

Concept Note 3

Support to Seed Regulatory Bodies

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.

9. 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.

10. 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

1. The ECOWAS has adopted a common regulation on genetic materials, agrochemicals and fertilizer. In order to mainstream the application of these regulations, each member country of ECOWAS must align its national regulation with that of ECOWAS. Currently, Sierra Leone lacks legislative framework for genetic materials and agro-chemicals. Sierra Leone therefore needs to develop a national regulatory framework in harmony with ECOWAS rules and regulations on genetic materials and agro-chemicals. This should cover areas governing quality control, certification, marketing of seeds and agro-chemical legislative framework. In addition to the National Seed Policy, a National Seed Law needs to be adopted to give legal backing to the mandated public sector institutions of the seed sub-sector, and establish the legal basis for variety registration as well as seed producer and supplier licensing; and Variety Protection Legislation.

2. For the implementation of the National Seed Law, support needs to be provided for: (i) the establishment and operationalization of a National Seed Secretariat (NSS); (ii) the establishment of a National Seed Board and Variety Release Committee, (iii) the strengthening of National seed certification unit; (iv) the development of a national seed information (v) the emergence and strengthening of a National Seed Traders Association.

3. Strengthening the plant quarantine infrastructure, materials and human resource to the Crop Protection Systems of MAFFS, so that adequate safeguards are developed at borders and in-country inspection points to prevent introduction of new pests which would affect crop production. Support needs to be provided to: (i) assess and quantify crop losses at different stages of crop growth; (ii) monitor pest incidence and provide forecasting information; and (iii) develop and disseminate pest control practices to farming communities through collaborative research and training. The plant quarantine procedures will be harmonized with those of ECOWAS and its members in order to enhance safe movement of seeds within the sub region.

C. Potential intervention zones and target groups

Potential intervention areas include major rice growing areas in Sierra Leone

Target groups will be seed producers, seed dealers, NGOs, SLARI, Standard Bureau.

D. Main Objectives of the Project

Global objective: To increase productivity through use of high quality seed and judicious use of agro-chemicals.

Specific Objectives:

- To establish and operationalise a Seed Secretariat
- To establish functional seed quality control facilities
- Upgrade Phytosanitary border posts

- Build the capacity of phytosanitary and pest management personnel

E. Description of the Components, Outputs and Activities

Component 1: Establish and operationalise Seed Secretariat

Component 2: Support to Seed quality and Agro-chemical Control Units

Component	Output	Activity
1. Establish and operationalise Seed Secretaria	Functional Seed Secretariat	a. Establish and operationalise a Seed Secretariat
2. Support to Seed quality and Agro-chemical Control Units	Functional seed and agro-chemical control Units established	a. Establish functional Seed quality control facilities Identify FBOs. b. Upgrade phytosanitary border posts c. Build the capacity of phytosanitary and pest management personnel

G. Implementation Strategy of the project

The implementation strategy of the project will encompass the following:

- i. Facilitate the enactment of Seed Law
- ii. Facilitate the development of Agro-chemical policy and enactment
- iii. Establish a National Seed Secretariat and appropriate bodies for genetic material release and control
- iv. Establish seed and agro-chemical quality control facilities
- v. Train phytosanitary and pest management personnel

H. Project Organization and Management

- MAFFS assumes overall responsibility for the project implementation
- SLARI and Standards Bureau will provide technical support to the project

I. Monitoring and Evaluation

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

J. Risks

- Favourable political climate for the implementation of the project
- Timely release of funds
- Contract award and service procurement are done on time
- Staff of various institutions are well motivated to participate in the project

Project/Program	Objectively Verifiable indicators	Means of Verification	Important Assumptions/ Risks
1. Global objective:			
To increase productivity through use of high quality seed and judicious use of agro-chemicals	Increased productivity and production	Farmer income increased Production level Local rice trade	Timely availability of funds Favourable climatic conditions Yield levels will increase by 30-40% under farmer condition using improved seeds and agro-chemicals
2. Specific Objective			
To establish and operationalise a Seed Secretariat	National Seed Secretariat established	Progress reports	Funds are made available
To establish functional seed quality control facilities	Functional seed quality control established		
Upgrade Phytosanitary border posts	Phytosanitary border posts upgraded		
3.Outputs/Results	% yield increase	Reports	-do-
Component1: Establish and operationalise Seed Secretariat			
Rehabilitate/construct Seed Secretariat	Functional Seed Secretariat in place	Reports	-do-
Equip the Secretariat		-do-	

Identify personnel and setup relevant committees			
Component 2: Support to Seed quality and Agro-chemical Control Units			
Establishment of Seed quality Units Construct Agro-chemical depot Agro-chemical quality assessment facility	Functional Units established	Reports -do- -do-	-do-