

## Concept Note

### Human Resource and Development (Research and Extension Personnel)

#### **A. Strategic context of the project**

The Government of Sierra Leone launched its second Poverty Reduction Strategy paper for 2008-2012 (PRSP II) the “Agenda for Change,” with a focus on four key priorities: energy; transportation; agriculture; and human development. Following the commencement or completion of several large road and energy infrastructure projects, agriculture has been identified as the President’s top priority. This has been reflected in steadily increasing public investment in the sector, with a budget allocation at 9.9 percent in 2010 and expected to increase to 10 percent in the near future. In September 2009, the Government launched NSADP, the Country Compact under the CAADP. The vision of the NSADP is to make agriculture the engine for socioeconomic growth and development through commercial agriculture. More specifically, its aim is to provide short, medium and long term Investment Programmes to increase commercialisation of the sector and promote “farming as a business.” The Smallholder Commercialisation Programme (SCP) is identified as the priority to delivery this goal.

A good number of the current employees of the Ministry of Agriculture , Forestry and Food Security (MAFFS) are not adequately qualified for the tasks they are expected to perform. The bulk of the employees are unskilled staff. MAFFS now has six divisions: Crops, Livestock, Forestry, Engineering, Extension and Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (PEMSD). Until recently, extension was part of the Crops division and operated through its field offices, while Livestocks and other sub sectors also provided their extension services. The designation of extension as division confers the responsibility for extension in all the other technical division.

The Agricultural Extension Division comprises six operational units: Staff Development and Training, Women in Agriculture and Nutrition, Agricultural Information Communications, Youth Engagement and Empowerment and HIV/AIDS. The extension services have been decentralized from Freetown to the Districts. A District Agricultural Officer (DAO) heads each District. FFSs are the platform for technology adoption and improved farming practices, improving decision-making capacity of farming communities and stimulating local innovation for sustainable agriculture. FFS have expanded to include business planning and livelihood aspects including nutrition and literacy etc.

#### **B. Justification**

Sierra Leone has a research centre specifically for rice research, in Rokuprr Agricultural Research Centre (RARC). There are a total of 18 Scientist with at least a masters degree and 15 technicians. In other to produce the improved technologies and realities needed to support the drive for increased rice productivities, the Sierra Leone Agricultural Research Institutions (SLARI) estimates that the number of researchers should be increased to 30 by 2018.

The number of qualified rice researchers in Sierra Leone has been dwindling even before the war. The deteriorating economic situation forced many professionals including rice researchers to seek greener pastures elsewhere.

However, in view of the current low number of extension and agricultural staff in the country, there will be need to almost double the current number of extension personnel to provide much needed linkage with the Farmer Field Schools (FFS) as well as in the Innovation Platforms

### **C. Potential intervention zones and target groups**

Potential intervention areas include MAFFS and Research institutions (RARC and SLARI)

.

### **D. Main Objectives of the Project**

**Global objective:** To strengthen the capacities of Research and Extension Services

#### **Specific Objectives**

- Build the capacities of Research and Extension personnel
- Provide field logistics and incentives to Research and Extension personnel

### **E. Description of the Components, Outputs and Activities**

Component 1: Training of Research and Extension personnel

Component 2: Provision of logistic support to Research and Extension institutions.

<b>Component</b>	<b>Output</b>	<b>Activity</b>
1. Training of Research and Extension personnel.	Trained Research and Extension personnel	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Assessment of manpower and training needs of MAFFS, research, and other relevant institution.</li> <li>2. Analysis of gender based constraints in agricultural support programme</li> <li>3. Preparation and implementation of appropriate manpower development programme</li> </ol>
2. Provision of logistic support to Research and Extension institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Well equipped and motivated staff</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Assess and identify logistical needs / gaps of research and extension institutions</li> <li>2. Work with human resource development of MAFFS to review terms of remuneration of other conditions of service for extension and research</li> </ol>

		<p>personnel</p> <p>3. Provision of appropriate incentives and other conditions of service</p>
--	--	--

### **G. Implementation Strategy of the project**

This sub-component will strengthen extension performance to better support and align with objectives of MAFFS. Through various trainings, exchanges and study tours, and provision of operational support (notably mobility and technical equipment), it is expected that extension staff will more effectively support FFS and the development of commodity chains) such outgrower schemes will better respond to farmer needs in technical skills area. The project will also support the Sierra Leone Agriculture Research Institute (SLARI) and Rokuprr Agricultural Research Centre (RARC) by training junior scientists and supporting adaptive research activities. District and Ward Councils, including Agricultural Committees will be more informed and involve by participating in sensitization, information sharing, and capacity development programs tailored to their responsibilities and needs.

The project will work closely with the Human Resource Development Unit of MAFFS to review logistical needs and other incentives.

### **H. Project Organization and Management**

- MAFFS assumes overall responsibility for the project implementation
- Research Institutions (SLARI and RARC)

### **I. Monitoring and Evaluation**

The Research Institutions will produce monthly reports based on submissions of MAFFS

Human Resource Development Unit for staff appraisal

### **J. Risks**

- Willingness of personnel to participate fully in the project

- Staff retention / resignation
- Favourable political climate for the implementation of the project
- Timely release of funds
- Government policy on employment and labour
  - Staff of various research institutions are well motivated to participate in the project

Project/Program	Objectively Verifiable indicators	Means of Verification	Important Assumptions/ Risks
1. Global objective:			
To strengthen the capacities of Research and Extension Services	Quality and type of training provided	Staff performance	Farmers practicing new technologies Available research and extension services
2. Specific Objective			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build the capacities of Research and Extension personnel</li> <li>• Provide field logistics and incentives to Research and Extension personnel</li> </ul>		Staff appraisal report	Funds are made available
3. Outputs/Results			
<b>Component1: Training of Research and Extension personnel.</b>			
1. Assess and identify key staff for training		Progress reports	
2. Review staff policy and recommendations.		Progress reports	
3. Provide training		Progress	

		reports	
<b>Component 2: Provision of logistic support to Research and Extension institutions</b>			
1. Assess and identify logistical needs gaps of institutions			
2. Award contracts for procurement of logistics.			