

**Country Programme Evaluation Series
02/2021**

**Evaluation of FAO's
country programme
in Sierra Leone**

2012–2019

**Annex 2. Main highlights from the FAO Sierra Leone and partners workshop
(13 December 2019)**

This annex presents the main highlights and takeaways from stakeholder workshops organized to discuss preliminary findings and identify the way forward based on five defined thematic areas:

1. Commercialization
2. Land governance and natural resource management
3. Sustainable agriculture and climate resilience
4. Livestock
5. Fisheries and aquaculture

Participants of the workshop included representatives from the government, UN agencies, resource partners, academia and implementing partners.

Working Group 1. Commercialization

1. What is the appropriate scaling ambition to commercialization?

For commercialization to happen we must have a long-term focus on the agriculture sector. There is need for investment that will support the sector. The private sector will play a major role in commercialization and hence the need to target private agribusiness companies. This needs effective promotion and support for private sector in order to increase investment. There are good examples of experiment in Ghana on the support for free zones with tax exemptions. This led to private sector to be attracted to the agriculture sector.

2. What are we doing towards this ambition?

The government has established a one-stop shop for investors at Sierra Leone Investment and Export Promotion Agency and is in the process of creating a National Investment Board. There are large development partner's support such as Smallholder Commercialization and agribusiness development and the Sierra Leone Agribusiness Enterprise Fund (SLADEF) from the World Bank and Value Chain Development Programme supported by IFAD. The African Development Bank is supporting Rice and Maize value chains. These interventions are aligned to the National Development plan and National Agricultural Transformation agenda of Government of Sierra Leone. As the lower level FAO was instrumental in the establishment of ABCs and FBOs for aggregation and market access and Farmer Field Schools for increased production and productivity of food crops and cash crops.

3. What needs to be done?

There is need for seriousness to do more work and less talk to move the sector to commercialization. There is need for inter-coordination between Ministries and Agencies in terms of ensuring there is a good environment for investors. There is need for the active promotion of the private agribusiness to build a network of agribusinesses

There is need for capacity building of the ABCs in order to become more effective in aggregation and agro-processing. The extension services is not working and need extensive strengthening and explore ways to increase extension worker to farmer ratios. The smallholder farmers are still far from understanding commercialization and diversification. There is need for a lot of support in capacity building to understand investment and commercialization. There is need to explore the use of innovative technologies, equipment and infrastructure to support the farmers effectively.

4. What needs to be in place to enable and sustain commercialization?

There is a strong Government of Sierra Leone commitment to commercialization but there are still gaps that need to be addressed for this support to become useful. There are investor supporting policies in place but they might need revisions to align to SLNDP. The main challenge in Sierra

Leone is that there is weak policy implementation. There is need to relook at the taxation is high there is need to review taxes for inputs. There is need to improve investor environment in order to attract investment.

5. Who needs to work together to achieve this and in what role?

The ministries departments and agencies are required to provide coordination. The development partners are required to provide the funding and technical assistance support. The Civil Societies Organizations and NGOs are required for the implementation of the interventions. The farmer's organization and community-based organizations are key in supporting the production and productivity along the selected value chains.

6. How will the sector contribute to youth employment and women empowerment?

In order for us to ensure that we are reaching the youth and women, there is need for direct targeting. The target youth along the value-chains and they should be enabled to provide services in the relevant sections of the value chain. The youth are interested to explore the use of technology in agriculture. There is need therefore to explore innovative agribusiness ideas for the youth with short-term turnover. There is need to ensure the women are accessing women friendly and appropriate technologies.

Working Group 2. Land governance and natural resource management

The land and NRM breakout session felt that appropriate scaling ambition should reflect what is already in the Land Policy, the draft Customary Land Law and the Law to Establish a Land Commission which is to have all family lands in the country mapped, with awareness aimed at the community and chieftom level country-wide. The national level is also the scaling-target for the policy implementation efforts. With regard to the latter there is considerable work that has already been accomplished toward this ambition at the federal level—national land policy completed, broad-scale sensitization, awareness raising, capacity building and policy consultation and dialogue has occurred. Further effort however is needed in bringing this to all district level offices. However significant further action is needed with regard to scaling up the mapping effort and the activities associated with it—sensitization, border harmonization, awareness raising.

A number of suggestions were made regarding how to enable and sustain such scaling up. These include: 1) involving university students and derive degree and professional training options at universities (youth and education aspects), 2) upgrading the community members that have already been trained in the mapping (as para-surveyors), to a higher professional level to map additional areas and train others (youth and employment aspects), 3) involve investors (with the caveat that these actors will not be seen as objective mappers, but can fund mapping), 4) upgrade capacity at Ministry of Lands for large-scale mapping. In addition it was noted that the Ministry of Lands should derive a framework GIS into which different formats of mapping can be compatible with, in order to take advantage of the different software that are currently employed.

There was a general recognition regarding the need for additional ministries to join the scaleup effort for land and NRM management.

Working Group 3. Sustainable agriculture and climate resilience

1. What is an appropriate scaling ambition related to this sector (2023)?

For 2023 CPF, FAO's ambition under the sustainable Agriculture and Climate Resilience Outcome is to provide policy and technical guidance to the MAF to pilot and scaleup the **Integrated**

Agriculture for Sustainability and Resilience (IASR) Model. This model will build on the Farmer Field School (FFS) concept and incorporates crop production, aquaculture, livestock production and environmental management on the same plot of land.

How does the model work?

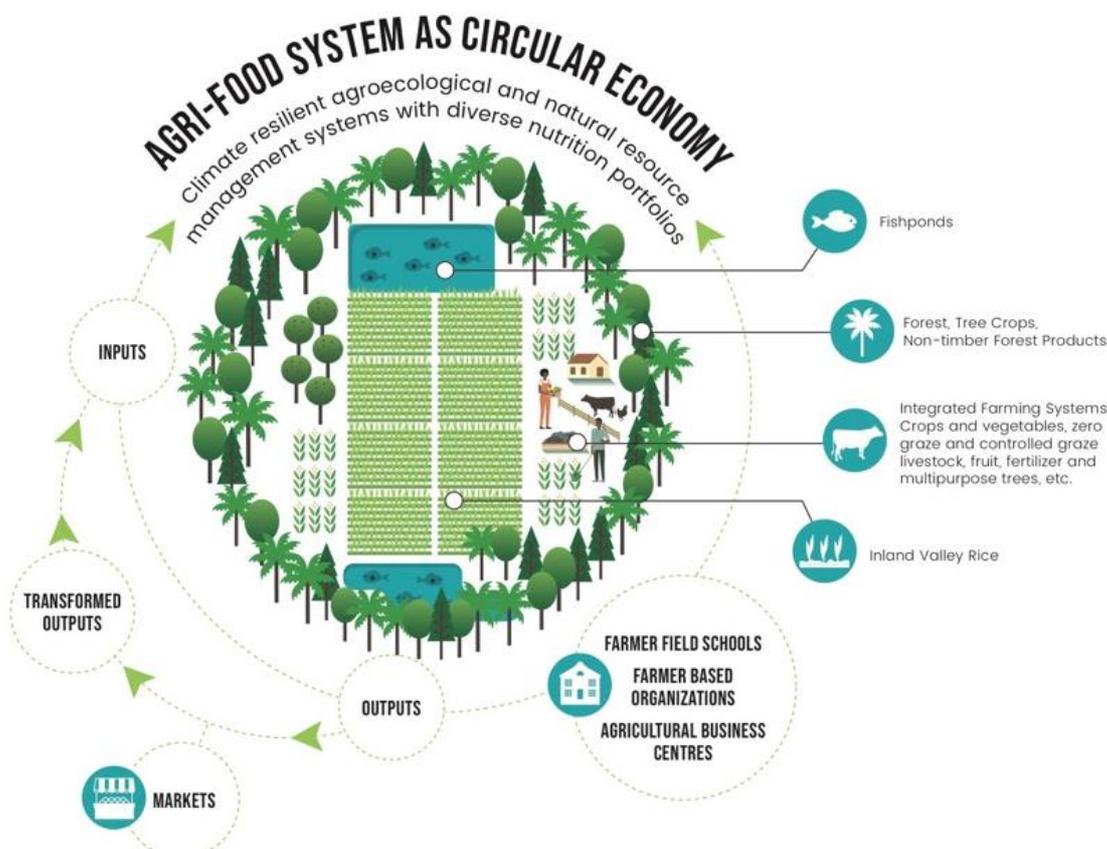
The model basically aims to maximize output from a fixed area of land, while keeping the environmental impacts from the operations to the barest minimum.

For a fixed plot of land (preferably IVS or any rain-fed ecology), various crops are cultivated in turn (crop rotation). On the inside edges of the land, fish ponds are constructed to culture different species of fishes. Around the outside edges (the dry lands around the IVS), other livestock (sheep, goats, cattle, poultry and pigs) are reared. To conserve the environment, fruit trees (interspaced with nitrogen-fixing plants) are planted on the dry land around the IVS, where the livestock are been reared.

When the crops are harvested (e.g. rice), the rice bran or other crop leftovers are used to prepare feeds for the livestock. At the same time, some of the nitrogen fixing plants (e.g. clover, soybeans, peanuts) can also be used as feed for the livestock, especially sheep and goats. In turn, the dung from the livestock is used as manure for the crops, thus enhancing organic production. The fruit trees help to maintain a healthy environment while providing fruits that contributes to a balanced diet production, all from the same plot of land.

The input-output flow diagram

The beauty of the IASR model, is that it builds on the FFS model and incorporates a business approach into it. See diagram below:



The production center becomes a FFS. In its simplest version, this FFS can belong to an FBO and the FBO in turn attached to an ABC. In reality, there can be several FFSs working with an FBO and several FBOs attached to and ABC. Produce from the FFSs are aggregated by the FBOs who in turn aggregates at the ABC level. From the ABC, an Off-Taker (OT) buys in large quantities. This is the output flow direction.

To make the system continue to operate and supply the OT the needed raw material, it is expected that the OT will support the production centers (FFS) with high quality inputs (technical assistance, extension services and planting/rearing materials). This is the input flow direction. Once this input-output flows become effective, the IASR model is sure of working round the year.

2. What are we currently doing towards this ambition?

Currently, the FFS model is operational across the country, though with some real challenges. Since the IASR model builds on this concept, this will be a good leverage point. In addition, Njala University has already gone ahead designing practically oriented integrated Sustainable Agriculture and Climate Resilience FFS related courses to be delivered, with evidence-based demonstration sites, by the university to smallholders and large scale farmers. This could be an opportunity that FAO may leverage on to have the model operational (have requested the designed courses from the DVC – Njala University, Dr. Joseph Sherman-Kamara).

3. What needs to be done (actions, what, where, how)?

To implement the IASR model, the following needs to be done first:

- i. Popularize the paradigm.
- ii. Establish pilot schemes across the country and in different ecological zones to enable comparison.
- iii. Demonstrate success and encourage the private sector to adopt the model.

4. What has to be in place to enable and sustain this (e.g. advocacy, evidence, policy, implementation, pilots, resilience)?

To make this model operational, the following will have to be in place or at least underway, while the model is being popularized:

- i. The enabling environment must be created, through the development of new policies and /or implementing old policies that touch on all aspects of the model. For instance issues of streamlining the model into MAFs activities, incentives for the private sector to adopt the model, supply chain management issues, manure management etc.
- ii. FBO and ABC operations strengthened and some ABCs transformed into seed producers, under the close supervision of MAF.
- iii. A well or moderately developed input supply chain developed.
- iv. Standard testing agencies strengthened for seeds, machinery etc.
- v. Nationwide training of MAF staff, farmers, businesses community etc. in the IASR model.

5. Who needs to work together to achieve this and in what role?

For this model to work, several institutions will have to work together, doing different functions which can be defined later. Some of them are listed below:

Institution	Functions
MAF	These can be defined as appropriate
Njala University	
SLARI	
UN (FAO, WFP, UN WOMEN etc.)	
ABCs	
FBOs	
Solidaridad	
NaYCom	
Private Sector (Agribusinesses, SLeCAD etc.)	
MTI	
MoHS	
SUN Secretariat	
NGOs (World Vision, CRS etc.)	
Donors (World Bank, EU, DFID, IFAD etc.)	

6. How will this sector contribute to youth employment and women's empowerment?

This model can contribute to youth employment through the following ways:

- i. MAF and other development organizations must start designing agricultural programmes and projects that are attractive to youths – must be youth centered, less labour intensive etc.
- ii. MAF should modify the FFS concept to attract youths.
- iii. Government (MAF and MTI) to start undertaking *Youth Innovation in Agriculture Solution* fairs, to encourage youths to showcase their talents in solving agricultural problems.

Working Group 4. Livestock

1. What is the appropriate scaling ambition to this sector?

- i. Aim at self sufficiency and surplus for sale:
 - Introduce modern intensive animal production.
 - Build capacity of producers.
 - Develop livestock value chains.
- ii. Improved human resource capacity for livestock:
 - Animal health workforce – Build from community to national level.
 - Retention/Policies of bonding.
 - Credible salaries/Competitive remuneration.
 - Refresher training.
 - Improved Animal health infrastructure.
 - Operationalize CVL sustainably.
 - Establish Diagnostic capacity at regional/district levels.

- Commercialisation of services – Business plans for government agencies e.g. provide diagnostic services on cost recovery basis to private consumers.
- Develop private-public animal health sector partnerships along VCs.
- Strengthening of surveillance systems sustainably.
- Expand surveillance units to district level.

2. What is the appropriate scaling ambition to this sector?

- i. Sustainable livestock development in terms of population and productivity:
 - Modernize and intensify livestock rearing.
 - Improve farmer education/extension and technology transfer.
 - Integrate livestock into farm household/FFS/FBOs/ABCs/Cooperatives.
- ii. Genetic Improvement and diversification for increased productivity for all species - poultry, cattle, sheep, goats, pigs etc.
- iii. Improve availability and quality standards for livestock products – Public health act for all animal products:
 - Improve abattoirs and other animal products handling infrastructure and inspection standards (VPH).
 - Review and implementation/enforcement of animal health and livestock policies
 - Animal health laws.
- iv. Expand access to grants to support producers increase production.
 - Improvement of production infrastructure, acquire assets and inputs.

3. What is the appropriate scaling ambition to this sector?

- i. Risk reduction – Compensation policies, offtake programmes.
- ii. Empower communities to embrace improved farming practices.
- iii. Livestock based farmer organization- FBOs to ABCs to cooperatives.
- iv. Community bylaws and cattle settlement policies to deal with land conflict between crop and livestock farmers – Need to enact the laws:
 - Designating and developing grazing areas.

4. What are we currently doing towards this ambition?

- i. Supporting capacity building of MAF in epidemio-surveillance.
- ii. Supporting capacity of MAF in laboratory diagnoses.
- iii. Small scale introduction of poultry and small ruminants to women and youth groups.
- iv. Training community animal health workers.
- v. Supporting disease surveillance activities in the field.

5. What needs to be done (actions, what, where, how)?

- i. Create an enabling policy and institutional environment:
 - Develop livestock policy.

- Review animal health laws.
- ii. Advocacy and awareness raising on livestock production, opportunities and benefits.
- iii. Expand animal and diversify rearing among households and communities outside the traditional livestock districts.
- iv. Revamp livestock extension and production infrastructure.
- v. Set aside grazing land with proper by-laws.
- vi. Strengthen MAF technical support and services using PPPs.

6. What has to be in place to enable and sustain this (e.g. advocacy, evidence, policy, implementation, pilots, resilience)?

- i. Sector Policies and strategies for various commodities.
- ii. Demonstration farms and farmer field schools for livestock or integrated with other commodities.
- iii. Livestock supply chains for various inputs.
- iv. Import substitution strategies for various livestock commodities to stimulate local production.
- v. Incentives for local production.

7. Who needs to work together to achieve this and in what roles?

- i. Local NGOs/CSOs/CBOs/FBOs/ABCs/FFSs:
 - Advocate for communities to access grants, organise people to push for development, access market, pool resources and learn together/technology transfer.
- ii. One Health Approach:
 - Work together with livestock farmers, MOHS, NGOs, CBOs, other ministries.
- iii. Local government:
 - Local bylaws, coordination of local development, conflict management, grazing land management.
- iv. Partners:
 - International NGOS (World vision, FAO, Action Aid, Plan International, BRAC, GIZ), universities, UN agencies, Development partners (USAID, EU, GiZ, DFID, WB, IFAD, etc), Banks and other private sector actors.
 - Develop structured institutional partnerships.

8. Contribution to youth employment and women's empowerment

- i. Trainings on animal production and health:
 - CAHWs, farmers/livestock keepers, extension agents, paravets, vets, butchers, tanners, etc.
- ii. Restocking of youth and women groups with appropriate livestock types; poultry, pigs, shoats, cattle.
- iii. Livestock related businesses:
 - Develop Business plans for women and youth.

- Stocking equipment and inputs, products (meat, milk, eggs, etc.).
- iv. Value addition of animal products:
 - Milk, meat, poultry, hides and skins, handicrafts from horns, bones, skins, hooves etc.
- v. Animal feed production & conservation:
 - Fodder, silage harvesting and conservation for sale.
 - Plant maize/grains for animal feed processing.
- vi. Intensification of livestock production:
 - Encourage market oriented livestock production.
- vii. Technical/Artisan Skills training:
 - Machine operators, maintenance of feed machinery, cold chain equipment etc.

Working Group 5. Fisheries and aquaculture

The Fisheries and Aquaculture group was small, but extremely constructive and engaged. One representative from IMBO, the Institute of Marine Biology, one from the Ministry for Youth, and two senior FAO SL staff participated.

Initial discussion centered around the very different potentials and needs for developing aquaculture and marine fisheries. Aquaculture was viewed unanimously as having great potential for both employment and food security. Marine Fisheries, already employing 500 000 in Sierra Leone directly or indirectly, was showing signs of overfishing, and concern was expressed that overfishing could in the near future create very negative impacts on food security and employment in the country.

Some of the six questions asked of the group were discussed at length, others only lightly touched upon, there was consensus within the group on the questions answered below:

	Aquaculture	Marine Fisheries
Appropriate scaling ambition for 2023?	Two fully functional aquaculture hubs, supporting clusters of profitable fish farms.	Matching fisheries resources to catching capacity. i.e. fewer vessels, and healthier fish stocks.
What are we doing towards this ambition?	Hubs exist, but are underperforming and underfunded.	Some individual stock assessment research being undertaken by IMBO, China and FAO, but no collaboration or data exchange.
What needs to be done?	Feed availability is the most important factor; fingerling provision; stronger youth groups; longer term support to trainees; and a more business-like approach to training, placing emphasis on costs, profitability and efficiency.	MFMR to reconstitute the Technical Advisory Committee mandated under Fisheries Legislation, and to follow scientific advice in developing a comprehensive Fisheries Management Plan.
What needs to be in place to enable this?	Established feed mills, and distribution plan; operation by an effective PPP/Private sector partner in the hubs.	Better data collection; closed seasons; an end to illegal fishing; development of a science based policy and licence cap to prevent overfishing.

	Aquaculture	Marine Fisheries
Who needs to work together and in what roles?	Youth, Agriculture and Fisheries Ministries; youth groups, private operators of hubs; FAO technical input.	MFMR Committee to include IMBO, CMAs, FAO, World Bank, European Union.
How will this sector contribute to youth employment and women's empowerment?	Significant clusters of profitable farms around the hubs.	It will contribute into saving employment and food security otherwise at risk of serious collapse.