

Commodity Commercialization

The Government of Sierra Leone's National Sustainable Agriculture Development Programme (NSADP), the country's agriculture investment programme, provides the basis for the development of national and district programs to overcome the challenges that militate against the development of agriculture in Sierra Leone. The challenges are clearly interdependent and require a concerted action. The proposed program combines policy, institutional, infrastructure and technology related measures to address the multiplicity of supply-side constraints to enhance the growth potential of Sierra Leone's agriculture. The programme would integrate on-going programmes and projects into this framework and take on the role of a national programme for food security.

The NSADP Program Objectives

The overall objective of the program is to increase the agriculture sector's contribution to the national economy by increasing productivity through commercialization and private sector participation. The program will facilitate and strengthen the productive capacities of small and medium scale farmers to provide enabling environment to promote large scale farming and development of agribusiness, and facilitate access to markets and value addition for the selected commodities. The selected commodities are: rice, cassava, oil palm, cocoa, fisheries and non-timber forest products (firewood, charcoal, rattan, raffia).

Key Performance Indicators

Increase in the agriculture sector growth from its current estimate of 2% to 6% per annum by 2015 enhances incomes and food security status of the producers.

Sub-Programmes

The NSADP/CAADP Agriculture Sector Investment Program will have four major sub-programs, namely:

1. Commodity Commercialization

Component 1: Small-holder Commercialization Scheme

Component 2: Medium and Large Farm Producers Promotion Scheme

2. Agriculture Infrastructure

Component 1: Support to the Rehabilitation and Upgrading of Feeder Roads

Component 2: Support to the Development of Irrigable Swamps

Component 3: Rehabilitation and Modernization of Existing Storage and Processing Facilities and Equipment

Component 4: Rehabilitation and Construction of Research Centers, MAFFS Offices

Component 5: Rehabilitation and Construction of Fish Harbors, Processing and Packaging Facilities

3. Private Sector Promotion

4. Sector Coordination and Management.

Outcomes and Objectives

The objective of this component is to increase the productivity of producers through the use of appropriate technologies and linking small to large producers to markets for the selected commodities in order to transform subsistence farming to commercial agriculture. To achieve this objective, the sub-program will address the specific needs of small as well as medium and large scale producers in order to enhance their organizations, productivity and market linkages.

Particular attention will be paid to small and medium scale farmers to increase the use of well tested sustainable agricultural technologies, inputs and farm equipment to increase productivity and building new market access organizations. Recognizing the different research, extension and organizational needs of small-holders versus medium and large farmers, two components are proposed for specific group focus:

COMPONENTS

I: SMALL HOLDER COMMERCIALISATION SCHEME

Target: To focus on small-holder value chain development of key economic areas specific in each district as noted above in Sub-Program 4. Small holder producers will be linked to the national economic system through new commercial groups, out-growers, stockists and producer-owned companies. The component will include (i) village level Farmer Field and Life School (FFLS) training leading to the establishment/ strengthening of Farmer Based Organizations (FBOs). The FFLS would also cover production technology, processing, marketing and key life skills (i.e. health, nutrition and functional literacy); (ii) creation of Agriculture Business Centers (ABCs) owned by FBOs and backstopped by MAFFS extension and research services under a public–private franchise model; (iii) producer owned companies at district or chiefdom level for bulk processing of rice and cassava; and (iv) social protection activities such as food for work, food for training and school or home gardens. This component will be facilitated through the decentralized local government’s extension services and in collaboration with FAO, WFP, UNIDO, UNDP and NGO development partners. Key commodity focus will be based on district prioritization of commodities for food and cash income.

Activities:

- i. Development, training and adoption of productivity enhancement technologies including: propagation and use of high quality seeds, seedlings and fingerlings that are high yielding, disease tolerant and adapted to the environment; improved agronomic and water management practices; improved harvesting, processing and marketing techniques; establishment of tree nurseries of medium scale (25,000 trees per year per ABC);
- ii. Support to strengthen FBOs to be able to access services, credit and marketing outlets, processing and equipment and leveraging their advocacy activities that affect the context in which they produce, market, transform and export their products;
- iii. Promote appropriate small to large agro-industrial development for added value to the selected commodities and other potential commodities;
- iv. Mechanic training for servicing small to medium scale equipment such as 2- or 4-wheeled tractors, trailers, threshers, cassava graters and other appropriate equipment;
- v. Strengthen research and extension capacities following FARA’s innovation platform methodology for participatory research and extension techniques;

- vi. Livestock management of poultry and small ruminants from production to marketing
- vii. Training and micro-financing support for artisanal fishermen and aquaculturalists for safe and quality fish handling, stock management and processing;
- viii. Social protection activities such as food for work to rehabilitate and build local agricultural infrastructure, food for training including farmers and extension staff, and other employment creating activities.

Estimated costs: 98 millions USD.

2: MEDIUM AND LARGE SCALE PRODUCERS PROMOTION SCHEME

Target: To develop private sector led mechanization and processing businesses (e.g. tractorization, rice mills, oil processing, dairy production, ethanol and bio-fuel processing. etc.). Training for farm managers, mechanics, developing sound business plans, packaging, branding and marketing etc., will be provided to the medium to large scale farmers. Industrial fisheries will be considered in another scheme. The project will be implemented in collaboration with the MAFFS, FAO, UNDP, Chamber of Agriculture, Njala University, IPAM and private sector partners.

Activities:

- i. Capacity building for medium and large producers on topics such as farm and business management and agriculture technologies, for banking institutions on agriculture lending, and for mechanics to service equipment;
- ii. Use of TradeNet market information systems and quality control measures and standards;
- iii. Development of agribusiness along commodity chains aimed at improved value chain addition and linking farmers with input and output marketing;
- iv. Development of a legal agriculture investment which would include a framework for secure land leases including GIS digital frameworks for farming investments, labor and social security protection policy;
- v. Establishment of national biofuel policy.

Estimated costs: 5 millions USD.

Table 1 – Cost of program 1: Commodity Commercialization

| SOUS-PROGRAMS | Total | Mobilized | Support | Associated | Gap |
|--|--------------|------------------|--|---|------------|
| 1. Small-holder commercialization | 98 | 38 | AfDB/ASREP EC food security EU-Food Facility FAO TCP IFAD/RCPRP Irish Aid Italian Cooperation OFID WFP WB RPSDP | CARD/MRU CARD Concern Coopi EC/EDF 10 GTZ IsDB/NERICA JICA KfW/NaCSA USAID/CORAD USAID/PAGE WHH | 60 |
| 2. Medium and large farm producers promotion | 5 | 1 | WB RPSDP | USAID/PAGE UNDP/FAO Chamber of Agric. | 4 |
| TOTAL PROGRAM | 103 | 39 | | | 64 |