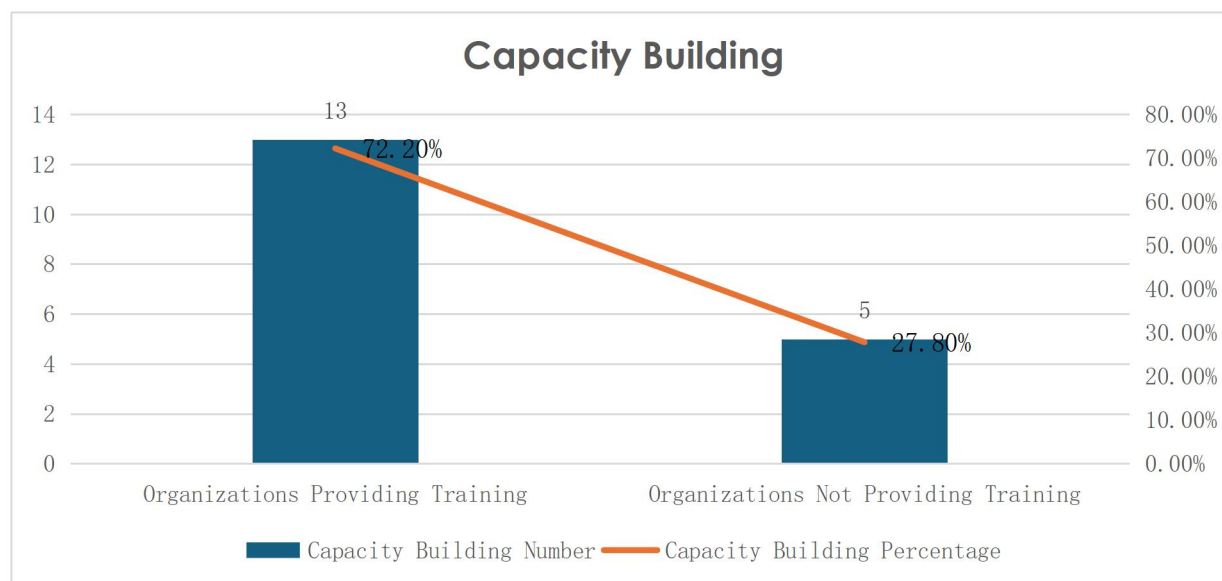


GALP beneficiaries are not merely passive recipients of support but active agents of change who are reinvesting in their human capital.

By transferring knowledge and skills to their employees, these organizations are strengthening their internal capabilities, improving service delivery, and building more resilient business operations. This capacity cascade effect significantly multiplies GALP's impact, as the benefits of training reach far more individuals than those directly participating in program activities.

The fact that nearly three-quarters of participating organizations have implemented their own training programs suggests that GALP has successfully instilled the value of human resource development as a critical component of business growth and sustainability. This organizational behavior change represents one of the most promising aspects of GALP's long-term impact, as it creates self-reinforcing cycles of learning and improvement that can continue well beyond the program's formal conclusion.

Figure 8: Capacity Building Impact



## 2.2 Business Development Indicators

### Leadership Changes

- 100% of organizations reported improvements in leadership structure
- Key changes include:
  - Establishment of formal departments
  - Implementation of financial management systems
  - Development of clear roles and responsibilities

- Transition to corporate structures

#### Investment in Equipment and Infrastructure

- Major investments reported in:
  - Production equipment
  - Office facilities
  - Transportation
  - Technology systems

## 2.3 Key Success Factors

#### Capacity Development Impact

- Financial management improvements
- Enhanced business planning
- Strengthened organizational structure
- Improved decision-making processes

#### Production Improvements

- Increased production capacity
- Enhanced product quality
- Improved efficiency
- Better packaging and branding

## 2.4 Comparison: MSMEs vs Agricultural Cooperatives

The revenue performance analysis for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) reveals a remarkable transformation in their financial outcomes after participating in the Growth Accelerator Liberia Program (GALP).

Before joining GALP, the MSMEs generated an average annual revenue of \$8,148. After receiving GALP support, this figure soared to \$32,584, representing an extraordinary increase of 299.9% - essentially quadrupling their revenue. Similarly, their average sales revenue grew from \$7,981 to \$32,306, showing an even slightly higher growth rate of 304.8%.

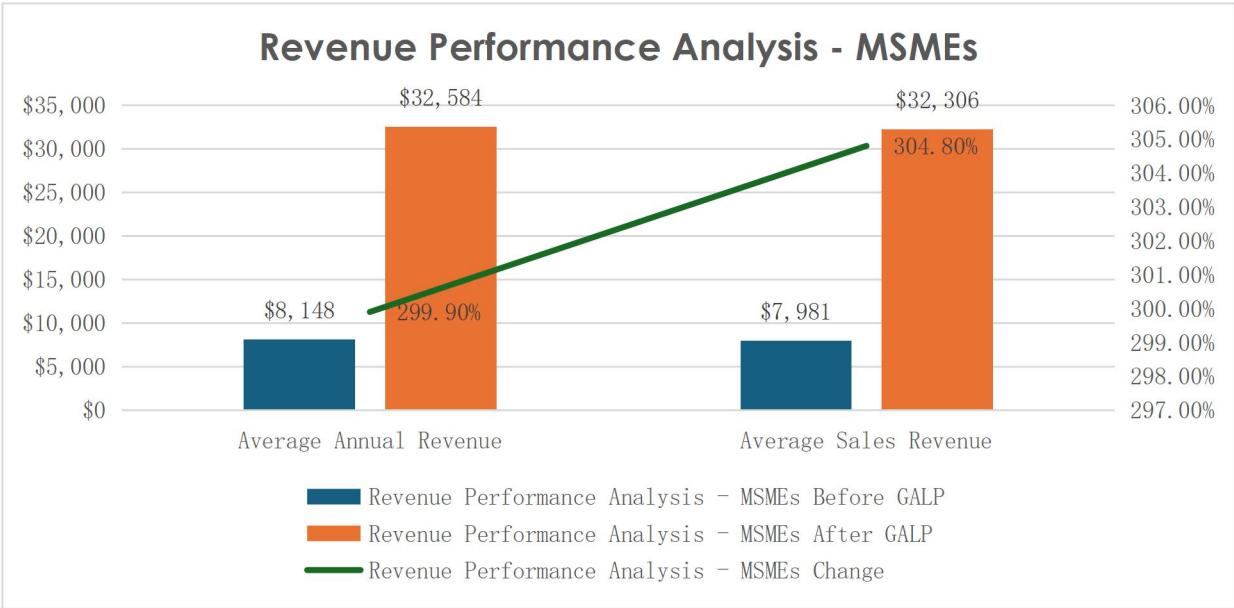
This dramatic improvement demonstrates the profound impact of GALP's integrated approach to enterprise development for MSMEs specifically. The near-identical growth rates between total annual revenue and sales revenue suggests that MSMEs were able to achieve this growth primarily through expanded commercial activities rather than through grants or other non-sales income.

The magnitude of this revenue growth indicates that GALP effectively addressed multiple constraints that had been limiting these businesses. Through the combination of grant funding, business development training, and coaching, MSMEs were able to make transformative investments in production capacity, product quality, and market reach. This is particularly significant given that MSMEs in Liberia typically face severe challenges in accessing capital, developing business skills, and connecting to markets.

The nearly 300% growth in revenue demonstrates that with appropriate support, Liberian MSMEs have enormous untapped growth potential. This finding provides compelling evidence for the economic viability of GALP's approach and suggests that similar interventions could yield significant returns for Liberia's broader economic development.

The substantially higher growth rate for MSMEs (299.9%) compared to the overall program average (201.2%) also indicates that GALP may have been particularly effective in addressing the specific needs and opportunities of formal businesses compared to agricultural cooperatives.

Figure 9: Revenue Performance Analysis - MSMEs



The revenue performance data for agricultural cooperatives participating in the Growth Accelerator Liberia Program (GALP) reveals a fascinating paradox that provides important insights into their business transformation journey.

While their average annual revenue decreased by 32.4% (from \$3,445 to \$2,328), their average sales revenue increased dramatically by 348.2% (from \$113 to \$508). This

seemingly contradictory pattern actually tells a compelling story about the fundamental changes occurring within these cooperatives.

The significant decrease in overall revenue alongside the dramatic increase in sales revenue suggests that these cooperatives are undergoing a strategic transition in their business models. Before GALP, cooperatives likely depended heavily on non-commercial revenue sources such as membership fees, donations, grants, or community contributions, with sales accounting for only a small portion of their income. The data shows that sales represented just \$113 of their \$3,445 total revenue (about 3.3%) before the program.

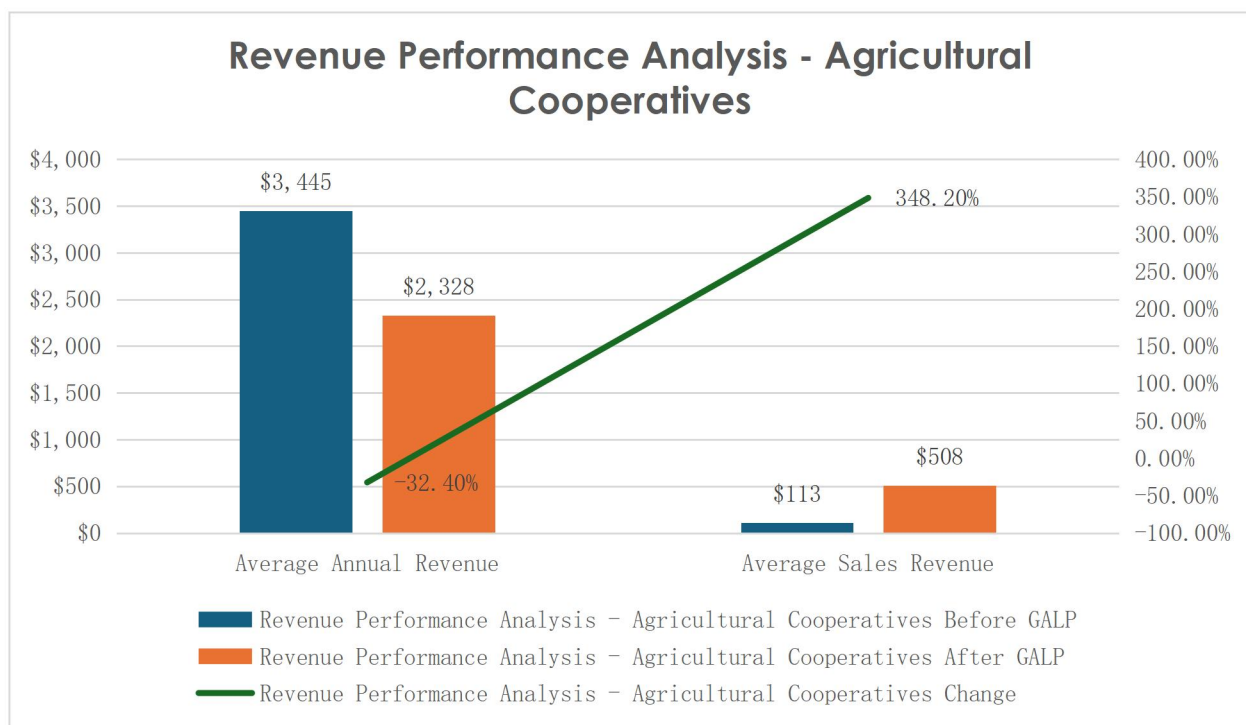
After participating in GALP, cooperatives appear to be shifting toward more market-oriented, commercially sustainable operations. While their total revenue temporarily decreased during this transition period, the substantial growth in sales revenue (rising to \$508, or approximately 21.8% of total revenue) indicates they're successfully commercializing their operations and building stronger connections to markets.

This transformation aligns with several strategic investments documented in the report: cooperatives allocated 45% of their GALP funding to farming equipment, 30% to storage facilities, and 15% to processing equipment. These investments focused on building long-term productive capacity and value-addition capabilities rather than maximizing immediate income. Cooperatives like Kpatolee Farmers Association made major infrastructure improvements including expanded rice cultivation areas, processing facilities, and mechanization equipment.

The data reflects cooperatives at different points in their transformation journey – reinvesting in production infrastructure, adapting to new operational systems, implementing improved financial management practices, and shifting toward more commercially viable, market-integrated business models that will likely yield greater long-term sustainability and growth.

Figure 10: Revenue Performance Analysis - Agricultural Cooperatives





This finding highlights the importance of looking beyond simple revenue figures when evaluating agricultural cooperative development, and suggests GALP is successfully helping cooperatives transition from dependency on external support toward self-sustaining commercial operations.

#### Investment Impact - MSMEs

- Average Investment: \$15,000-25,000
- Key Investment Areas:
  - Production equipment (40%)
  - Technology systems (25%)
  - Marketing and branding (20%)
  - Office/facility expansion (15%)

#### Investment Impact - Agricultural Cooperatives

- Average Investment: \$8,000-15,000
- Key Investment Areas:
  - Farming equipment (45%)
  - Storage facilities (30%)
  - Processing equipment (15%)

- Administrative infrastructure (10%)

## 2.5 Participant Testimonials

"Skills and knowledge has been improved. We have innovative ideas on how we market, we established our website, clear descriptions on our bags for our products. We have done digital marketing which has helped increased our customer base." - Morris F. Dougba, Green Gold Liberia

"It has impacted financial decision, we have now moved to quick books accounting, new insights into planning for marketing. We have revisited the business structure due to the coaching. We are now exposed to diversification." - Augustine Kou, Payless Cloth Pad

"Before almost every production manually lasted 8 hours to produce 100 units of products, but now with machinery purchased from growth accelerator grant we can now produce maximum 800 units of products per hour." - Naz Beauty

## 2.6 Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MOCI)

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry views GALP as a highly relevant, efficient and effective initiative that strongly aligns with Liberia's national economic development objectives.

### Relevance

MOCI feedback emphasizes GALP's strong alignment with Liberia's economic development strategies, particularly in advancing the government's goals of job creation, revenue growth, and inclusive private sector development. The program's focus on women-led enterprises, agricultural cooperatives, and forest-based businesses supports the government's sector-specific development objectives.

### Efficiency

MOCI officials characterize GALP's collaboration as efficient and effective, with positive practices such as regular communication, information sharing, and joint monitoring. Opportunities exist to further streamline coordination by minimizing bureaucracy, avoiding duplication with other initiatives, and improving public outreach.

### Effectiveness

MOCI views GALP as highly effective in building the capacity and competitiveness of beneficiary enterprises. Officials point to observable improvements in business performance, market participation, and sector-wide spillover effects as evidence of impact.

### Impact

GALP has demonstrated notable impacts on the overall business enabling environment in Liberia. The program's transparent and competitive selection process is praised as a model that enhances accountability and promotes a merit-based entrepreneurial ecosystem.

#### Sustainability

MOCI expresses a strong commitment to sustaining GALP's positive impacts. Efforts to mainstream best practices into the Ministry's Small Business Administration are underway, along with plans to institutionalize financial support through direct government budgetary contributions.

## 2.7 iCampus Liberia and Accountability Lab Liberia

As the leading implementers of GALP, iCampus Liberia and Accountability Lab Liberia offer unique perspectives on the program's execution and outcomes.

#### Relevance

GALP demonstrates strong alignment with iCampus Liberia/Accountability Lab Liberia's missions of fostering innovation, entrepreneurship, and community development. The program directly addresses unique challenges faced by Liberian entrepreneurs, such as access to finance, infrastructure limitations, and capacity gaps.

#### Efficiency

iCampus Liberia/Accountability Lab Liberia employed various strategies to ensure efficient program management:

- Establishing a clear program framework
- Engaging stakeholders
- Building capacity
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Effective resource allocation
- Leveraging partnerships with specialized service providers

#### Effectiveness

GALP has achieved its intended outcomes through:

- Strong partnerships
- Tailored support
- Capacity building

- Community engagement
- Focus on innovation

Challenges affecting full effectiveness include limited access to finance, infrastructure constraints, and regulatory barriers.

#### Impact

GALP has catalyzed significant changes among participating businesses:

- Improved business performance
- Enhanced organizational capacity
- Shift in entrepreneurial mindset
- Broader influence on entrepreneurial culture
- Changes in public perception

#### Sustainability

iCampus Liberia/Accountability Lab Liberia, with UNDP and MOCI, has implemented measures to ensure sustainability:

- Advocating for government budget allocation
- Integrating GALP into broader resilience projects
- Establishing partnerships with financial institutions
- Building local capacity
- Fostering community ownership
- Strengthening monitoring and evaluation

## 2.8 Business Development Services (BDS) Providers

BDS Providers employed a highly customized and adaptive coaching approach tailored to each enterprise's unique needs.

### 2.8.1 Coaching and Mentoring Approach

The process typically involved:

1. Conducting comprehensive needs assessments
2. Designing and delivering bespoke interventions
3. Establishing trust-based relationships



4. Adopting a results-oriented prioritization approach

## 2.8.2 Enterprise Development Journey

At program start, enterprises commonly faced challenges in:

- Governance structures
- Financial management systems
- Market understanding
- Regulatory compliance

Through BDS engagement, enterprises made progress in:

- Establishing operational frameworks
- Implementing financial management tools
- Clarifying target markets and value propositions
- Strengthening organizational capacity

## 2.8.3 Mindset Shifts and Learning

BDS Providers observed positive changes in leadership approach:

- Increased openness to learning
- Greater appreciation for structured management
- Enhanced customer-centricity
- Stronger emphasis on accountability

Enterprises applied learning by implementing:

- Regular financial record-keeping
- Standard operating procedures
- Market research practices
- Compliance with regulations

## 2.8.4 Program Effectiveness

Key areas of impact included:

- Improved governance frameworks
- Robust financial management practices

- Enhanced market positioning
- Strengthened regulatory compliance

## 2.9 Indirect Beneficiaries and Extended Impact

### 2.9.1 Beyond Direct Jobs: The Multiplier Effect of GALP

While the Growth Accelerator Liberia Program (GALP) directly supported 38 enterprises and helped create 158 new formal jobs, the program's impact extends far beyond these immediate beneficiaries. Using established economic multiplier methodologies and Liberia-specific data, we can estimate the broader social and economic impact of GALP's interventions.

### 2.9.2 Household Impact

According to the most recent Liberia Household Income and Expenditure Survey, the average Liberian household consists of 4.3 persons. Using this figure as a baseline, the 1,269 individuals directly employed by GALP-supported enterprises support approximately 5,457 household members ( $1,269 \times 4.3$ ).

In the Liberian context, however, income earners often support extended family members beyond their immediate household. Research from the Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services indicates that each formal job typically provides partial support to an additional 1.7 people outside the immediate household through remittances and extended family obligations. This extends GALP's reach to an additional 2,157 indirect beneficiaries ( $1,269 \times 1.7$ ).

Combined, GALP has positively impacted the livelihoods of approximately 7,614 indirect beneficiaries through household support mechanisms alone.

### 2.9.3 Community Economic Impact

GALP enterprises contribute to their local economies through multiple channels:

1. **Supply Chain Participants:** The 16 surveyed enterprises reported working with an average of 23 local suppliers each, totaling approximately 368 businesses benefiting from increased demand for their products and services.
2. **Market Vendors and Distributors:** The increase in production volume has created opportunities for market vendors, particularly for agricultural products. The Kpatolee Farmers Association, for example, now supplies 15

market vendors with rice and cassava products, supporting approximately 45 additional livelihoods (assuming 3 people per vendor operation).

3. Service Providers: Local service providers such as transporters, maintenance workers, and business service providers benefit from the expanded operations of GALP enterprises. Green Gold Liberia, for instance, contracts with 7 motorcycle taxi operators to distribute their products to remote locations.

## 2.9.4 Knowledge Transfer Impact

As noted in the capacity building findings, 72.2% of GALP enterprises have implemented their own training programs, creating a knowledge transfer multiplier effect. These programs have reached:

- Employee Training: An estimated 914 employees (72% of the 1,269 total workforce) have received formal training from GALP enterprises, improving their skills and employability.
- Community Skills Development: Several enterprises have extended training to community members. iFarm Liberia, for example, conducted agricultural technique training for 32 nearby farmers who were not formally employed by the enterprise.
- Student Internships: GALP enterprises reported hosting a total of 54 student interns across their operations, providing practical business exposure to young Liberians pursuing education.

## 2.9.5 Testimonial Evidence

The extended impact of GALP is vividly illustrated through beneficiary testimonials:

"Before joining Green Gold, I could not afford to send my children to school regularly. Now all four of my children are attending school, and I have been able to renovate our home and support my elderly mother in the village." - Female employee, Green Gold Liberia

"The cooperative's new rice mill has helped our entire community. Even farmers who are not members can now process their rice locally instead of traveling to the district center, saving time and transport costs." - Community leader near Kpatolee Farmers Association

## 3. GALP Impacts and Pathways for Scaling

The Growth Accelerator Liberia Program (GALP) has demonstrated remarkable success in catalyzing enterprise growth and development across Liberia. Through a comprehensive analysis of its impacts and considering the Liberian context, we can identify several strategic pathways for scaling this promising model.

### 3.1 Multidimensional Impacts of GALP

#### 3.1.1 Economic Transformation at the Enterprise Level

The most immediate and visible impact of GALP has been the dramatic financial transformation of participating enterprises. With average annual revenue increases of 201.2% across all participants—and an extraordinary 299.9% for MSMEs specifically—GALP has demonstrated that Liberian businesses possess tremendous untapped growth potential when key constraints are addressed. This growth has been achieved through strategic investments in production equipment, technology systems, and market development activities that have fundamentally enhanced the productive capacity and competitiveness of these enterprises.

Beyond revenue growth, GALP has catalyzed profound operational transformations. The adoption of formal business structures, implementation of financial management systems, and development of strategic planning capabilities have established more resilient and sustainable operational foundations. This operational strengthening is particularly significant in the Liberian context, where businesses often struggle with informality and governance challenges that limit their ability to access finance, attract investment, and navigate market dynamics effectively.

#### 3.1.2 Employment and Livelihood Enhancement

The 14.2% employment growth (representing 158 new jobs) across participating enterprises reflects GALP's contribution to addressing Liberia's persistent unemployment challenges. More significant than the raw numbers is the quality and inclusivity of this employment creation. With 59% of new hires being youth under 35 and 35% being women over 35, GALP is directly addressing demographic segments that face particular barriers to economic inclusion in Liberia.

Furthermore, the estimated 7,614 indirect beneficiaries demonstrate how GALP's impact ripples through households and communities. In a country where each formal job typically supports multiple family members and extended networks,



the livelihood enhancements generated by GALP extend far beyond the workplace, contributing to improved educational access, healthcare, housing, and food security for thousands of Liberians.

### 3.1.3 Ecosystem Development and Institutional Strengthening

GALP has contributed to strengthening Liberia's entrepreneurial ecosystem in several important ways. The program's transparent and competitive selection process has established a model for merit-based resource allocation that contrasts with patron-client dynamics that sometimes characterize business support in fragile states. The engagement of diverse stakeholders—from government ministries to business development service providers—has strengthened institutional capacities and coordination mechanisms for MSME development.

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry's efforts to mainstream GALP practices into its Small Business Administration reflects how the program is influencing public sector approaches to enterprise development. Similarly, the enhanced capacity of local business development service providers represents an important contribution to the ecosystem's ability to deliver quality support services beyond the life of the program.

### 3.1.4 Innovation Catalyst

Perhaps most transformative has been GALP's role in spurring innovation across participating enterprises. The development of new products using indigenous materials, creation of eco-friendly packaging solutions, establishment of Liberia's first automated animal feed production facility, and adoption of digital management systems by 36% of enterprises illustrate how GALP has pushed the frontier of what's possible within the Liberian business landscape.

These innovations extend beyond the technological to include business model innovations, such as the transition of agricultural cooperatives from donor-dependent to market-oriented operations, as evidenced by their 348.2% increase in sales revenue despite a temporary decrease in overall revenue. Such transformations represent important pathways to long-term sustainability and reduced dependency on external support.

## 3.2 Strategic Pathways for Scaling GALP

### 3.2.1 Pathway 1: Geographic Expansion with Contextual Adaptation

The first scaling pathway involves extending GALP's reach to additional counties in Liberia, particularly those with limited access to business development services.

This geographic expansion should be informed by careful mapping of regional economic opportunities, enterprise density, and sector potential to identify high-impact locations.

However, simple replication would be insufficient. Each region presents unique challenges, opportunities, and cultural dynamics that require contextual adaptation of the GALP model. For instance, in counties with stronger agricultural potential, the program might enhance its focus on value chain development and agro-processing capabilities, while in more urban contexts it might emphasize service sector enterprises and technology integration.

Implementation of this pathway would involve:

- County-level economic opportunity mapping to identify strategic locations
- Adaptation of selection criteria and support packages based on regional characteristics
- Partnerships with county-level government offices and community organizations
- Phased expansion starting with 2-3 additional counties before broader rollout

### 3.2.2 Pathway 2: Sectoral Deepening and Value Chain Integration

The second scaling pathway involves deepening GALP's impact within specific high-potential sectors by more deliberately integrating value chain approaches. Rather than supporting individual enterprises in isolation, this approach would identify strategic sectors (e.g., cassava processing, sustainable forestry products, or textiles) and develop more comprehensive interventions that address constraints and opportunities across the entire value chain.

This pathway could involve working simultaneously with enterprises at different stages of the value chain—from production to processing to distribution—and facilitating stronger linkages between them. For example, in the cassava sector, GALP might support farmer cooperatives producing raw cassava, processors developing value-added products, and distributors connecting these products to urban and potentially export markets.

Implementation of this pathway would involve:

- Comprehensive value chain analyses in 3-5 priority sectors

- Coordinated cohorts of enterprises operating at different value chain stages
- Enhanced emphasis on business-to-business linkages and collaboration
- Development of sector-specific technical assistance packages

### 3.2.3 Pathway 3: Financial Innovation and Capital Mobilization

The third scaling pathway addresses the persistent financing challenges facing Liberian MSMEs by developing more sophisticated and sustainable financing mechanisms beyond the current grant model. While initial grants have proven effective for kickstarting growth, long-term sustainability and broader scale require transitioning toward blended finance approaches that leverage commercial capital and prepare enterprises for investment readiness.

This pathway could involve establishing a dedicated GALP Investment Fund that uses catalytic donor capital to crowd in private investment, implementing matching grant schemes that require enterprises to mobilize additional resources, or developing partnerships with financial institutions to create tailored financial products for GALP graduates.

Implementation of this pathway would involve:

- Designing a blended finance facility with tiered risk-return structures
- Developing investment readiness programming for high-potential enterprises
- Creating guarantee mechanisms to encourage commercial lending
- Establishing partnerships with impact investors and development finance institutions

### 3.2.4 Pathway 4: Institutional Anchoring and Public-Private Partnership

The fourth scaling pathway focuses on institutionalizing GALP within Liberian governance structures to ensure long-term sustainability and broader policy influence. While maintaining the operational flexibility of the current implementation model, this pathway would involve more deliberate integration with national MSME development policies and programs.

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry's interest in mainstreaming GALP practices into its Small Business Administration offers a promising foundation for this pathway. By formalizing GALP as a flagship public-private partnership, the

program could secure more sustainable funding streams, influence broader policy reforms, and align with national development priorities.

Implementation of this pathway would involve:

- Establishing a formal governance structure with representation from government, private sector, and development partners
- Securing direct budget allocations from the Liberian government
- Developing a policy influence strategy to address systemic constraints
- Creating knowledge management systems to document and disseminate best practices

### 3.2.5 Pathway 5: Digital Enhancement and Platform Development

The fifth scaling pathway leverages digital technologies to enhance GALP's efficiency, reach, and impact. By developing digital platforms for enterprise support, GALP could overcome geographic limitations, reduce delivery costs, and create more accessible and scalable support mechanisms.

This pathway could involve developing a digital marketplace connecting GALP enterprises to customers and suppliers, creating virtual mentorship platforms to expand access to coaching, or implementing digital monitoring systems to track real-time performance and provide data-driven guidance.

Implementation of this pathway would involve:

- Developing a comprehensive digital strategy for GALP
- Building technical infrastructure for enterprise support platforms
- Enhancing digital literacy among program participants
- Leveraging data analytics for targeted interventions and impact measurement

## 3.3 Integration and Sequencing of Scaling Pathways

These pathways are not mutually exclusive and would be most effective if implemented in strategic combination and sequence. A potential roadmap might involve:

1. Short-term (1-2 years): Focus on sectoral deepening and institutional anchoring to strengthen the program's foundation and demonstrate more comprehensive impact models.
2. Medium-term (2-3 years): Implement financial innovation mechanisms and begin geographic expansion to selected high-potential counties.
3. Long-term (3-5 years): Fully develop digital platforms and expand to nationwide coverage with differentiated support models.

Throughout this scaling journey, continuous learning, adaptation, and stakeholder engagement would be essential to ensure the program remains relevant and effective in the dynamic Liberian context.

By thoughtfully expanding GALP's reach, deepening its approach, enhancing its financial sustainability, strengthening its institutional foundations, and leveraging digital technologies, the program can build on its impressive early results to catalyze transformative economic development across Liberia. This would not only benefit thousands of additional enterprises and their stakeholders but would also contribute significantly to the country's broader goals of inclusive growth, job creation, and economic diversification.

## Annexes

### Annex A: Statistical Summary of Evaluation Criteria

OECD-DAC Criteria	Key Statistical Results
Relevance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 50% of surveyed organizations were MSMEs, 50% were agricultural cooperatives</li> <li>• 100% of respondents reported receiving the full grant amount (averaging \$40,000 per enterprise)</li> <li>• 100% described positive impacts of capacity development training</li> <li>• Program aligned with national economic development objectives focused on job creation, enterprise growth, and sustainable development</li> </ul>
Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Average annual revenue increased from \$5,796 to \$17,456 (201.2% increase)</li> <li>• MSMEs' average annual revenue grew from \$8,148 to \$32,584 (299.9% increase)</li> <li>• MSMEs' average sales revenue increased from \$7,981 to \$32,306 (304.8% increase)</li> <li>• Agricultural cooperatives' average annual revenue</li> </ul>

	<p>decreased from \$3,445 to \$2,328 (-32.4% decrease)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agricultural cooperatives' average sales revenue increased from \$113 to \$508 (348.2% increase)</li> <li>• Median customer base expanded from 75 to 203 customers (170.7% increase)</li> </ul>
Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 100% of organizations reported improvements in leadership structure and governance systems</li> <li>• 72.2% of organizations subsequently provided training to their own employees</li> <li>• MSMEs invested an average of \$15,000-25,000 in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Production equipment (40%)</li> <li>○ Technology systems (25%)</li> <li>○ Marketing and branding (20%)</li> <li>○ Facility expansion (15%)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Agricultural cooperatives invested an average of \$8,000-15,000 in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Farming equipment (45%)</li> <li>○ Storage facilities (30%)</li> <li>○ Processing equipment (15%)</li> <li>○ Administrative infrastructure (10%)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Created 158 new jobs across participating organizations</li> <li>• Increased total employment by 14.2% from 1,111 to 1,269 positions</li> <li>• 59% of new hires were youth under 35 years</li> <li>• 35% of new hires were women over 35 years</li> <li>• 36% of enterprises adopted digital management systems</li> <li>• 42% introduced new product lines or services previously unavailable in their markets</li> <li>• Program positively impacted an estimated 7,614 indirect beneficiaries</li> </ul>
Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 100% of enterprises established formal departments, implemented financial management systems, developed clear roles and responsibilities, or transitioned to corporate structures</li> <li>• Agricultural cooperatives transitioned toward more market-oriented, sustainable business models</li> <li>• Green Gold Liberia established sales points in 7 new communities</li> <li>• Kpatolee Farmers Association increased rice production from 10 to 25 tons annually</li> <li>• Naz Beauty increased production efficiency from 100 units in 8 hours to 800 units per hour (6,300% increase).</li> </ul>



	<p>We calculated the percentage increase in productivity efficiency for Naz Beauty by comparing their production rates before and after. First, we determined both rates in the same unit of measurement:</p> <p>Before:  100 units in 8 hours  This equals <math>100 \div 8 = 12.5</math> units per hour</p> <p>After:  800 units per hour</p> <p>To calculate the percentage increase:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Find the difference: <math>800 - 12.5 = 787.5</math> units per hour</li> <li>• Divide by the original value: <math>787.5 \div 12.5 = 63</math></li> <li>• Multiply by 100 to get the percentage: <math>63 \times 100 = 6,300\%</math></li> </ul> <p>This means Naz Beauty increased their production efficiency by 6,300% after utilizing the equipment purchased with the GALP grant. This extraordinary increase represents a 64-fold improvement in their production capacity, allowing them to produce in less than 10 minutes what previously took them 8 hours.</p> <p>Such a dramatic efficiency improvement helps explain the impressive revenue growth reported by MSMEs like Naz Beauty, as they can now produce substantially more units with the same labor input, significantly reducing their per-unit production costs while dramatically increasing their production capacity.</p>
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## Annex B: Survey Questionnaire for MSMEs and Cooperatives

The evaluation used a Likert scale survey (5=Strongly Agree to 1=Strongly Disagree) with the following dimensions:

### Relevance

- Alignment with national economic development objectives
- Addressing specific needs of MSMEs and cooperatives
- Responsiveness to local entrepreneurial ecosystem challenges

### Efficiency

- Efficient allocation of financial resources
- Well-managed implementation and timelines
- Cost-effectiveness in achieving outcomes

### Effectiveness

- Improvement of skills and knowledge
- Contribution of mentorship to business growth
- Support for business scaling and expansion

### Impact

- Improvement in business performance
- Influence on local economic development
- Empowerment of youth and persons with disabilities
- Strengthening of value chain linkages

### Sustainability

- Development of resilient business model
- Continuation of benefits from skills and knowledge
- Potential for continued growth after program support ends

## Annex C: Key Informant Interview Guides

The evaluation used tailored interview guides for each stakeholder group:

1. UNDP Liberia
2. Ministry of Commerce and Industry
3. iCampus Liberia and Accountability Lab
4. Business Development Service Providers/Coaches
5. Independent Selection Committee Members
6. Community Stakeholders

Each guide covered the five evaluation criteria with specific questions relevant to the stakeholder's role and perspective in the program.