

POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY PAPER (PRSP)

PROGRESS REPORT

SIERRA LEONE

APRIL 2006

**PROGRESS ON PILLAR II: PROMOTING PRO-POOR
SUSTAINABLE GROWTH FOR FOOD SECURITY
AND JOB CREATION**

AGRICULTURE SECTOR

The cessation of hostilities and the need to the President's Pledge in May 2002 "that no Sierra Leonean should go to bed hungry come 2007" increased the momentum in agricultural production throughout the country.

A steady improvement in the national food security situation is currently being experience. Rice Self-Sufficiency Level has steadily increased from 57.4% in 2002 to 61% in 2004 and 69% in 2005 respectively.

Cassava which is the second most important food crop after rice has a production level far in excess of the national requirement. Inorder to add value to the production of cassava. Cassava has moved from a more subsistence crop to a major Poverty Alleviation Crop thereby warranting His Excellency, the President to declare a presidential initiative on cassava. This initiative is to integrate production and commercialisation of cassava for increased livelihoods in Sierra Leone.

Table I shows the production of major crops from 2002-2005 whilst Table II shows Rice Self-Sufficiency Levels by District in 2004 and 2005.

Table I Production of Major Food Crops 2002-2005

CROP	PRODUCTION METRIC (TONS)				PERCENTAGE CHANGE BETWEEN 2002 AND 2005
	2002	2003	2004	2005	
Rice (Paddy)	422,065	445,633	526,619	552,000	30.8
Maize	16,068	16,060	32,125	38,550	140.0
Cassava	895,817	1,091,178	1,759,292	2,287,060	155.3
Sweet potato	45,450	74,446	153,198	191,498	321.3
Groundnut	98,400	117,000	152,000	167,200	70.0

Table II Rice Self-sufficiency levels by District and Region in 2004 and 2005

DISTRICT	TOTAL PRODUCTION OF RICE (MILLED) IN MT	TOTAL CONSUMPTION REQUIREMENT IN (MT)	SELF-SUFFICIENCY LEVEL (%)	TOTAL PRODUCTION RICE (MILLED) IN MT	TOTAL CONSUMPTION REQUIREMENT IN (MT)	SELF-SUFFICIENCY LEVEL (%)
KAILAHUN	39,664	37,257	106	46,563	37,930	123
KENEMA	38,404	50,527	76	44,884	51,437	87
KONO	20,899	35,518	58	22,326	36,157	62
BOMBALI	22,751	42,225	53	25,300	42,985	59
KAMBIA	27,562	28,807	96	31,229	29,326	107
KOINADUGU	29,494	24,370	121	34,793	24,809	140
PORT LOKO	32,069	47,323	69	35,242	48,175	73
TONKOLILI	22,655	35,972	63	29,556	36,620	81
BO	18,868	49,184	38	22,883	50,069	46
BONTHE	3,099	14,543	21	6,521	14,805	44
MOYMABA	24,660	27,000	91	28,841	27,486	105
PUJEHUN	23,737	24,360	97	28,655	24,799	116
WESTERN AREA	3,417	98,896	04	4,286	99,885	4
TOTAL	307,168	516,183	60	361,114	525,474	69

Apart from the increased production in food crops, the Ministry made considerable strides in the achievement of the following:

1. REVITALISATION OF THE COMMERCIAL SECTOR

- a. Rehabilitation of Magbass Sugar Complex
- b. Rehabilitation of the Sierra Leone Rubber Company
- c. Rehabilitation of Tree Crops
- d. Promotion of Large Scale Farming in the Private Sector

2. ASSISTANCE TO SMALL FARMERS

An analysis of the assistance to small farmers is shown in Table III

Table III Analysis of Assistance:

NO	INPUT TYPE	2002	2003	2004	2005
1	Fertilizer	200Mt	250Mt	768Mt	-
2	Seed Rice	1,000Mt	1,500Mt	3,225Mt	3,168Mt
3	Power Tiller	148	-	-	-
4	Tractors	10	10	21	115
5	Combined Harvesters	-	-	-	8
6	Mobile Threshers	-	-	-	6
7	Haulers Trucks	-	-	28	-
8	Hilux Vans	-	-	20	-
9	Cashew Seedlings	-	43,000	150,000	250,000
10	Ginger Seeds	-	87.5Mt	62.8Mt	-
11	Oil Palm Seedlings	35,000	40,000	120,000	110,000

In terms of extension service to the farmers, the Farmer Field Schools Methodology has been used. A total of 586 Farmer Field Schools involving 14,550 farmers have been established in all fourteen (14) Agricultural Districts. Of these, 520 schools are established by the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security and 66 schools established by the CORAD Group (consortium for Rehabilitation and Development) comprising international NGO's such as CARE, CRS, WORLD Vision with ARC and Search for Common Ground.

In Addition to the direct input assistance to small farmers, the Ministry has improved on its Policy and Planning Environment by achieving the following:

1. Completed the Draft Agriculture Policy and strategy
2. Decentralising the Ministry and developing key functions and staff.
3. Conducted the Integrated Farm Production, Food Security and Vulnerability Assessment, Health and Nutrition Survey.
4. Conducted Manpower Survey and Appraisal.

The trend of Increased Production is also seen in the Livestock sub-sector. Estimate of Livestock numbers have shown that there is gradual increase. This is as a result of the restocking programme by the Government and some of its development partners.

Table IV: Livestock Estimate 2002-2005

LIVESTOCK	YEAR			
	2002	2003	2004	2005
Cattle	100,000	120,000	150,000	200,000
Goats	250,000	300,000	350,000	450,000
Sheep	200,000	235,000	300,000	375,000
Chicken	4,000,000	4,290,000	4,500,000	5,200,000
Ducks	300,000	350,000	400,000	500,000
Pigs	20,000	22,000	25,000	35,000
Rabbits	5,000	5,500	6,000	7,000

In reaction to the world wide concern of an outbreak of the highly infectious bird FLU (Avian Influenza), the Ministry in collaboration with the Ministries of Health and Sanitation, Trade and Industry ;and other institutions set up a Technical Working Committee comprising 18 members to complement the efforts of the Ministerial Coordinating Committee. The purpose of the committee is to develop plans to prevent the entry and spread of the disease in Sierra Leone. A secretariat has been set up and two officers from the Livestock Division have been assigned to the programme.

The Multinational NERICA Dissemination Project

This project is jointly funded by the African Development Bank (ADB) and the government of Sierra Leone. The New Rice for Africa (NERICA) is a higher yielding, shorter duration and better quality rice varieties than most of the improved varieties available to farmers presently. The widespread cultivation of this crop will enhance rice self-sufficiency in the short term and food security in the medium to long term.

The off-season of 2004/2005 267.30 acres of NERICA were multiplied in 15 Chiefdoms within five districts in the country. In the season of 2005, 286 acres of NERICA were cultivated followed by 160 acres in the off-season of the same year. Those efforts produced over 500Mt of seed rice which were supplied to the wider population of farm families who are showing interest in this rice variety.

Donor participation In the Agricultural Sector

The increasing government commitment to the sector in budgetary allocations from 2.7% of the GDP in 2002 to 5.6% in 2006 and the overall improvements in good governance have encouraged several donors to contribute to the development of the agricultural sector. Projects which are operational amount to 13.5 million. Those in the pipeline total up to \$59.0 million and most of these will hopefully commence in 2006. There is also a bi-lateral donor support to the sector through NGOs and these by the EU and the USAID (Table)

In addition to these efforts a number of countries have provided bilateral support to Sierra Leone from 2000 to date. The Chinese government has donated agricultural equipments in tractors, power tillers, threshers, combine harvesters. They have also trained over 60 Sierra Leoneans in China in rice and other food crops production this year the Chinese plan to send a training team of experts in rice production for six months to train more Sierra Leoneans. They will also send 18 technicians for two years to support our food production activities as part of the South- South Co-operation and also a team of scientists and technicians for three years to help develop the rice sub sector as a modern industry.

The Federal Republic of Germany has been supporting the Seed Multiplication project to provide more of better quality seed to the farmers. They are also directly involved in the food security programme in Kailahun and Kono districts as well as funding the Right to Food Secretariat which is the co-ordination and monitoring agency for progress towards the right to food, and the Special Programme for Food Security through the FAO.

The governments of Iran and Libya have donated some consignments of tractors and farm implements.

In collaboration with the Islami Development Bank the government of Malaysia is supporting the capacity building of Sierra Leoneans for the oil palm industry. By this project the famous Federal Land Development Authority (FELDA) scheme in Malaysia will be replicated in Sierra Leone.

The Irish Republic, Japan, Egypt and the United States, the EU, multilateral lending agencies like ADB and IFAD, and the United Nations organizations like UNDP, FAO, WFP, UNICEF and UNFPA are also supporting the sector in a number of activities which together will boost productivity and improve the income levels of the of the population as a whole

Challenges

A number of challenges have been identified and if surmounted the sector will develop and serve as the engine of growth for the economy:-

- Minimal private sector participation in agriculture.
- Inadequate funds for food security activities and shortage of credit facilities.
- Poor network of socio-economic infrastructure i.e. roads, markets, stores and drying floors etc.
- Limited use of improved farm inputs and insufficient farming methods
- Over dependence on rice as the major food base
- Shortage of skilled personnel in the Ministry due to poor Remuneration
- Acute shortage of farm labour
- Weak national extension services
- Limited incentive to attract youths to the sector
- Heavy reliance on rain fed agriculture; on irrigation schemes
- Extensive degradation of the natural resource base (Land, Forestry, Marine and Fisheries).
- Insufficient food safety nets.