

Concept Note 2

Rehabilitation and Development of IVS

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.

In addition to the CAADP and NSADP, the Government has in place a number of other policies to support the agriculture sector. The Decentralisation Policy has been revised and the Local Government Act (2004) approved into law, to accelerate the transfer of power to local communities and chiefdoms, and enhance service delivery to small farmers through an ongoing process of devolution of technical and financial resources. With a view to supporting small farmers to make the transition toward commercialisation, the Government’s Private Sector Development Strategy has been put in place, focusing on (i) improving access to finance; (ii) improving the legal and regulatory framework; (iii) promoting and supporting entrepreneurship; (iv) making markets work better; and (v) improving physical infrastructure. Agriculture is also one of the key target growth sectors in the National Export Strategy (2010-2015), including through the mobilisation of Sierra Leone Investment and Export Promotion Agency (SLIPA). The Government has also made significant efforts to support its young population through establishing a number of initiatives to promote employment, such as the Youth Agricultural Farm Scheme.

Over the last decade, donor activity has been making a transition from post-conflict and emergency relief to longer-term development. After the war, donors and NGOs were primarily focused on resettlement and rehabilitation of farming land and rural communities, using project-based approaches. More recently donors shifted to more programmatic designs, and refocused activities towards building rural infrastructure including feeder roads.

B. Justification

Inland valley swamps (IVS) play a major role in the restoration and increase of agricultural production through their potential for cropping intensification of rice and vegetables. IVS exist throughout the country in all the main drainage lines. It is estimated that 65 000 ha out of a total of 300 000 ha of IVS are used for rice production. The cultivation of most swamps was abandoned during the civil war, including swamps that were traditionally cultivated or swamps that were previously developed by irrigation. Weeds and bushes have been growing for several years and are difficult to wipe out with traditional tools. Dikes, canals, drains and weirs in previously developed swamps have not been maintained for years. In spite of the high potential for production in the IVS is negatively affected by: (a) inadequate drainage and flash flooding; (b) irregular flooding due to lack of water management; (c) low fertility levels and iron and aluminium toxicity; and (d) inadequate residual moisture and water supply during the dry season. Irrigation schemes for smallholder production in IVS exist but only at minimal levels. There is high potential to maximize production in irrigated zones, up to double the current yield which is about 1.8 t/ha of paddy. MAFFS has identified some 241,600 hectares of potential development of irrigable land area using surface or underground water management techniques and 28,000 hectares using perennial swamp surface water management techniques.

C. Potential intervention zones and target groups

Potential intervention areas include major lowland rice growing areas in Southern and Northern Regions of Sierra Leone – Port Loko, Kambia, Bombali, Tonkolili, Pujehun, Bonthe, Moyamba.

D. Main Objectives of the Project

Global objective: to develop appropriate small scale irrigation infrastructure in order to boost rice production, a major staple in the country.

Specific Objectives:

- Increase area under rice cultivation in the IVS.
- Increase yield per unit area
- Increase household food security
- Enhance commercialization.
- Increase productivity to generate marketable surplus

E. Description of the Components, Outputs and Activities

Component 1: Rehabilitation and development of IVS

Component	Output	Activity
1. Rehabilitation and development of IVS	1. Rehabilitation and development of 6,000 ha of IVS	1 Identification and selection of IVS 2. Survey of IVS. 3. Mapping and designing 4. Implementation
		1.

G. Implementation Strategy of the project

The implementation strategy will emphasize mainly on the development of small scale gravity irrigation systems, which can be developed by communities themselves at a relatively low cost so that large number of smallholders can benefit; and provide support to farmers to maintain and manage the schemes toward assuming full responsibility with no external support. Social conflicts, inappropriate land tenure and technical issues (design) have been major causes of failure of IVS in the past. Thus particular attention will be given to: social survey and land tenure analysis during the identification and selection phases of IVS; community engagement and acceptance of clear land tenure agreements before embarking on works; appropriate design of IVS to avoid misconception and eliminate IVS which necessitate too complicated or too costly works; building the capacity of FBOs/user groups to ensure proper maintenance of developed IVS.

The programme will promote the expansion/new development of IVS where technically feasible, economically viable, socially acceptable and environmentally friendly. Priority will be given to the rehabilitation of perennial lowlands, with strong community demand, technically simple to design and cheap to implement, without major land tenure barriers. Implementation would be based on the active participation and leading role of the beneficiaries in the design, implementation (farmer's labour, partly paid through FFW) and monitoring of IVS. In each swamp, an FFS will be supported and construction and maintenance committees will be established.

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H. Project Organization and Management

- MAFFS assumes overall responsibility for the project implementation
- SLARI and LWDD of MAFFS will provide technical support to the project
- District councils will provide oversight

I. Monitoring and Evaluation

MAFFS and SLARI will provide quarterly technical report.

The District Agricultural Officers will produce monthly reports based on submissions of M&E officers in the District.

Local councils to carryout independent assessment of progress and report appropriately.

J. Risks

- Willingness of the communities to participate fully in the project
- Favourable political climate for the implementation of the project
- Timely release of funds
 - Social conflicts.
 - Inappropriate land tenure

Logical Framework

Project/Program	Objectively Verifiable indicators	Means of Verification	Important Assumptions/ Risks
1. Global objective:			
to develop appropriate small scale irrigation infrastructure in order to boost rice production, a major staple in the country	Increase number of rehabilitated and developed IVS. 30% increase in rice yield per hectare	IVS developed Production output Farmer income increased	Favourable land tenure Limited social conflict.
2. Specific Objective			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase area under rice cultivation in the IVS. • Increase yield per unit area 		Progress reports	Funds are made available

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase household food security • Enhance commercialization. • Increase productivity to generate marketable surplus 			
3.Outputs/Results			
1. Component1: Rehabilitation and development of IVS			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identification and selection of IVS - Survey of IVS. - Mapping and designing - Implementation 		Progress reports Progress reports Survey map report Progress reports	