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SIERRA LEONE

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DRAFT VERSION

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ACRONYMS

| | | | |
|-------|---|---------|---|
| A4D | Agriculture for Development | IPC | Integrated Phase Classification |
| BAFS | Boosting Agriculture and Food Security | LF | Logical Framework |
| CAADP | Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme | MAFFS | Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security |
| CBO | Community-Based Organisation | MTI | Ministry of Trade and Industry |
| CCC | Cocoa Coffee Cashew | MTR | Mid Term Review |
| COOPI | <i>Cooperazione Internazionale</i> / Italian Cooperation Agency | MOFED | Ministry of Finance and Economic Development |
| DAO | District Agriculture Office | NAO | National Authorising Officer |
| DC | District Council | NGO | Non-Governmental Organisation |
| EDF | European Development Fund | PCU | Project Coordination Unit |
| EpE | Ex-post Evaluation | PRO-ACT | Pro-Resilience Action |
| EVD | Ebola Virus Disease | SLEPA | Sierra Leone Environmental Protection Agency |
| EU | European Union | SMART | Specific Measurable Accessible Relevant Time-bound |
| FA | Framework Agreement | TA | Technical Assistance |
| FAO | Food & Agriculture Organization of the UN | TAT | Technical Assistance Team |
| FBO | Farmer-Based Organisation | ToR | Terms of Reference |
| HH | House-hold | UN | United Nations |
| GDP | Gross Domestic Product | WHH | Welt Hunger Hilfe |
| GoSL | Government of Sierra Leone | WPF | World Food Programme |
| IFAD | International Fund for Agricultural Development | | |

Executive Summary.

Background

This report covers the activities and findings of the Ex-post Evaluation (EpE) of the EU-funded Agriculture for Development Project (A4D) in Sierra Leone. The A4D project was subject to a comprehensive Mid-Term Review (MTR) in 2014, shortly before the outbreak of Ebola Virus Disease (EVD). The current EpE builds on the findings of that MTR to give an overall independent assessment of the past performance of the A4D programme, results measured against its objectives, and to identify key lessons and recommendations in order to inform future interventions.

Sierra Leone is a small West African country, with a population of about 7 million people. Whilst some 75% of the country is arable land suitable for cultivation, current estimates are that only 15% is actually cultivated, with only 20% under cash crop production, i.e. only 2.5% of the total arable land is under cash crops. Agriculture is 46% of GDP and 70% of total employment.

The vulnerability of the country to shocks was illustrated by the Civil War of 1992 - 2002, and the EVD outbreak of 2014 – 15. The economy was recovering from the end of the Civil War with annual GDP growth >10% by the end of 2013 but the EVD epidemic and collapse of iron ore prices in 2014 led the country into another crisis with negative GDP growth rates since 2014 (-21.1% in 2015 at the peak of EVD). According to World Bank Trade Statistics, Sierra Leone's top export earner in 2017 was cocoa, with a value of US\$ 14,461.19 million. Set against this, imports of the staple food, rice, of US\$ 191,618.34 million. Cash cropping of coffee and cocoa, an important contributor to the countries' wealth, all but collapsed during the Civil War, and has only slowly recovered since.

The A4D Programme

The A4D Programme was intended to revive the cash crop sectors, targeting crops with the highest socio-economic comparative advantage and strengthening links in the private sector value chain. These crops were identified as cocoa, coffee and cashew. The programme was funded under the 10th EDF National Indicative Plan. Total estimated budget was €15 662 979. The Government of Sierra Leone contributed € 2 300 000, mostly in kind, and grant contracts beneficiaries contributed roughly € 1.5 m in co-financing.

A4D had the following Overall Objective:

“reduction of poverty in Sierra Leone through increased agricultural productivity, diversification and private sector participation, improved research and extension delivery”.

The Project Purpose was:

“to improve the incomes and food entitlements of rural families in selected districts by improving the quantity and quality of cash-crop production, reducing transaction costs and maximizing the efficiency and effectiveness of the value chain, with special emphasis made to selected cash crops with high value on the global and regional markets”

The programme had five projected results, which can broadly be summarised as:

Result 1 - efficient and effective value chains for targeted crops developed, with increased quality production, processing, marketing and trading.

Result 2 - effective management of agriculture, food security and natural resources programmes by District Councils and District Agriculture Offices.

Result 3 - Civil Society and Private Sector as effective and economically viable actors of the targeted value chains are significantly enhanced.

Result 4 - selected training and research institutions strengthened to effectively support the development of the targeted value chains.

Result 5 - effective and efficient management systems, policies and legislation established as an enabling environment for the development of the value chains in place.

The Mid Term Review (MTR) of 2014 suggested that the most tangible effects are to be expected only under Result 1. This finding stands.

Capacity building and training activities at government/public sector level was principally by way of technical assistance by a German contractor. Cocoa, coffee and cashew initiatives at district/farm level with the private sector were by way of grants to NGOs. These NGOs in turn worked with a number of Implementing Partners (IPs) to reach beneficiaries at field level.

Overall assessment

The overall assessment of A4D support to the private sector¹- **very positive**.

The longer-term sustainability of cash crop development under A4D will ultimately depend upon the profitability of these crops for growers and exporters. This will depend in part upon improvements farm management and in quality (something that is under the control of the private sector partners, but requires advisory and legislative support from the public sector), and the world price for these commodities in export markets (which is not under the control of the sector partners).

Sierra Leone is, and will continue to be for the foreseeable future, a “price taker”, not a “price maker” in world commodity markets for cocoa, coffee and cashews. This can be seen as an opportunity rather than a challenge. Sierra Leone could increase its production of these crops very significantly and have no effect on world price. The need is to increase production quantity and quality, in part to command a better price for quality produce, but perhaps more importantly to reduce losses at farm level. The better understanding of this that lead farmers have from A4D and the linkages in the private sector value chain established under A4D will go a long way to enabling much greater and more profitable business in world markets.

In particular, the introduction of block farming by A4D will have an important long-term positive influence. Block farming has been defined as “*the consolidation of the management of small farms of less than five hectares, into a bigger but contiguous unit for purposes of improving farm productivity while **individual ownership** is preserved*”. The important proviso here is the retention of individual ownership by farmers. Several of the IPs contracted by NGOs were commercial traders/exporters who worked with farmers to introduce block farming. These traders have continued and expanded their block farming activities after the close of A4D. In the words of one exporter “*A4D gave me the idea of becoming a planter (a farmer) as well as being a trader*”. These private sector partners are investing in cocoa plantations in the longer term, with leases and buying contracts with farmers. This is having the effect of making credit available, either in cash or in kind, to farmers to see them through the process of renewing and rehabilitating their cocoa trees. These enhanced linkages between traders/exporters and the farming community will continue after A4D and any follow-on programmes are gone. This has been one of the most important results of the A4D programme.

¹ The private sector here is understood to include farmers who are moving from subsistence to cash crop farming

A4D can be seen to have effectively introduced cashews as a cash crop to Sierra Leone. Cashews were previously regarded as a subsistence crop of little value. There has been, and will continue to be, informal exports of cashew to Guinea, but the first official export was of 70 tonnes in 2017. Again, - **very positive**.

The assessment of A4D development of the public sector - **less positive**.

This assessment is due to a number of factors, many of which were outside of the control of the Technical Assistance Team and NGO's. There can be no doubt that many of the individuals who were involved from MAFFS, DAOs and DC and other public sector bodies were fully committed to A4D, but the inability of the public sector to access finance for materials, inputs, and particularly transport has meant that the public sector involvement both over the course of A4D and in the subsequent follow-on has been less than would have been ideal. This is particularly the case with the MAFFS Extension Service. A functioning extension service is essential for any substantial effect at farm level. The extension service is the channel through which information and initiatives reaches the farmer. Again, there are clearly individuals within the MAFFS extension service who are highly motivated and committed, but the chronic underfunding and a freeze on recruitment has left the service unable to be anywhere near as effective as it should be.

Conclusions²

Private Sector involvement

A4D was implemented through Implementation Partners (IPs). Key to the success of A4D and its longer-term sustainability is the fact that several of these IPs were commercial agricultural trading business. These are businesses in their own right – they are not NGOs or other quasi-public – private sector organisations, dependent to a large extent on aid money and public sector finance. The concept of block farming was explained to these commercial traders, and they saw in it a way to secure supplies of tree crop produce for their export business in the longer term – some now have block farming agreements for 15 years. These private sector traders will be in place and continue their activities long after A4D and other development projects are gone. It is important to recognise that these traders are not middlemen. They are not simply buying and selling, they are looking to obtain secure tree crop products for their export business in the future. This is not charity – these traders are profit motivated, but they are recognising that it is also necessary for farmers to be active in the value chain, and that there must be some measure of equitable sharing of benefits throughout the value chain. This is the key transferable lesson to be learnt from A4D.

FBOs and Cooperatives

Farm Business Organisations and Cooperatives were supported under A4D. Some have survived, others have not. FBOs and Cooperatives have had a variable success rate not only in Sierra Leone, but worldwide. Where they have a clear purpose – where there is something that farmers can do better as a group than they can do individually, and where “elite capture” can be avoided, they can be successful. Successful cooperatives grow from ground level. They are not put in place by government or development projects. This is not easy, but nevertheless the fact remains that groups and cooperatives are the way that small farmers can aggregate their produce and achieve some measure of power in both input and output markets. They need to be supported and developed to maintain their sustainability.

² These conclusions and recommendations are in the main body of the report, but are reproduced here to be easily accessible in the report overview.

Log Frame and Planning

The mid-Term review of A4D found that the total number of beneficiaries in the project Log Frame (LF) to be extremely high and unrealistic. Many of the LF indicators were not SMART³, and the definition of the activities included in the LF not clear. In the event, according to the final reports of the NGOs LF targets in terms of seedlings planted and farmers supported has been exceeded. This has only been possible because the project activities were implemented through IPs. Whilst the involvement of IPs has been positive in some cases (Conclusion 1. above), there is also the possibility that there has been some chasing of targets, “quantity over quality”, and that some of the farmers involved may not be so committed in the longer term. The MTR also found that the 28-month duration of the three grants was too short to guarantee sustainability - a particular issue with tree crops. Any follow-on work needs to be planned with more realistic targets and a longer time frame, specifically to allow time for a more detailed benchmarking to identify those growers who are more likely to be there for the longer term.

Public sector weakness.

The public sector involvement in A4D and the long-term sustainability of A4D actions in the public sector has been weak. To be fair, Ebola and the general weak state of the economy would have tested the public sector of any developing country. However, future actions should seek to prioritise certain critical sections of the public sector and channel support to these entities, rather than trying to do everything for everybody. For example, SLARI has been largely ineffective in A4D, and if a government research body of this kind is seen to be necessary, it should be given independent development assistance.

For A4D and similar follow-on actions in the agricultural sector, the key public sector MAFFS unit will be the Extension Service. Without a functioning extension service none of the potential benefits of policy, research and development objectives reach the farmer.

Recommendations.

For EUD/EU Project Planning

1. The success of the introduction and adoption of block farming needs to be built upon. Private sector commercial business partners have had a major impact here, and they have continued to expand their block farming activities without the support of A4D. There will be a limit, however, to how much of this activity the private sector will be able to finance from their own resources. Some form of co-financing mechanism should be considered, with inputs of private sector capital supported by public grants.
2. FBOs and Cooperatives will continue to have an important role to play in giving small farmers some measure of market power, and they are the mechanism where produce can be aggregated for marketing. Their formation needs to be supported with a “bottom up” process. LF indicators such as (X number of cooperatives formed, Y number of farmer members in groups) should be avoided when planning support Actions. LF frame indicators need to be SMART and realistic.
3. The MAFFS extension service has a crucial role to play with the two previous recommendations. Their activities need to be targeted, both regionally and crop specific – they should not attempt blanket coverage of the whole country, and they need to be supported with both capacity building and transport.

³ specific, measurable available realistic and time-bound

4. A4D concentrated mainly on production. This was the right approach at the outset, but as tree crop production increases there will be a need to address both post-harvest processing and marketing initiatives. Farmers need support in understanding the importance of quality, and how the international market for commodity crops works. They hear that the international price for cocoa is more than USD 2,000 per tonne, and question why they are not receiving that for their cocoa. Farmers need to have more realistic expectations of what can and cannot be achieved.
5. Sierra Leone tree crops are “organic by default”, and NGOs have pushed organic production. This needs further study. A very small amount of the world trade in cocoa is organic, and the demand is perhaps more driven by lifestyle and fashion choices in specialised niche markets in rich countries rather than any intrinsic benefit organic cocoa may have. Sierra Leone is and will continue to be a price taker in commodity markets, and a better policy may be to work to increase production of conventional cocoa rather than chase the organic market.

For MAFFS and GoSL

1. The recommendation above need to be understood and adopted by GoSL and MAFFS. They need to support policy development and legislation for tree crops that addresses issues such as quality that are both realistic and enforceable. This will include a review and probable refocussing of the Produce Management Board to understand how effective its work is in supporting the tree crop sector overall.
2. It is recognised that MAFFS is chronically underfunded. Nevertheless, it is necessary to support as much as possible the extension service to become a functioning service that can support the private sector, farmers and traders, not necessarily nationally but in targeted districts.
3. SLARI has been largely ineffective in supporting A4D. There is a need to review the role, purpose and need for SLARI. Is SLARI attempting to do fundamental research that has already been done elsewhere? Can it move from being a pure research Institute to working more closely with the private sector? Could SLARI research stations such as the one at Pendembu be better used to do “close to market” studies such as whether conventional cocoa production would give better returns to farmers than organic.
4. There is a need to strengthen Cocoa/Coffee/Cashew Working Groups and Boards, in particular with definition of realistic standards and regulations, and to provide adequate means for enforcement of new standards.
5. There is a need to examine ways of increasing access of farmers / FBOs / cooperatives to rural finance, for example through APEX bank. APEX bank capital needs to be increased, and switched from a social to more commercial focus, while still allowing for flexible farming financial products.
6. Support to farmers should be devised through a graduated system, with support to be specific to farmers’ attitudes and ability. Grades of support would be for subsistence agriculture, business agriculture (farming as a business approach), commercialisation by way of cooperative support, with specific training and support for each group, including to youth and women.

1 Introduction

1.1 Country Context

Sierra Leone is a small West African country, with a population of about 7 million people. Whilst some 75% of the country is arable land suitable for cultivation, current estimates are that only 15% is actually cultivated, and that of this cultivated area, only 20% is devoted to cash crop production, i.e. only 2.5% of the total arable land. Agriculture is 46% of GDP and 70% of total employment. According to the 2015 Human Development Index, Sierra Leone ranking is 181 out of 188, with 70% of the population below the poverty line, and 50% of households food insecure (WFP 2015).

The main drivers of poverty are:

- low agricultural productivity,
- poor road infrastructure,
- lack of access to safe water,
- gender inequality,
- lack of education opportunities,
- lack of income generation among farming households
- vulnerability to shocks

The effect of the last driver, vulnerability to shocks, was profoundly illustrated by the Civil War 1992 - 2002, and the Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) outbreak of 2014 – 15. The economy was recovering from the end of the civil war with annual GDP growth >10% by the end of 2013 but the EVD epidemic and collapse of iron ore prices in 2014 led the country into another crisis with negative GDP growth rates since 2014 (-21.1% in 2015 at the peak of EVD).

Cash cropping of coffee and cocoa, an important contributor to the countries' wealth, all but collapsed during the Civil War, and have only slowly recovered since.

According to the World Bank WITS Trade Statistics, Sierra Leones top export earner in 2017 was cocoa, with a value of US\$ 14,461.19 million. Set against this, imports of the staple food, rice, of US\$ 191,618.34 million. For 2017, WITS states total value of exports (FOB) as US\$ 103 million, and the total value of imports (CIF) as US\$ 1,074 million.

| Sierra Leone - a Financial and Demographic overview | | | |
|---|-------|---|-------|
| GDP USD billion current | | Population, millions | |
| 2001 | 1.09 | 2000 | 4.564 |
| 2008 | 2.505 | 20015 | 5.658 |
| 2014 | 5.015 | 2010 | 6.458 |
| 2016 | 3.556 | 2015 | 7.237 |
| | | | |
| Life Expectancy at birth | | Infant Mortality/1,000 live births 2012 | |
| 2000 | 38.7 | at birth | 117 |
| 2005 | 43.6 | under 5 | 182 |
| 2010 | 48.2 | | |
| 2015 | 51.4 | Ranked 10 th lowest out of 233 countries | |
| | | | |
| source: - World Bank and UNFPA | | | |

| Cocoa and Coffee Exports, tonnes | | | | | |
|---|---------|---------|---------|----------|----------|
| Year | 2010/11 | 2011/12 | 2012/13 | 2013/14 | 2014/15 |
| Cocoa, | 14,430 | 9,596.7 | 9,00.2 | 10,352.4 | 12,727.4 |
| Coffee, | 4,588.2 | 3,588.2 | 1,882.4 | 2,941.2 | 3,509.7 |
| source: Sierra Leone Produce Monitoring Board | | | | | |

Given the importance of agriculture for the economy of Sierra Leone, agricultural development has been a focal point of government policy. Recent focus has been on intensification, diversification and commercialization of smallholder agriculture through value-addition and access to markets. As a part of its commitment when signing the CAADP, Africa's policy framework for agricultural transformation, Government committed to:

- promoting the private sector in order to up-scale agribusiness industry,
- upgrading agricultural infrastructure
- increasing the budget allocation for agriculture from 3% to 10% by 2010.

At the same time, the government prioritised smallholders and medium to large farm producers in order to increase exports of agricultural commodities by providing better access to markets and processing facilities. A key instrument has been the 2015 Smallholder Commercialization and Agribusiness Development Project aimed at fostering productive business linkages between smallholder farmers and selected agribusiness firms, and in the process, creating jobs through developing local value addition industries for agriculture products.

The priorities of the current Government of Sierra Leone Agricultural Policy are in line with the global 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted in 2015 by the United Nations General Assembly, and the recently adopted New European Consensus on Development in June 2017. These two global instruments make climate smart agriculture and natural resource management very important in achieving sustainable economic development.

1.2 The A4D Programme

The A4D Programme was intended to revive the cash crop sectors, targeting crops with the highest socio-economic comparative advantage and strengthening links in the private sector value chain. The programme was funded under the 10th EDF National Indicative Plan in the framework of the Cotonou Agreement. Total estimated budget under the 10th EDF was €15 662 979. The Government of Sierra Leone contributed € 2 300 000, mostly in kind, and grant contracts beneficiaries contributed roughly € 1.5 m in co-financing.

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“reduction of poverty in Sierra Leone through increased agricultural productivity, diversification and private sector participation, improved research and extension delivery”.

The Project Purpose was:

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The programme had five projected results, which can broadly be summarised as:

Result 1 - efficient and effective value chains for targeted crops developed, with increased quality production, processing, marketing and trading.

Result 2 - effective management of agriculture, food security and natural resources management programmes by District Councils and District Agriculture Offices.

Result 3 - Civil Society and Private Sector as effective and economically viable actors of the targeted value chains are significantly enhanced.

Result 4 - selected training and research institutions strengthened to effectively support the development of the targeted value chains.

Result 5 - effective and efficient management systems, policies and legislation established as an enabling environment for the development of the value chains in place.

The Mid Term Review (MTR) of 2014 suggested that the most tangible effects are to be expected only under Result 1. This has been the finding of the current EpE team.

Capacity building and training activities at government/public sector level was principally by way of technical assistance, T/A by a German contractor, Agriculture and Finance Consultants Int'l (AFCI). Cocoa, coffee and cashew initiatives at district/farm level with the private sector was by way of three grants to NGOs - University of Greenwich, the Italian NGO Cooperazione Internazionale Fondazione (COOPI), and the German NGO WeltHungerHilfe. The MTR cited here was by the contractor Agriconsulting.

The seven component projects of the A4D Programme

| Result | Title | Dates | Contractor | Amount in € |
|---------------|---|------------------------|--|-------------|
| 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 | Technical Assistance to the A4D Project | Apr 12 to Aug 16 | Agriculture and Finance Consultants Int'l (AFCI) | 2 996 690 |
| 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 | Start-Up Programme Estimate | Nov 10 | Republic of Sierra Leone | 201 883 |
| 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 | A4D Operational Programme Estimate | Nov 10 to May 14 | Republic of Sierra Leone | 1 029 893 |
| 1, 4 | Robusta Coffee Development Project | Jul 13 to Apr 16 | University of Greenwich | 1 325 700 |
| 1, 4 | The Northern Land Cashew Project | Jul 13 to Apr 16 | Cooperazione Internazionale Fondazione (COOPI) | 798 968 |
| 1, 4 | Cocoa Development Project | Jul 13 to oct 16 | WeltHungerHilfe | 6 010 444 |
| | Closure Programme Estimate | Nov 10 to May 16 | Government of Sierra Leone | 1 932 218 |
| 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 | Mid-Term Evaluation of A4D | 25 May 14 22 Nov 14 | Agriconsulting | 31 339 |

The A4D Intervention Logic - **Objective, Purpose, Results, Activities** is still sound and did not need to be reconstructed during the Inception Phase. There are however, potential problems with the Log Frame. The A4D MTR of June 2014 states:

- “When considering the envisaged (tangible) benefits at family level, it appears that the total number of beneficiaries is extremely high and unrealistic. Many of the LF

indicators are not SMART (specific, measurable available realistic and time-bound) and in many cases the definition of the activities included in the LF of the FA is not clear”.

and:

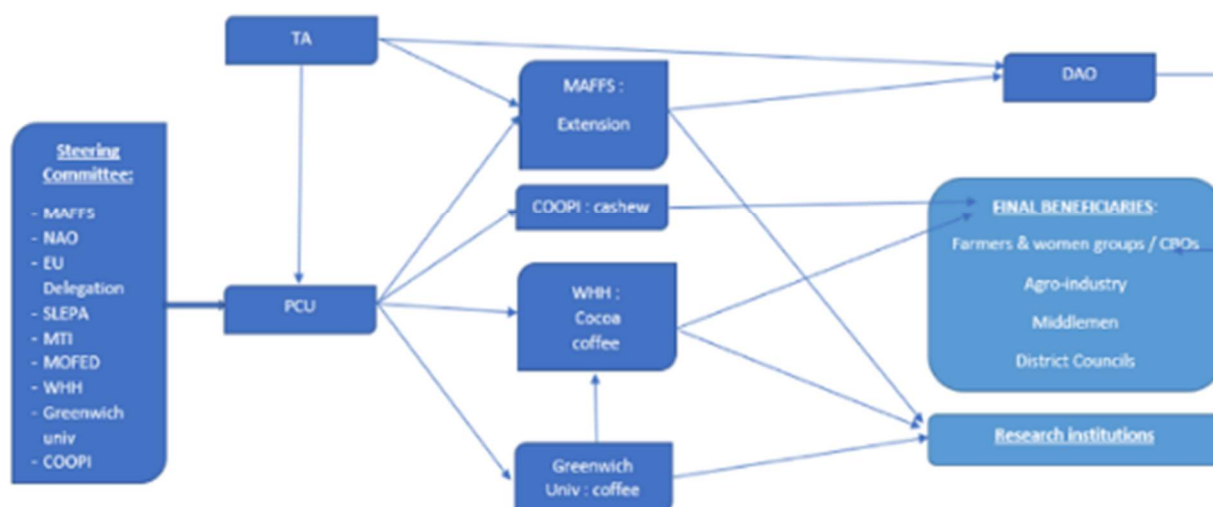
- “Regarding the Project Purpose it can be concluded that A4D has implemented necessary actions to develop the cocoa, coffee and cashew value chains. But the chosen targets for the Project Purpose are unrealistic and consequently they will not be achieved”.

This before the dislocation caused by Ebola!

1.3 A4D Stakeholders

- The stakeholders of the A4D programme included:
- the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security and its relevant departments (including the DAOs),
- the implementing partners: WeltHungerHilfe, Cooperazione Internazionale (COOPI), the Natural Resources Institute of Greenwich University;
- the Sierra Leone Import & Export Promotion Agency (SLIEPA),
- various Farmers Based Organisations and various private sector traders⁴.

Mapping of the major stakeholders:



⁴ There is a tendency to implicitly classify farmers, farm business organisations and cooperatives as in some way different from private sector enterprises such as dealers, middlemen and exporters. This is not appropriate. Once a farmer moves from subsistence farming to cash crop production she/he is every bit as much a private sector actor seeking to maximise profit as are dealers, middlemen and exporters.

1.4 Objectives of the Current Evaluation.

The objectives of this Ex-post Evaluation (EpE) as specified in the ToR are:

- to provide an overall independent assessment of the past performance of the A4D programme, paying particular attention to its results measured against its objectives;
- to identify key lessons and recommendations in order to improve current (BAFS) and future Actions.

The evaluation is intended to:

1. Understand the performance of the A4D programme, its enabling factors and those hampering a proper delivery of results to inform the planning of the future EU interventions and Actions in the same sector;
2. Make an overall independent assessment about the performance of the Agriculture For Development programme.
3. Identify key lessons and propose practical recommendations to the main stakeholders of the programme;
4. Highlight the strengths and main shortcomings, and make recommendations on organisational structure, staffing and resources;
5. Identify successes that can be sustained in future agricultural support programming in Sierra Leone.

The A4D was subject to a Mid-Term review in April/May 2014. This is a sound analysis of the situation at that time. The current evaluation seeks to build on the findings of the Mid – Term Review to provide a sound analysis of the overall A4D programme.

BAFS and ProAct

With the end of A4D in 2016 and in anticipation of a follow-on BAFS(Boosting Agriculture for Food Security) programme, the Pro-Act fund was designed to improve the food security situation of the farmers, especially after the Ebola crisis ended. The PRO-ACT instrument targets countries in crises or emergency phase of the Integrated Phase Classification (IPC) in relation to their food and nutrition situation, since the needs become wider than the available resources in such situations. This fund was therefore used to reduce the negative impact of the Ebola outbreak on the food security situation in Sierra Leone.

2 Answered Questions/Findings

2.1 Relevance and Design

2.1.1 Relevance.

The extent to which the objectives of the development intervention (projects/ programme) are consistent with beneficiaries' requirements, country needs, global priorities and partners' and EC's policies.

The relevance of the project was evaluated as positive by the MTR, and there is no reason to question this conclusion. The project as designed responded to the needs of target groups, and it was in line with the policies of the government of Sierra Leone and with EU policies for rural development. The MTR found that the project correctly addressed the main issues in the development of agricultural value chains. Key findings of the MTR supported by the current EpE with respect to relevance can be summarised as follows:

- the economy of the country is essentially based on agriculture, with cocoa playing a primary role among cash crops. Agriculture employs about 75% of the population and its contribution to GDP was estimated to be 47% in 2012.

- coffee is less important. Coffee is bought by traders to retain cocoa farmers, who also produce coffee. This is because coffee is not considered to be as profitable as cocoa.
- at regional level Sierra Leone faces strong competition for cocoa and coffee from West African countries which present much more developed supply chains.
- cashew is a very important commodity in West Africa, with Nigeria being the second largest producer in the world (after Viet Nam). Approximately 95% of total African production of cashew nuts is processed in India or Vietnam. Sierra Leone has suitable soils and climate for cashew, the low volume of production (in 2015) was completely absorbed by the domestic market, although there may have been some unofficial exports to Guinea⁵.

The Project was considered very relevant as it was intended to contribute to poverty reduction by increasing incomes through an improvement of quantity and quality of cash crop production, it responded to the needs of the target group and it correctly addressed their constraints. The development requirements of the targeted value chains were adequately covered by the Project as planned, with initiatives regarding production adequately mainstreamed in the project by the three grants.

Post-harvest processing was also covered by grants, but the cocoa project probably underestimated the resources needed. The latter post-harvest issue was confirmed by the findings of the current EpE. Commercialisation aspects were the responsibility of NGO projects. This was judged appropriate because developing market channels is not a task that government institutions can easily develop. This may have introduced an element of risk, as not all NGOs have a business focus and commercialisation experience.

Access to finance for smallholders and FBOs was identified as being missing from A4D as planned. This was intentional because at the time of project formulation, access to finance was a topic already covered by IFAD.

2.1.2 Design

There are issues to be raised, both positive and negative, in regard to project design.

Specifically:

- the design of the Project built on lessons learned under the previous STABEX-funded initiatives. This can be seen to be giving some measure of continuity, not starting again to re-learn lessons already learnt.
- the decentralised approach of having a 'satellite' Project Coordinating Unit (PCU) enabled close support to District Agricultural Offices (DAO), and the project Steering Committee along with District Steering Committees also contributed.
- independent/externalised implementation through NGO's made for swift implementation. However, this also meant that there that there could have been a risk of insufficient Gov appropriation/ownership after project's end to follow-up.
- a PCU was necessary to implement a project using EU PRAG; but externalised use of expertise and no extensive MAFFS trainings in PRAG, in particular for the Planning Department resulted in poor integration of the PCU in MAFFS; hence poor ownership of project results.
- The Sierra Leone Produce Monitoring Board (PMB) is meant to ensure quality of produce including cocoa, coffee and cashew in accordance with established national and international standards. The PMB was initially part of the Ministry of Agriculture before being transferred to the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI). There is an apparent lack of regulations and framework for control of the PMB, and its ability to

⁵ The first official export shipment of 70 tonnes of cashew as a result of A4D support was last year.

perform its mandate is limited. The lack of A4D support to the MTI with PMB activities can be seen as a design shortcoming.

- a clear exit strategy was lacking, in particular linkage with rural finance to allow farmers to further expand their operations post-A4D. Access to finance was intentionally not included in A4D because it was already being addressed by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). However, there was no provision to accompany farmers' transition from project support to access to finance when A4D was near completion. There was an assumption that A4D farmers would be able to secure rural finance from IFAD, but this did not happen.

2.2 Effectiveness

How far the project's results were attained, and the project's specific objective(s) achieved, did unforeseen external factors intervene, how far the recommendations of the Mid-Term Review have been taken on board to reorient the programme.

Result 1. Efficient and effective value chains for targeted crops developed, with specific focus on increased quality production, processing, marketing and trading (disincentives removed).

The project log frame specified indicators that included an increase in tree-crop seedlings produced and planted each year, targeted tree-crops rehabilitated, and new areas brought under cultivation, the number of farmers a year adopting new crop-diversification practices, Farmer Field Schools, clonal gardens, communal and private nurseries established and a 50% increase in export volume of targeted crops by 2015

Increase in tree crop seedlings.

The final reports from the NGO's indicate that the target of 1.6 million tree crop seedlings has been achieved, indeed substantially exceeded. According to final reports from NGOs, the cocoa project alone has facilitated the production of 11 million seedlings. This is equated to 10 thousand ha. new cocoa trees, with an estimated additional 5 thousand tonnes export grade cocoa in six years-time (*from 2017*). For coffee, 1.9 million plants of which 1.785 million have been planted out. For cashews, some 320 thousand seedlings from 19 nurseries.

How many seedlings have survived is, of course the real test. Discussions with project staff and other stakeholders suggest that cocoa seedling transplantation survival from nursery can vary widely, from 10% to 70% depending on farmers' expertise, and perhaps also commitment and availability of labour. Maintenance of transplanted young trees is labour intensive and may be beyond the capacity of some farmers.

The results for cashew nurseries are much better, with losses in the nursery at less than 10%, and again at transplanting, 10%. Cashew is a much hardier plant.

Crop Rehabilitation.

Final reports from NGOs state that for cocoa, 20 thousand ha. have been rehabilitated by 42 thousand farmers. It is predicted that this will double the present yield from 150 kg to 300 kg, giving an additional 3 thousand tonnes of export. For coffee, "verified area rehabilitated with project support is 2533 ha. with farmers extending this to an estimated area of 6295 ha". Under the cashew project, crop rehabilitation for cashews was by definition not an issue, as there were few if any commercial cashew plantations with smallholder farmers. A4D was instrumental in introducing commercial cashew production to Sierra Leone.

There can be an immediate production increase through rehabilitation of cocoa and coffee. There is increased awareness of the need for under brushing, although there is still weak adoption of pruning, in part due to lack of specific tools such as pruning saws. Several farmers said that they would buy pruning saws if they were available, but these tools are not currently available in Sierra Leone. In the absence of a saw, pruning is done with a machete, an imprecise tool that damages the tree. Efficient pruning requires a clean cut on an angle, to

avoid water and disease ingress. Also, farmers do not always delay out-planting to be carried out during the rainy season; and inadequate shading can result in poor survival rate of seedlings.

In short, there are very variable results with regard to knowledge transfer to farmers and implementation by farmers of the benefits of crop rehabilitation. How much this is down to the quality and relevance of the training and how much is a reflection of the attitude of the individual farmer is open to question. The EpE team met with farmers who have clearly benefited from the support and training of A4D and who are achieving good results on their farms. They also visited one farm where the head of the household had been a very enthusiastic participant in A4D. Unfortunately, this lead farmer died shortly after the end of A4D. The land then passed to his sons who are clearly not interested, and the farm is rapidly being neglected. As with many things, success or failure is ultimately down to the attitude of the individual.

Farmers adopting new crop-diversification.

There is clear evidence that farmers are practicing some measure of crop diversification and agroforestry, both in young plantations of all tree crops, and as a measure of intercropping. Cassava is widely intercropped, as are bananas, pineapples, and avocado. How much of this is new crop diversification as a result of A4D, and how much is a continuation or re-adoption of established practice is not clear, but there can be no doubt that this is contributing to overall improvement in nutrition and food security.

FFS established and functioning

According to final reports from NGOs, for cocoa farmer field school trainings were carried out for more than 30 thousand farmers. Training was monitored by the implementing partners, project field extension staff, M&E officer and senior district extension officers. For coffee, “a total of 10,690 farmers have been attended(sic) by the project, 22.5% of which are women”. In the cashew sector 48 FBOs were used for delivering farmer field schools based on the FFS manual developed by the project. A total of 204 sessions were held to train each FBO approximately 4 times on different topics. The final report on the cashew project states “*This activity allowed the project to reach an important number of farmers in a short time. The FFS methodology worked also in a very farmer friendly way, by practical exercises and examples. This strategy is to be maintained and further training on agriculture practices should be done through this already established organization*”.

This positive assessment at the end of A4D was not reflected at the time of the EpE. In many cases FFS/ToT has not proved to be sustainable. A number of factors are at play, including lack of community leadership to take over, despite DAO involvement as facilitators, insufficient follow-up by DAO/NGO of trainees, caused principally by lack of transport to follow-up on advice to farmers. Farmer’s feedback has suggested that training sessions were too short and there was insufficient follow-up afterwards. Farmers would have preferred a different training mechanism, such as conventional DAO extension support.

Overall, results with FFS have been mixed, with some groups being successful, others less so. In many cases this is probably as much down to the individuals involved. Where an enthusiastic and effective Lead Farmer emerges, the group and the associated FFS can succeed - a FFS that has no effective leadership is less likely to survive.

Clonal gardens.

The clonal garden initiative was not successful, due mainly to the inability of SLARI to make effective use of the support it was given under A4D. The cocoa final report cites a general lack of budding skills in SLARI personnel and concludes that the improvement of SLARI researchers' capacity was not initially prioritized in a proper way. With cashews, the proposed clonal garden was cancelled. MAFFS strongly recommended that SLARI should do this work instead of the University of Makeni, as proposed by the implementing NGO. SLARI submitted a proposal for the implementation of the cashew clonal garden at a cost of 80 thousand Euros.

The allocated budget for this activity in the project was 1,200 Euros. SLARI has quite clearly been less than effective.

In fairness to SLARI staff, their available facilities and working conditions did not allow them to use acquired knowledge. SLARI is quite clearly chronically underfunded, and the overall management of the Institute at the time of A4D has been questioned. It is understood that there has recently been a change of senior management, and SLARI staff interviewed are now more optimistic, but SLARI still needs a substantial amount of support if it is going to effectively meet its mandate.

Communal and private nurseries.

Whilst there is perhaps limited uptake of some activities, such as pruning, there has been a notable increase in the number of farmers establishing nurseries with the recommended practice of establishing seedlings in polythene bags. A4D had a limited amount of poly bags to distribute, and farmers have been improvising with waste plastic bags and scrap plastic. It is not clear why this technique has been so widely adopted. It could be that the materials needed, i.e.

poly bags can be easily and cheaply improvised, and that a nursery can be established without too much labour. This is not the case with another husbandry such as pruning and underbrushing.

Nursery established by farmer, Kenema District



50% increase in export volume of targeted crops by 2015

The NGOs in the cocoa and coffee sector are generally upbeat about volumes of produce exported. The cocoa final report states “*Year 2013 had an official export, Produce Marketing Board (PMB), of 10.000 t, year 2016 had an estimated export, no official figures available, of 14.500 t. That means an increase of 32%.*” Export data from the Sierra Leone Produce Marketing Board would broadly support this, although this data may be open to question. The PMB itself states:

“Export volumes of cocoa and coffee are affected by some farmers/dealers that smuggle their produce to the neighbouring Guinea or Liberia or export without the knowledge of the Board”.

Cocoa and Coffee Exports 2011 – 2015, tonnes

| | 2010/11 | 2011/12 | 2012/13 | 2013/14 | 2014/15 |
|---------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Cocoa | 14,430 | 9,596 | 9,002 | 10,352 | 12,727 |
| Coffee | 4,588 | 3,588 | 1,882 | 2,914 | 3,509 |

It would seem that the target of 50% increase of export volume by 2015 has not been met, although the effect of Ebola cannot be discounted here.

The situation for cashew is fundamentally different, since A4D can be credited with introducing cashew as a commercial crop in Sierra Leone. The first official export of cashew of 70 tonnes was last season, but an unknown quantity of cashew finds its way over the border in Guinea.

Processing, Quality Standards, Marketing and Trading.

The activities of NGOs and TAT in all sectors has primarily been focussed on production. There is only limited evidence on the ground of any major impact on post-harvest activities. In the cashew sector this is understandable, as cashew was little more than a subsistence crop before the intervention of A4D.

In the cocoa and coffee sectors attempts to introduce improved post-harvest activities have met with mixed success. Improved solar dryers, a wooden frame with plastic sheet covering were promoted. However, because regular middlemen only do a visual inspection to set the price, there is little incentive to switch from floor drying to elevated solar drying - in project areas, only 25% of farmers do elevated drying, presumably because there is no clear incentive and no return on the capital and labour investment.

Solar Dryer frame with cover removed.



Nine coffee hullers were provided. One of these was seen during the EpE study in the process of being moved to a new location, as it was underutilised in the original. A locally constructed building is being prepared to house the huller without any external financial support. This can be seen as positive – time and effort are being expended to utilise an A4D input which could have been simply left unused.

The Produce Monitoring Board (PMB), part of the MTI is meant to ensure quality of produce including cocoa, coffee and cashew in accordance with established national and international standards. There is an apparent lack of regulations and framework for control of the PMB, and its ability to perform its mandate is limited. There is a missed opportunity to increase added value as the result of a lack of proper quality control mechanisms under the PMB, and set standards are not enforced. The Native Produce Inspection Regulations have not been revised, the draft proposals remain in the Land Reform Commission, which

Building under construction for coffee huller, Foindu village, Kenema



has further limited the capability of the PMB. The involvement of MTI remained limited despite the need to support PMB and the Sierra Leone Standard Bureau largely because A4D did not directly support the MTI. In short, the only identifiable increase in overall quality improvement of the sectors has been through the private traders' certification schemes.

Attempts to introduce washed coffee processing have not been successful. It may be too soon for this development. There is a need for selective picking plus proper expertise as wet processing of Robusta coffee is more delicate than Arabica. Robusta is thicker and stickier than Arabica⁶. Sierra Leone coffee is Robusta variety.

There is reportedly a greater awareness by growers of the possibility for better incomes by more direct marketing. If a farmer delivers cocoa to an exporters' collection point she/he can get 12-13,000 Leones/kg for a 64 kg bag. Transport by motorbike would be 20,000

⁶ Source: <http://www.intracen.org/coffee-guide/coffee-quality/wet-processing-of-robusta/>

Leones/bag, depending on location. If the middleman buys on-farm at 10.000 Leones/kg, there is a clear incentive to go straight to the exporter where possible.

Result 2 - effective management of agriculture, food security and natural resources management programmes by District Councils and District Agriculture Offices. *Indicators include trained staff, plans prepared, monitoring work, reports, planning maps and data prepared, used and distributed to stakeholders, and participation of actors at District level in District coordination.*

There was, and indeed still is, clearly strong enthusiasm and support for the A4D programme at District Agricultural Office and District Council level. The question “does the term A4D mean anything to you” invariably was answered “yes”, and staff were able to discuss at length and in detail the objectives and activities of A4D. To some extent this is to be expected in District Agricultural Offices, but the level of knowledge and support for the programme at District Council level is also noticeable.

DAO staff were given extensive training under the TAT component in monitoring and evaluation, awareness of the cocoa, coffee and cashew value chains, computer literacy, yield studies, baseline and end line studies. An initial programme to conduct a full-scale land use plan for six intervention districts was found to exceed the available budget by a wide margin. The decision was then taken to concentrate on capacity development of MAFFS PEMSD and District Council staff to build local capacities especially in the use of GIS technologies for land use planning activities. Particular attention was given to providing practical hands on training in the use of GIS and GPS. There is also clearly more awareness of MAFFS staff on Cocoa/Coffee/Cashew (CCC) organic farming, marketing and processing.

This training has clearly built the capacity of both DAO and DC staff in a range of subjects. However, after A4D there was a major reduction in the capacity of DAO staff to provide continuing extension support to farmers, and of DC staff to implement the planning activities in which they had been trained. This is down to lack of equipment and resources after A4D. There was an insufficient number of computers available, GPS equipment was relocated during the course of A4D to other project areas, and DAO field extension staff do not have transport or any travel budget to allow them to regularly and efficiently interact with farmers, although interviews suggested that extension staff now do interact more with A4D beneficiaries than before where the government budget allows.

The agricultural commodity information system intended to supply agro-marketing data is no longer operational due to lack of internet access and data collection capability of MAFFS and DAO staff.

Result 3 - Civil Society and Private Sector as effective and economically viable actors of the targeted value chains are significantly enhanced. *Indicators include legislation reviewed, drafted and enacted, effective trade / commodity organisations, effective farmer / producer groups and an increase in total volume of produce handled by farmer / producer groups.*

The MTR found that A4D had already substantially contributed to the achievement of this result by 2014, specifically by way of the work of the NGO's with FBO's, traders and commodity associations. However, the Ebola crisis will have had a particularly severe impact on the achievement of this result as group meetings were not possible for the best part of one year.

At the time of the EpE:

- A4D had prepared the ground for subsequent policy development. Cocoa /coffee policies are now endorsed
- A formal cashew policy was not approved under A4D; cashew policy is to be presented to parliament in February 2019, and the current BAFS project is now supporting the establishment of a CCC Board mechanism. There is still, however, an apparent lack of value chain approach for cashew under CCC policy.
- All of the above is integrated now into National Agriculture Transformation Strategy (NATS) Plan

- There is no improvement of the Native Produce Inspection Regulations; draft proposals remain in the Land Reform Commission.
- There was a functional CCC Working Group by the end of A4D, but this soon became defunct. It is currently being reactivated with discussions on structural options.
- There is currently no functional national association of cashew

Farmers groups were established as a means of reaching growers quickly with training and support through Farmer Field Schools (FFS). Results have been mixed, with some groups being successful, others less so. In many cases this is probably as much down to the individuals involved. Where an enthusiastic and effective Lead Farmer emerges, the group can succeed - a group that has no effective leadership is less likely to survive.

Result 4 - selected training and research institutions strengthened to effectively support the development of the targeted value chains. Indicators included education and training packages prepared and adopted, ongoing sessions at each level in the value chain, clonal gardens re-established and functioning, results applied in the field through extension, and a research institute established in Kenema.

Education and training packages were prepared by TAT and delivered, but these packages would appear to have been delivered to MAFFS, DAO and DC staff rather than to the staff of any selected training and/or research institute. Ongoing sessions at field level have been continued by NGO's under ProAct, but the MAFFS/DAO involvement would appear to be minimal because of lack of funding.

This result calls for the involvement of "selected training and research institutions" (plural) but in fact it would seem that the only research institute involved was SLARI. As discussed above, the clonal garden initiative was not successful, due mainly to the inability of SLARI to make effective use of the support it was given under A4D. The cocoa final report cites a general lack of budding skills in SLARI personnel and concludes that the improvement of SLARI researchers capacity was not initially prioritized in a proper way.

Also discussed above, the proposed cashew clonal garden was cancelled, reportedly because SLARI's proposal was well in excess of the budget for this activity. During discussions for the EpE there was also some evident frustration from staff on the coffee project about the size of payments expected by SLARI for materials and support to A4D.

SLARI has quite clearly been ineffective. It is chronically underfunded, and the overall management of the Institute at the time of A4D has been questioned. It is understood that there has recently been a change of senior management, and SLARI staff interviewed are now more optimistic, but SLARI still needs a substantial amount of support if it is going to effectively meet its mandate to agriculture and rural development in Sierra Leone.

Results have been applied in the field through extension by the NGO's, but after A4D there has been only limited input to Monitoring and Evaluation, a reduction in end-studies, and a substantially reduced capacity to provide extension support to farmers by MAFFS and DAO. There is increased awareness of MAFFS on CCC organic farming, marketing and processing, but only limited ability to transfer this knowledge to farmers and traders.

Result 5 - effective and efficient management systems, policies and legislation established as an enabling environment for the development of the value chains in place. Indicators included annual reports produced on time, timely procurement, input delivery and financial control, updated policies and updated legislation.

With the exception of policy and updated legislation as discussed above, this result would appear to have been achieved. Reports have been delivered on time, and they are of good quality. No issues with regard to procurement and input delivery have been raised, with the exception of the failure to be able to deliver improved planting material from clonal gardens.

The MTR found that financial management was properly done, and the EpE has found no evidence to question this assessment.

2.3 Efficiency

How well the various activities transformed the available resources into the intended results against what was planned, how well did Technical Assistance help to provide appropriate solutions and develop local capacities, did any unplanned outputs arise from the activities.

The general efficiency of the A4D was rated positive by the MTR, and this assessment largely stands, although there was some delay in the initial phases. The A4D FA was signed in November 2010, but the contract awarded to the TA Company was not signed until April 2012 with the Start-Up Programme Estimate at the beginning of June 2012. NGOs could not start their operations until 15 months after the initial establishment of the TAT. This had the effect of shortening the time frame for project implementation, a particular issue with tree crops, although the no cost extension of A4D would go some way to mitigating this.

No particular audit issues were identified apart from some misplaced expenses. Project finance control systems were adequate and efficient.

Two satellite PCUs were set up at district level, one in Kambia for the Northern Region, and one in Kenema for the Eastern Region. These were intended to improve management efficiency and decision making, and they would appear to have been reasonably effective in this, although there would appear to have been some coordination issues with the central PCU in Freetown. Satellite PCUs were located in the relevant DAO and covered other districts in their regions. A regular Monitoring and Evaluation mechanism was evolved, with DAO staff and Farmers Groups meetings on a monthly basis, and monthly sectoral meetings of the District Council, although all NGOs did not participate systematically in these. This would perhaps be more so for cocoa and coffee than for cashews, where there was only one IP.

There was in fact some apparent uneven coordination between satellite PCUs and NGOs. The NGO in Kenema for the cocoa and coffee project had a relatively large team of people working with them and were located a site separate from although close to the DAO. The smaller team for the cashew project had an office in the DAO building in Kambia. This has perhaps resulted in closer cooperation between the NGO in Kambia than in Kenema.

The NGO projects had contractual obligation to undertake certain activities, but inside of this they were able to act with a degree of autonomy. This was positive in that it allowed them the flexibility to react to changing circumstances. However, this also meant that the NGOs had to some extent a parallel implementation structure, which was expected to be taken over by the private sector for certification and traceability. This has happened to a reasonable degree, but certification and traceability only has value if it leads to higher prices being paid by export buyers.

The structure that was set-up presented some overlapping activities regarding monitoring and evaluation. NGOs monitored their own activities and were required to report regularly to the NAO/EUD. The PCU would also monitor its own activities and contribute to the overall monitoring system with the help of the TAT because the PCU has no direct mandate to monitor the NGOs. NGOs contracts were with the NAO, which had only a limited monitoring capacity. There are strong indications that this multi-stakeholder monitoring system was not very efficient.

The implementation of the cocoa/coffee component through Implementing Partners (IP's) can be judged as an efficient way of reaching a large number of farmers quickly. This has inevitably meant that monitoring of the programme has been on a statistical analysis of a selection of participants, but this should not detract from the overall value of the activities. Interventions in the cashew sector at farm level were through one implementing partner, the National Farmers Federation. This has meant that in the cashew sector, there is perhaps a more detailed understanding of the exact numbers involved, but this is in no way to detract from the work of the NGO's in cocoa and coffee.

Working through IPs was an efficient way to reach a large number of farmers. It also raised an issue with the selection of participating farmers. The project logframe set very high targets

for the number of seedlings to be out planted and the number farmers to be supported. This has perhaps led NGOs and IPs to chase targets – numbers rather than quality. Implementing Partners selected farmers with no apparent control by the NGO. This would be inefficient as both highly motivated and poorly motivated farmers participated, with some farmers not showing any long-term commitment to the A4D objectives. Some system for selection of better motivated individuals would have been the ideal, but this would have introduced further delays.

There have been some notable successes with nurseries. The limited number of seedlings initially distributed did not meet demand, and farmers were willing to increase substantially the number of seedlings transplanted. This led to more seedlings being distributed, up from 100 to 225 seedlings/farmer.

There were no notable unplanned outputs that arose, other than the fact that resources were diverted for the best part of a year to help the GoSL with the management of Ebola, with NGOs distributing food and health kits.

2.4 Impact

To what extent have the objectives of the project have been achieved as intended and influenced by external factors. Were there been unintended or unexpected impacts, how have these affected the overall impact. Were there issues with project/programme management, and participation of relevant stakeholders. Was there a contribution to economic and social development and poverty reduction, and a difference in terms of cross-cutting issues

Has there has been an impact on the productivity of selected cash crops? The short answer here is yes, although again with some qualification. There has been a productivity increase through improved land husbandry techniques such as brushing, pruning, and stump removal. The number of seedlings available for transplanting was less than would have been the case if the input of the Sierra Leone Agricultural Research Institute (SLARI) had been more effective, but there has nevertheless been an increase in new nurseries and plantings for both coffee, cocoa and cashews. Farmers are now better experienced in on-farm seed selection and nurseries establishment. According to traders, certified cocoa quality has increased 20-30%, with defects now less than 10% defect against 20 - 30% before A4D. Farmers are now receiving about 60% of FOB price plus 100-150\$/t for certified produce, where there is demand.

There has been no significant area increase for coffee, reportedly because of low prices. Farmers with mixed farming are interested in increasing cocoa plantation, only pure coffee stand farmers continue with coffee and expand marginally where possible. The use of the master-farmer approach has been effective for rapid transfer of knowledge in all tree crops.

Recently planted cocoa on a block farm, Guru Gawa village, Kenema.



A major impact in the cocoa sector has been block farming, introduced by A4D. Exporters have rapidly adopted the concept. A4D established some 2,500 ha. of block farming in partnership with selected exporters. Some traders/exporters have subsequently expanded their block farming contracts at their own initiative. Farmers are interested in block farming because they lack capital to improve their operations, and block farming can bring in credit that would not otherwise be available. However, as always, there have been difficulties, for example only 10% survival rate with imported batch of cocoa seedlings, due to logistical and administration issues.

A4D had a particular impact in the cashew sector, where cashew, previously a subsistence crop, is now regarded as a commercial crop. Farmers awareness of the value of the crop has

Block Farming. The concept of block farming has been introduced to cocoa production in Sierra Leone by A4D. Block farming has been defined by the Department of Agrarian Reform of the Philippines Government as”

*“the consolidation of the management of small farms of less than five hectares, into a bigger but contiguous unit for purposes of improving farm productivity while **individual ownership** is preserved”*

The important proviso here is the retention of individual ownership by farmers.

The system has been adopted by cocoa export traders under A4D and has been sustained and expanded since. The trader leases land from the land owner and replants cocoa. The trader is then responsible for the management of the crop and payment of labour to maintain the crop. The trader is pre-financing for a period of 3 or more years until the crop is in production - in effect providing credit for replanting and rehabilitation, always an issue with tree crops. Paid labour may be the farmer and family or may be hired locally - important where the landowner is too old or infirm to work the land themselves, or in the case of women farmers who find heavy manual labour difficult. Payment may be in cash or in kind and food and drink is provided on the day.

Once the crop is harvested then the value of the produce is divided between the trader and the farmer to an agreed formula. One agreement seen specifies 70% of the FOB price to be divided equally between the farmer and the trader. The lease agreement is for 15 years, after which time the land and the crop revert to the land owner. Leases are formal legal documents drawn up by a lawyer from Freetown, read and explained to the farmer before the deal is agreed.

Not all development specialists would agree with this approach. Some have argued that a better and “fairer” approach would be to support farmers cooperatives to aggregate produce and give the individual farmers more market power and bargaining rights. This begs the question, “who decides what is fair”, and successful farm business cooperatives have to grow from the bottom up. This can take time. There is a role for both cooperatives and the private sector in block farming. The two are not mutually exclusive.

Block farming may have its flaws, but it is bringing land back into production that was otherwise neglected, it is providing a system of credit and income to replant tree crops until they are in full production, and it allows the landholder to retain long term possession of their land. Perhaps most importantly, it can demonstrate that it is possible to make a decent living by farming cocoa, so that when the land and crop returns to the full control of the landowner, he/she or the next generation can be better motivated to take up farming as a sustainable way of living.

been raised, with more orderly planting and improved seeds from Ghana with 24 Farm Business Organisations (FBOs) by A4D's end. The Sierra Leone cashew sector is now connected to the world market, whereas before trade was only through Guinea. It is also reported that neighbouring non-A4D communities requested similar support, then set up their own nurseries supported by exchange visits of farmers to demonstrations by proactive farmers. There are cases of a copy effect between farmers, with neighbours adopting techniques such as brushing and out-planting.

The impact on and from the public sector involved in A4D has been less positive. There has been no significant improvement of SLARI's capability to link with farmers, and the mechanism of subcontracting to IP's has resulted in no real sense of ownership by MAFFS. There has

been limited impact of capacity building as this was not embedded into regular routine activities, and because project activities were also not embedded into recurrent MAFFS activities. MAFFS lacked assertiveness to ensure close collaboration of the available Technical Assistance and PCU to ensure knowledge transfer and subsequent results sustainability. A4D can be seen to have had impact on final beneficiaries but has maintained MAFFS dependency on external aid despite knowledge transfer.

That said, at District level, there is clearly enhanced knowledge of DAO's in the cocoa, coffee cashew value chains. Collaboration of DAO's at District level with NGOs resulted in facilitating subsequent support to FBOs and farmers supported during A4D; in effect A4D project areas became entry points for DAO to link more easily with farmers.

The delay in implementation in the initial phases discussed above at Efficiency, which had the effect of shortening the time frame for project implementation, and the coordination issues between the central and satellite PCUs can be seen as an issue with programme management, but this will not have had a major impact on the overall project implementation. Participation of private sector stakeholders and the more motivated farmers has been good. Participation of public sector stakeholders perhaps less positive, but again the chronic lack of funds and resources faced by the public sector has been an issue here.

The impact on cross cutting issues has been largely neutral.

2.5 Sustainability

2.5.1 Private Sector

The principle driver of sustainability of activities established under A4D will be the involvement of the private sector. Several traders/exporters have undertaken some measure of vertical integration by becoming involved in production as well as trading. In the words of one exporter "A4D gave me the idea of becoming a planter (a farmer) as well as being a trader". These private sector partners are investing in cocoa plantations in the longer term, with leases and buying contracts with farmers for 10 -15 years. This is having the effect of making credit available either in cash or in kind to farmers to see them through the process of renewing and rehabilitating their cocoa trees. This is always an issue with tree crops, where it can be up to five years before any real income is available from newly planted stock. These enhanced linkages between traders/exporters and the farming community can continue after A4D and any follow-on programmes are gone. This has been one of the most important results of the A4D programme.

DAO and NGO staff have reported an on-going copy effect, where neighbouring non-A4D communities where A4D support was not available have attempted by to establish their own nurseries, and these is a positive effect of exchange visits of farmers to demonstration plots and proactive farmers. There is also a reported copy effect between farmers, with neighbouring farmer's adopting some techniques such as brushing and out-planting. There is also some anecdotal evidence that the opportunity to make improved incomes from tree crops is attracting some younger individuals into farming. One of the most impressive farms visited was that of a young farmer in the Kambia district, where previously derelict land has been reclaimed and planted with cashews,

Cashews, cassava, pineapples and bees are produced on the land of a young farmer, Kambia



under-cropped with cassava and pineapples. This will yield a secure and reliable income until income is being generated by the cashew trees that will displace the annual crops

Farm Business Organisations and Farm Cooperatives were supported under A4D. Some of these can be seen to be operational at the time of the EpE, others would appear to have ceased operations. The sustainability of these FBOs and groups will depend upon them being able to provide services that are of value to individual members and avoid the problem of “elite capture”, where a powerful individual or group of individuals takes control of group assets or management. These issues with farmers groups and cooperatives are not unique to Sierra Leone -these problems can be seen throughout both the developing and the developed world. Farmers by their nature are risk averse, independent, and not quick to adopt new paradigms. Nevertheless, the fact remains that groups and cooperatives are the way that small farmers can aggregate and achieve some measure of power in both input and output markets. They need to be supported and developed to maintain their sustainability.

The longer-term sustainability of the cocoa/coffee/cashew sector development work of A4D in the private sector will ultimately depend upon the profitability of these crops for growers and exporters.

2.5.2 Public Sector

The sustainability of A4D support to the public sector is less positive. Although located in MAFFS the PCU and TA team were in some ways seen as an external implementation unit, with no counterpart assignment. This meant that the PCU and T/A was viewed as an independent project unit, not embedded in MAFFS, and there was insufficient MAFFS ownership of TA trainings.

Many farmers still use their own seeds for cocoa establishment. There are no significant research results and no linkage mechanism. SLARI must be judged as ineffective here.

A4D had no exit strategy. There was no direct linkage with IFAD and APEX bank to support A4D farmers seeking capital/pre-financing to increase production. In many cases farmers are still reliant upon advance harvest payments from dealers to buy food or bartering advance food supplies against harvest through pre-financing. The cashew NGO has attempted to support FBOs to seek credit from local Financial Service Associations. A 25% interest rate over 10 months has attracted little farmer and FBO interest, although some cocoa/coffee FBOs benefitted from APEX support as they were involved in both IFAD & A4D projects.

Agro-processing facilities for cashews are not yet developed. There are few stakeholders, but the number is growing. Electrical energy supply for cashew agro-processing is an issue – there is no evidence of renewable energy supply strategy.

The NGOs involved MAFFS extensionists in training sessions. An official hand-over for some training activities would have been certainly positive for the sustainability of the Project.

2.6 Coherence

There has been no significant overlapping of activities with other EU / donor's interventions in the targeted sectors and project areas. IFAD was active in providing rural credit services. For that reason, rural credit was not included in A4D. There were clear coordination issues for similar activities implemented (e.g. underbrushing) by both A4D and IFAD. Solidaridad have recently become involved in the cocoa sector, with hybrid seeds from Ghana and Cote D'Ivoire being raised for planting by smallholder farmers mobilized around four cocoa private sector companies, but they were not active at the time of A4D.

2.7 Cross-cutting issues – Gender and Environment

The MTR of A4D found that *“Gender issues have not been properly taken into account. This is because cash crops are basically managed by men”*. Whilst this may be an accurate overall assessment of the situation, in reality there have been some positive indirect outcomes for women. The fact that cashews are less labour intensive than cocoa has traditionally meant a greater involvement of females of all ages in manual agro-processing, and a discussion with a group of women in the Kambia District indicates that the increased income from cashews is benefitting women and children as well as men. These are social issues that are difficult to address in the lifetime of a development project and will be self-correcting in the longer term. A4D did not discriminate on the basis of gender - female-headed farmers benefited from the project under the same implementation mechanism as for male farmers, and there is anecdotal evidence from meetings with women at village level that the increased cash income is at least in part finding its way to women.

There has been no visible environmental degradation, and discussions with the Forestry Department of MAFS reveal that they see no environmental damage. Tree crops are intrinsically more environmentally friendly, particularly where they are planted instead of annual crops. The most beneficial effects of afforestation might be in cashew areas that are subject to annual bushfires – mature.

Alice Augustine on her A4D supported coffee farm, Kormende Luyma village, Kenema



3 Overall assessment

The overall assessment of A4D support to the private sector- **very positive**. The private sector here is understood to include farmers who are moving from subsistence to cash crop farming.

As discussed above, the longer-term sustainability of initiatives under A4D will ultimately depend upon the profitability of these crops for growers and exporters. This will depend in part upon the necessary improvement in quality already discussed (something that is under the control of the private sector partners, but requires legislative support from the public sector), and the world price for these commodities in export markets (not under the control of the sector partners).

Sierra Leone is, and will continue to be for the foreseeable future, a “price taker”, not a “price maker” in world commodity markets for cocoa, coffee and cashews. This can be seen as an opportunity rather than a challenge. Sierra Leone could increase its production of these crops very significantly and have no effect on world price (see Annex 1 for a more detailed analysis of the markets for cocoa, coffee and cashew). The need is to increase production quantity and quality, in part to command a better price for quality produce, but perhaps more importantly to reduce losses at farm level. The linkages in the private sector value chain established under A4D will go a long way to enabling much greater and more profitable business in world markets.

The support of block farming by A4D will have an important long-term positive influence.

A4D can be seen to have effectively introduced cashews as a cash crop. Cashews were previously regarded as a subsistence crop of little value. Again, **very positive**.

The assessment of A4D support to the public sector - **less positive**.

This assessment is due to a number of factors, many of which were outside of the control of the TAT and NGO's. There can be no doubt that many of the individuals who were involved from MAFFS, DAOs and DC and other public sector bodies were fully committed to A4D, but the inability of the public sector to access finance for materials, inputs, and particularly transport has meant that the public sector involvement both over the course of A4D and in the subsequent follow-on has been less than would have been ideal. This is particularly the case with the MAFFS Extension Service. A functioning extension service is essential for any substantial effect at farm level. The extension service is the channel through which information and initiatives reaches the farmer. Again, there are clearly individuals within the MAFFS extension service who are highly motivated and committed, but the chronic underfunding and a freeze on recruitment has left the service unable to be anywhere near as effective as it should be.

4 Conclusions and Recommendations

4.1 Conclusions

Conclusions are organised by evaluation criteria as required by the ToR.

- Relevance and Design

The projects relevance was found to be positive by the Mid – Term Review. This conclusion is supported by the current EpE. The project design built on previous experience and allowed for swift implementation, but lack of ownership by MAFFS and the absence of a clear exit strategy have to be questioned.

- Effectiveness

At the level of the individual farmers and traders who have embraced the support of A4D, **very effective**. There are clearly farmers and traders who have benefitted from the support of A4D to increase marketable production. There are indicators that there has been an income increase for targeted farmers. As with all tree crops, these benefits will increase in the years following A4D, particularly with cashew.

For post-harvest processing and marketing, the assessment is **less effective**, but given further support progress should be possible here also as farmers and traders gain a better understanding of cash crop production

Education and training packages delivered by NGO's and TAT were effective, and where this work has reached farmers in the field there will have been some positive results. Training delivered to MAFFS and DAO staff will have been effective from the point of view of the original trainee. However, much of this was intended to be Training of Trainers (ToT) but this will not be very effective at farm level, at least in the short term, as there is only limited capacity to continue the delivery of this training to the wider stakeholders due to chronic underfunding of MAFFS.

SLARI as a partner has been **largely ineffective**.

Final policy and legislation, to support to civil society and private sector for CCC value chains is still to be incorporated into law, so the effectiveness of these activities remains to be seen.

- Efficiency

The general efficiency of the A4D was rated **positive** by the MTR, and this assessment largely stands, although there was some delay in the initial phases. Project finance control systems were adequate and efficient.

The implementation of the cocoa/coffee component through Implementing Partners (IP's) was an efficient way of reaching a large number of farmers quickly. However, the project logframe set very high targets for the number of seedlings to be out planted and the number of farmers to be supported. This has perhaps led NGOs and IPs to chase targets – numbers rather than quality, with some selected farmers not showing any long-term commitment to the A4D objectives. Some system for selection of better motivated individuals would have been the ideal, but this would have introduced further delays.

There were no notable unplanned outputs that arose, other than the fact that resources were diverted for the best part of a year to help the GoSL with the management of Ebola, with NGOs distributing food and health kits.

- Impact

There has been a **positive impact** on the productivity of cocoa as a cash crop through improved husbandry techniques, less so for coffee but still positive. Private nurseries have been widely adopted, but the impact here has been limited to some extent by the inability of SLARI to be more effective.

A **major impact** in the cocoa sector has been the idea of block farming, introduced by A4D. Traders and exporters have rapidly adopted the concept and are expanding block farming contracts post A4D on their own initiative.

A4D has had a particular impact in the cashew sector, where cashew, previously a subsistence crop, is now regarded as a commercial crop.

The impact on and from the public sector involved in A4D has been **less positive**. There has been no significant improvement of SLARI's capability to link with farmers, and the mechanism of subcontracting to IP's has resulted in no real sense of ownership by MAFFS.

- Sustainability

The potential for sustainability in the private sector and at farm level is **very strong**. Several traders/exporters have undertaken some measure of vertical integration by becoming involved in production as well as trading. The introduction of block farming by A4D has the potential to have a major influence on sustainable crop production in the medium term. These enhanced linkages between traders/exporters and the farming community will continue after A4D and any follow-on programmes are gone. This has been the most important results of the A4D programme.

There is also evidence that there will be a good measure of sustainability in the cashew sector, with functioning FBOs and younger farmers being attracted into cashew production.

Farm Business Organisations and Farm Cooperatives were supported under A4D. Some will be sustainable, others not, for the reasons discussed in the body of this report. Nevertheless, the fact remains that groups and cooperatives are the way that small farmers can aggregate and achieve some measure of bargaining power in both input and output markets. They need to be supported and developed to increase their sustainability.

Agro-processing facilities for cashews are not yet developed. There are few stakeholders, but the number is growing. Electrical energy supply for cashew agro-processing is an issue – there is no evidence of renewable energy supply strategy.

The sustainability of A4D support to the public sector is **less positive**. The PCU and TA team were in some ways seen as an external implementation unit, with no counterpart assignment, and there is no long-term MAFFS ownership of activities.

There are no significant research results and no linkage mechanism. SLARI must be judged as ineffective here.

A4D had no exit strategy. There was no direct linkage with IFAD and APEX bank to support A4D farmers seeking capital/pre-financing to increase production and no mechanism for the public sector to initiate these contacts.

The NGOs involved MAFFS extensionists in training sessions. An official hand-over for some training activities could have been more positive for the sustainability of the project activities.

- **Coherence**

There has been no significant overlapping of activities with other EU / donor's interventions in the targeted sectors and project areas. IFAD was active in providing rural credit services. For that reason, rural credit was not included in A4D, although there should at least have been some formal contact mechanism between A4D and IFAD.

- **Cross-cutting issues – Gender and Environment**

The Mid – Term Review of A4D found that “*Gender issues have not been properly taken into account. This is because cash crops are basically managed by men*”. This may be an accurate overall assessment of the situation, but in reality, there have been some positive indirect outcomes for women. A4D did not discriminate on the basis of gender - female-headed farmers benefited from the project under the same implementation mechanism as for male farmers, and there is anecdotal evidence from meetings with women at village level that the increased cash income is at least in part finding its way to women.

There has been no visible environmental degradation, and discussions with the Forestry Department of MAFS reveal that they see no environmental damage. Tree crops are intrinsically more environmentally friendly, particularly where they are planted instead of annual crops.

- **Major Conclusions (in order of priority as per ToR.)**

Private Sector involvement

A4D was implemented through Implementation Partners (IPs). Key to the success of A4D and its longer-term sustainability is the fact that several of these IPs were commercial agricultural trading businesses. These are businesses in their own right – they are not NGOs or other quasi-public – private sector organisations, dependent to a large extent on aid money and public sector finance. The concept of block farming was explained to these commercial traders, and they saw in it a way to secure supplies of tree crop produce for their export business in the longer term – some now have block farming agreements for 15 years. These private sector traders will be in place and continue their activities long after A4D and other development projects are gone. It is important to recognise that these traders are not middlemen. They are not simply buying and selling, they are looking to obtain secure tree crop products for their export business in the future. This is not charity – these traders are profit motivated, but they are recognising that it is also necessary for farmers to be active in the value chain, and that there must be some measure of equitable sharing of benefits throughout the value chain. This is the key transferable lesson to be learnt from A4D.

FBOs and Cooperatives

Farm Business Organisations and Cooperatives were supported under A4D. Some have survived, others have not. FBOs and Cooperatives have had a variable success rate not only in Sierra Leone, but worldwide. Where they have a clear purpose – where there is something that farmers can do better as a group than they can do individually, and where “elite capture” can be avoided, they can be successful. Successful cooperatives grow from ground level. They are not put in place by government or development projects. This is not easy, but nevertheless the fact remains that groups and cooperatives are the way that small farmers can aggregate their produce and achieve some measure of power in both input and output markets. They need to be supported and developed to maintain their sustainability.

Log Frame and Planning

The mid-Term review of A4D found that the total number of beneficiaries in the project Log Frame (LF) to be extremely high and unrealistic. Many of the LF indicators were not SMART⁷, and the definition of the activities included in the LF not clear. In the event, according to the final reports of the NGOs LF targets in terms of seedlings planted and farmers supported has been exceeded. This has only been possible because the project activities were implemented through IPs. Whilst the involvement of IPs has been positive in some cases (Conclusion 1. above), there is also the possibility that there has been some chasing of targets, “quantity over quality”, and that some of the farmers involved may not be so committed in the longer term. The MTR also found that the 28-month duration of the three grants was too short to guarantee sustainability – which is particular issue with tree crops. Any follow-up on work needs to be planned with more realistic targets and a longer time frame, specifically to allow time for a more detailed benchmarking to identify those growers who are more likely to be there for the longer term.

Public sector weakness.

The public sector involvement in A4D and the long-term sustainability of A4D actions in the public sector has been weak. To be fair, Ebola and the general weak state of the economy would have tested the public sector of any developing country. However, future actions should seek to prioritise certain critical sections of the public sector and channel support to these entities, rather than trying to do everything for everybody. For example, SLARI has been largely ineffective in A4D, and if a government research body of this kind is seen to be necessary, it should be given independent development assistance.

For A4D and similar follow-on actions in the agricultural sector, the key public sector MAFFS unit will be the Extension Service. Without a functioning extension service none of the potential benefits of policy, research and development objectives reach the farmer.

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⁷ specific, measurable available realistic and time-bound

For A4D and similar follow-on actions in the agricultural sector, the key public sector MAFFS unit will be the Extension Service. Without a functioning extension service none of the potential benefits of policy, research and development objectives reach the farmer.

4.2 Recommendations.

For EUD/EU Project Planning

1. The success of the introduction and adoption of block farming needs to be built upon. Private sector commercial business partners have had a major impact here, and they have continued to expand their block farming activities without the support of A4D. There will be a limit, however, to how much of this activity the private sector will be able to finance from their own resources. Some form of co-financing mechanism should be considered, with inputs of private sector capital supported by public grants.
2. FBOs and Cooperatives will continue to have an important role to play in giving small farmers some measure of market power, and they are the mechanism where produce can be aggregated for marketing. Their formation needs to be supported with a “bottom up” process. LF indicators such as (X number of cooperatives formed, Y number of farmer members in groups) should be avoided when planning support Actions. LF frame indicators need to be SMART and realistic.
3. The MAFFS extension service has a crucial role to play with the two previous recommendations. Their activities need to be targeted, both regionally and crop specific – they should not attempt blanket coverage of the whole country, and they need to be supported with both capacity building and transport.
4. A4D concentrated mainly on production. This was the right approach at the outset, but as tree crop production increases there will be a need to address both post-harvest processing and marketing initiatives. Farmers need support in understanding the importance of quality, and how the international market for commodity crops works. They hear that the international price for cocoa is more than USD 2,000 per tonne, and question why they are not receiving that for their cocoa. Farmers need to have more realistic expectations of what can and cannot be achieved.
5. Sierra Leone tree crops are “organic by default”, and NGOs have pushed organic production. This needs further study. A very small amount of the world trade in cocoa is organic, and the demand is perhaps more driven by lifestyle and fashion choices in specialised niche markets in rich countries rather than any intrinsic benefit organic cocoa may have. Sierra Leone is and will continue to be a price taker in commodity markets, and a better policy may be to work to increase production of conventional cocoa rather than chase the organic market.

For MAFFS and GoSL

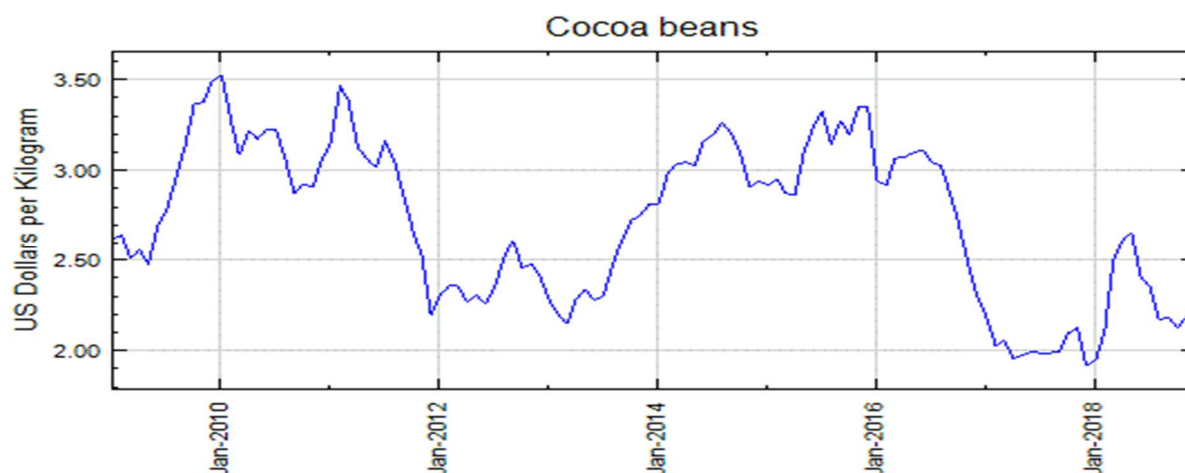
6. The recommendation above need to be understood and adopted by GoSL and MAFFS. They need to support policy development and legislation for tree crops that addresses issues such as quality that are both realistic and enforceable. This will include a review and probable refocussing of the Produce Management Board to understand how effective its work is in supporting the tree crop sector overall.
7. It is recognised that MAFFS is chronically underfunded. Nevertheless, it is necessary to support as much as possible the extension service to become a functioning service that can support the private sector, farmers and traders, not necessarily nationally but in targeted districts.
8. SLARI has been largely ineffective in supporting A4D. There is a need to review the role, purpose and need for SLARI. Is SLARI attempting to do fundamental research

that has already been done elsewhere? Can it move from being a pure research Institute to working more closely with the private sector? Could SLARI research stations such as the one at Pendembu be better used to do “close to market” studies such as whether conventional cocoa production would give better returns to farmers than organic.

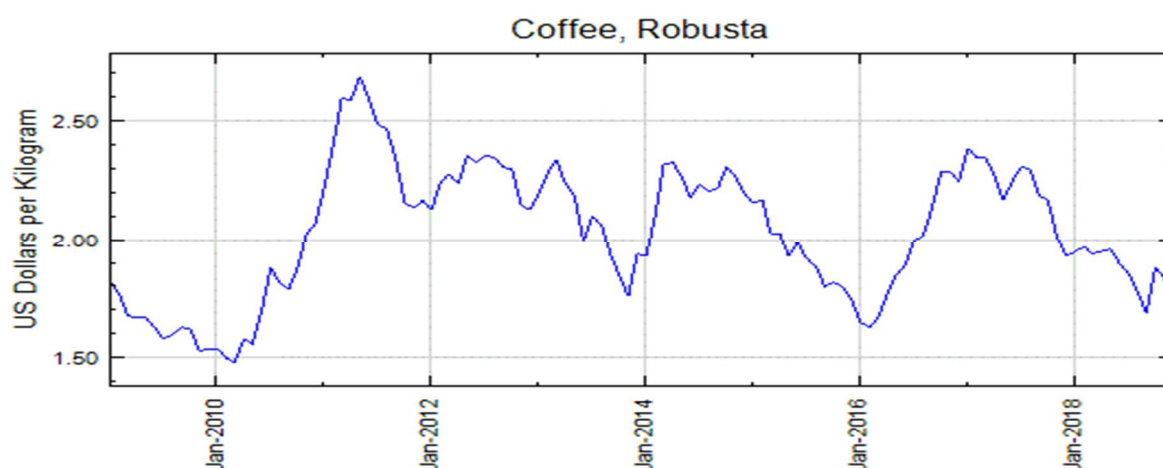
9. There is a need to strengthen Cocoa/Coffee/Cashew Working Groups and Boards, in particular with definition of realistic standards and regulations, and to provide adequate means for enforcement of new standards.
10. There is a need to examine ways of increasing access of farmers / FBOs / cooperatives to rural finance, for example through APEX bank. APEX bank capital needs to be increased, and switched from a social to more commercial focus, while still allowing for flexible farming financial products.
11. Support to farmers should be devised through a graduated system, with support to be specific to farmers’ attitudes and ability. Grades of support would be for subsistence agriculture, business agriculture (farming as a business approach), commercialisation by way of cooperative support, with specific training and support for each group, including to youth and women.

Annex 1 World Markets for Cocoa, Coffee and Cashews

Cocoa - The world outlook for cocoa is generally positive. The global chocolate market was worth \$103.28 billion in 2017, and it is expected to reach approximately USD 161.56 billion in revenue by 2024, growing at a CAGR(compound annual growth rate) of around 7.0% between 2018 and 2024. Cocoa prices⁹, as with all agricultural commodities, are subject to supply and demand, with supply being affected by natural variations such as weather and disease. The ten year time series for cocoa prices shows this fluctuation, and whilst it is possible to draw a decreasing trend line through this data, it is not statistically significant.



Coffee - A 5.5% CAGR is predicted for the global market value of coffee is during the period 2019 – 2024. About 44% of US coffee demand comes from “millennials”, people reaching young adulthood in the early 21st century, and the café culture in developing countries like China and India is becoming a fashion symbol, driving coffee consumption globally. The availability of wide-range of coffee type, flavours and brewing styles, rising urbanization & disposable income are also driving the global coffee market growth. However, the price fluctuation of coffee beans and climate change, leading to supply shortage, are restraining in the market¹⁰. As with cocoa, ten year coffee prices show fluctuation, but no statistically significant trend.



8 Global Chocolate Market Report 2018. Zion Market Research

9 Cocoa and Coffee price charts source – Index Mundi

10 Coffee Market - Growth, Trends and Forecasts (2019 - 2024) Mordor Intelligence

Cashew - Data on long term prices for cashews is more difficult to find. FAO has long term data trends, but these are not disaggregated and difficult to access. However, a general survey of the various commodity websites and analyses would suggest that the long term prospects for cashews are positive. According to the Tridge Business Connections website¹¹, March 2018:

In 2016, cashew nut demand increased by 6.1 percent. In 2021, it is expected that cashews take over 29 percent of the global nut market. Whether the production volume growth can meet the increasing demand is uncertain. Compared to the 6.1 percent increment in demand, production volume increased only by 3 percent. Prices are expected to remain high, and the numbers are only to grow with resilient demand for cashew.

In 2016, world's imported quantity of in-shell cashew was 1,446,151 tonnes. In 2016–2017 the price rose from \$3.55–3.70/kg range to \$5.00 to 5.10, a 35% rise. Raw cashews were priced even higher: the price reached USD 2400 per tonne. Although the current cashew season is forecasted to yield better amount, the demand, not only in Asia but also in North America and Europe remains resilient, and thus cashew price will likely remain high.

Discussion

These data on prices are relevant, but perhaps of more immediate relevance to Sierra Leone is production rather than price. The world trade in 2017 for the CCC commodities in million tonnes according to the various sources cited is:

Cocoa 4.740 mill. tonnes Coffee 9.54 mill. tonnes Cashew 1.44 mill. tonnes

Sierra Leone's exports based on PMB figures quoted by the NGOs were 14,500 tonnes of cocoa, coffee 3,509 tonnes. The first export of cashews in 2018 was 70 tonnes. By any measure, Sierra Leone is a price taker, not a price maker. Whatever Sierra Leone does in the foreseeable future it is not going to materially affect world prices.

Quality and Organic Production. Quality of produce remains an issue at farm and trader level in Sierra Leone. Both the cocoa and coffee projects worked towards farmer and trader certification. One IP worked towards support Utz certification. The final report of the cocoa projects states that:

It is expected that an additional 4,000 farmers will be certified in the next year after the project ends, which will result in a total of 35,000 farmers. FMS and JULA(*the relevant IPs*) worked with 12 organizations towards certification through the TA facility. These 12 organizations consisted of 6 traders and 6 cooperatives that were operating under one umbrella organisation.

The four major traders represent over 80% of the 30,000 certified farmers and volume of exported cocoa. These traders also indicated that they are willing to continue their activities on certification. All cooperatives were certified. They represent a smaller percentage in terms of traded certified cocoa and numbers of farmers, so have a smaller impact. At the start of the project it was already foreseen that not all organisations would be in the position to reach all the certification requirements. Eventually two traders did not get external validation and could not be certified.

A search for “organic cocoa Sierra Leone” will yield results from a number of websites, some from NGOs and development organisations and some from the private sector. All push the concept of organic cocoa production. What is much more difficult to find is any firm data on the actual quantity and added value of organic cocoa exported from Sierra Leone. It has been suggested that 80% of cocoa from Sierra Leone is bought by one company, who then turn it into cocoa butter in Europe. If this cocoa butter is then blended with cocoa from other sources then the organic status becomes meaningless. One of the IPs in correspondence with the Ex-

¹¹ <https://blog.tridge.com/becoming-the-most-expensive-nut-in-the-world-in-2018-cashew-prices-on-a-rise-275b15ba1be7>

post Evaluation team states that that *“although certification for coffee was taken out for one year, as no certified sales were made traders have not maintained certification for coffee”*.

Certified produce only has added value if there is market demand for it.

Sierra Leone cocoa is “organic by default”. There may well be market opportunities in the USA, Europe and Japan for organic cocoa and coffee. These are also extremely difficult markets to supply, with many retailers requiring traceability down to the individual farmer. This is something that will be difficult to achieve in Sierra Leone at her present stage of development. There is a danger that Sierra Leone “organic by default” cocoa is being supported by NGOs and development organisations for whom organic is something of a belief system rather than a rational assessment of business opportunities.

There is, of course, no question that NGOs and IPs have been very active in encouraging quality certification for farmers and traders. Whether this has contributed to increased farm level incomes is open to debate. It was reported that farmers can now receive about 60% of FOB price plus 100-150 \$/tonne for certification of cocoa, but how much cocoa is traded under these terms is not clear.

According to a study by AgroForestry World in 2013, a price premium between 28% and 30% should be offered to entice cocoa producers in Ghana to grow cocoa organically. The premium price of organic cocoa at the time of the study was far below the estimated premium needed to attract producers to switch to organic production. If the export price of today's cocoa in Sierra Leone is \$ 2,300 per tonne (PMB figures for 21st January, the additional 100 – 150 \$/tonnes quoted by NGOs is still way below the 28 -30% premium. This assumes of course that the experience in Ghana is directly transferable to Sierra Leone, and that Sierra Leonean farmers could grow conventional non-organic coffee and achieve higher yields. It is nevertheless right to ask if farmers in Sierra Leone could achieve higher incomes through higher yield by adopting conventional cocoa production systems.

This is not saying that there has been no benefit certification. Traders report that certified cocoa quality has resulted in defect levels being reduced from as much as 30% to below 10%. This in itself will mean an increase in the quantity of saleable cocoa, regardless of whether or not it is marketed as certified organic.

Annex 2 Terms of Reference

SPECIFIC TERMS OF REFERENCE

Ex-Post Evaluation of Agriculture for Development (A4D)

FWC SIEA 2018 - LOT 1: Sustainable management of resources and resilience

EuropeAid/138778/DH/SER/multi

Contracting Authority: European Union Delegation to Sierra Leone

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Rationale

Systematic and timely evaluation of its programmes and activities is an established priority¹² of the European Commission¹³. The focus of evaluations is on the assessment of achievements, the quality and the **results** of interventions in the context of an evolving cooperation policy with an increasing emphasis on **result-oriented approaches**¹⁴. Evaluations should provide an understanding of the cause and effects links between activities and results.

Evaluations should serve decision making, learning and management purposes.

The final evaluation of the Agriculture for Development project (A4D) is required according to §4.2 of Annex II of the Financing Agreement No. SL/FED/2010/21456.

BACKGROUND

Relevant country / region / sector background

Sierra Leone is a small West African country with a total land cover area of ca. 72 300 km², with nearly 75% of arable land suitable for cultivation and with a population of ca. six million inhabitants (2015). It is a Least economically Developed Country with a GPD per capita of US\$675, ranking 167 out of 186 countries (International Monetary Fund Database 2015). Agricultural production contributes ca. 46% of GDP and 70% of total employment. In 2015, the Human Development Index ranked Sierra Leone 181 out of 188 countries: 70% of the population still lives below the poverty line and 49.8% of households are still food insecure (WFP: CFSVA report 2015). The main drivers of poverty and food insecurity are low agricultural productivity, poor road infrastructure, lack of access to safe water, gender inequality, lack of education opportunities, lack of income generation among farming households and vulnerability to shocks including the recent Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) outbreak. The economy had recovered strongly since the end of the civil war (2002) with a real annual GDP growth >10% by the end of 2013 but the EVD epidemic and collapse of iron ore prices in 2014 led the country into another crisis with negative GDP growth rates since 2014 (-21.1% in 2015 at the peak of EVD).

The cash crop sector in Sierra Leone, particularly coffee and cocoa, built the country's relative wealth but increasingly went into steep decline from the start of the civil war in 1992. The aim of the A4D was to help rejuvenate the cash crop sector targeting selected crops of highest socio-economic comparative advantage, irrespective of geographical distribution, and strengthening the links in the private sector value chain, so enabling profitability to be increased at every level. The programme had the potential to reduce poverty levels of approximately 140 000 families thereby perhaps one million people overall.

An important event occurred in 2014 that badly compounded during the project implementation: the Ebola Virus Disease (EVD). It profoundly disturbed the implementation of all development projects, including the 7 contracts attached to this Financing Agreement.

The Action to be evaluated¹⁵

¹² EU Financial regulation (art 27); REGULATION (EC) No 1905/2000; REGULATION (EC) No 1889/2006; REGULATION (EC) No 1638/2006; REGULATION (EC) No 1717/2006; COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 215/2008

¹³ SEC(2007)213 "Responding to Strategic Needs: Reinforcing the use of evaluation"

¹⁴ COM (2011) 637 final "Increasing the impact of EU Development Policy: an Agenda for Change"

¹⁵ The term 'Action' is used throughout the report as a synonym of 'project and programme'.

The action to be evaluated includes all projects implemented under the Financing Agreement excluding audit and financial verification contracts i.e. seven contracts:

| CRIS n° | Result # | Title | Dates | Contractor | Amount in € |
|------------------|---------------|---|------------------------|--|-------------|
| FED/2012/290-014 | 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 | Technical Assistance to the A4D Project | APR 12 to AUG 16 | Agriculture and Finance Consultants Int'l (AFCI) | 2 996 690 |
| FED/2012/292-592 | 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 | Start-Up Programme Estimate | NOV 10 | Republic of Sierra Leone | 201 883 |
| FED/2012/306-975 | 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 | A4D Operational Programme Estimate | NOV 10 to MAY 14 | Republic of Sierra Leone | 1 029 893 |
| FED/2013/322-213 | 1, 4 | Robusta Coffee Development Project | JUL 13 to APR 16 | University of Greenwich | 1 325 700 |
| FED/2013/322-245 | 1, 4 | The Northern Land Cashew Project | JUL 13 to APR 16 | Cooperazione Internazionale Fondazione (COOPI) | 798 968 |
| FED/2013/322-248 | 1, 4 | Cocoa Development Project | JUL 13 to OCT 16 | WeltHungerHilfe | 6 010 444 |
| FED/2013/328-825 | | Closure Programme Estimate | NOV 10 to MAY 16 | Government of Sierra Leone | 1 932 218 |
| FED/2014/342-620 | 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 | Mid-Term Evaluation of A4D | 25 MAY 14 22 NOV 14 | AGRICONSULTING | 31 339 |

The Financing Agreement & the logical framework are in Annex VI.

- Available documents for FED/2012/290-014 Technical Assistance to the A4D Project are in Annex VIII.
- Available documents for FED/2012/252-592 Start-Up Programme Estimate are in Annex IX.
- Available documents for FED/2012/306-975 A4D Operational Programme Estimate are in Annex X.
- Available documents for FED/2012/322-213 Robusta Coffee Development Project are in Annex XI.
- Available documents for FED/2012/322-245 The Northern Land Cashew project are in Annex XII.
- Available documents for FED/2012/322-245 Cocoa Development Project are in Annex XIII.
- Available documents for FED/2012/328-825 Closure Programme Estimate are in Annex XIV.
- Available documents for FED/2014/342-620 Mid-Term Evaluation of A4D are in Annex XIV.

The total estimated budget financed by the 10th EDF National Indicative Plan in the framework of the Cotonou Agreement was € 15 662 979. The Government of Sierra Leone contributed € 2 300 000 (mostly in kind through human resources and office space). Grant contracts beneficiaries contributed roughly € 1.5m in co-financing.

Consistency with Partner Government(s) policies and strategies

The A4D project was also consistent with Sierra Leone's 2nd Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP II) 2008-2012 – Agenda for Change, which puts agriculture as one of its top priorities. Accordingly, the government was focusing on:

- Increasing agricultural productivity (intensification and diversification)
- Promoting commercial agriculture through private sector participation
- Improving agricultural research and extension delivery systems
- Promoting efficient and effective sector resource management systems
- Mainstream cross-cutting issues in agriculture

The PRSP II further underlines the need for “strengthening pro-poor growth by raising quantity and value-added productivity in agriculture and fisheries as the majority of people in Sierra Leone are engaged in agricultural and fishing activities”. Here, the development of agribusiness is recognised as strategic because of the possibilities it represents for food security, revenue generation and wealth creation.

The A4D project was further in line with the National Agricultural Response Programme (NARP) as well as the National Sustainable Agricultural Development Plan (NSADP), currently under implementation in fulfillment of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) process of the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD).

Decentralisation is a major government initiative gathering pace and now embraced by all. Capacity at the local level is currently weak in almost all aspects, yet willingness and potential certainly exist. Budgets are now being released to District Councils and infrastructure is being rehabilitated. Thus, the A4D project fitted neatly into supporting the development of capacity at district level, working side-by-side with the staff of the District Agriculture Offices, the District Councils and other relevant stakeholders. During the war considerable attrition of human resources took place and a break in training and education of almost a generation occurred, so its restoration is crucial to the long term integrity of decentralisation. As a result, training and capacity building was one of the focus areas of the A4D project. The long term development of the agricultural sector cannot be achieved unless local and decentralized authorities are in control of key data and information. Furthermore, it is important to actively promote and facilitate land use planning and sustainable natural resources management in the intervention areas. Thus, the project was perfectly positioned to help with the achievement of national policies.

Stakeholders of the Action

The stakeholders include: the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security and its relevant departments (including the district agricultural officers), the implementing partners: WeltHungerHilfe, Cooperazione Internazionale (COOPI), the Natural Resources Institute of Greenwich University; the Sierra Leone Import & Export Promotion Agency (SLIEPA), various Farmers Based Organisations, various private sector traders.

The table below maps the main stakeholders by type, their weaknesses and the action proposed initially:

| Level | Main Issue | Proposed Intervention |
|---|---|--|
| Producers and farmer-based organisations (FBOs) | Producers are Impoverished and indebted | Promote diversification of cash crops to spread risk and increase production season from two to six months. Encourage the provision of rural credit from other projects and/or rural new banks to replace expensive credit obtained from Buyers' Agents (often 30% or more). |
| | Weak FBOs | Strengthen the FBOs by providing organisational capacity building and directly linking it to ABCs |
| | Low life expectancies | Enable families to move out of the subsistence way of life by |

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| | | promoting income generation of cash crops (and inter-crops) to enable access to health centres, education for children. |
| | Access infrastructure mainly the poor condition of feeder roads and ports | Public sector investment will be sought to repair or re-lay feeder roads to reduce transport costs and for ports facilities for handling the product without wastage. |
| | Youth unproductive having migrated away from rural areas | Sponsor youth groups to work on cash crops and to develop their own initiatives as an alternative to unemployment in the towns and cities. |
| | Women not fully engaged | Promote their development in all aspects of cash crop production, processing and trading. |
| Buyer, Buyers' Agents and Exporters | High transaction costs, provision of credit to producers that keeps them in poverty | Develop collection centres as current volumes produced (200kg/family) are too small to trade efficiently. Increase production volumes to bring in economies of scale. Train buyers and form associations. |
| | Buying all year around | Re-introduce the closed season (May-October, already legislated) to promote increase in quality (less mould, more fermentation) and to decrease damage to infrastructure (roads destroyed in wet season). |
| International marketplace | Sierra Leone is disfavoured as quality and quantity so low and inconsistent | Improve quality of fermentation and moisture content. Increase volumes, e.g. of cocoa from 10,000 T/yr to 30,000 T/yr, and cashew to between 2,000 and 10,000 T/yr. Improve logistics, processing, storage facilities. |
| International shipping | Sierra Leone is disfavoured as volumes are so low | Improve port and shipping facilities as storage space will be too small and special containers not allowed by shipping lines. |
| Central Government | Enabling environment, provided by government unsatisfactory | Help revise legislation, set up a Quality Assurance Company contracted by Government. Do away with duplicated and unnecessary inspections that prohibit free, certifiable trade. |
| | Ministries of Agriculture and Trade not working together | Help re-structure planning, monitoring and reporting capacities of District Councils and Ministry of Agriculture. |
| Local Government | Insufficient capacity to fulfil mandate for development within their own district | Assist in training and education of staff to develop planning, M&E and reporting capacities at district level; enable them to promote the private sector. |
| Paramount Chiefs | Often contrary with District Councils | Assist, with councils, in the promotion of cash crops. Information and knowledge transferred on decentralisation and their empowerment. |
| Agricultural Research and Educational Institutions | Wide gap in the capacity of agricultural staff and the latest developments and poor research conditions | Strengthening the research institutes and related educational institutes especially covering research on cash crops and effective agricultural extension. |

Other available information

Due to a number of reasons, including the Ebola Virus Disease Outbreak that hit Sierra Leone hard between August 2014 and November 2015, none of the projects in the Financing Agreement have been ROMed. A Programme Mid-Term Review was published in August 2014, just at the beginning of the Ebola crisis (see annex XIV)

DESCRIPTION OF THE EVALUATION ASSIGNMENT

| | |
|--------------------|----------------------------|
| Type of evaluation | EX-POST |
| Coverage | the Action in its entirety |

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Geographic scope | Sierra Leone |
| Period to be evaluated | the entire period of the Action implementation(4 NOV 10 to AUG 16) |

Purpose of the evaluation

Systematic and timely evaluation of its programmes and activities is an established priority¹⁶ of the European Commission¹⁷. The focus of evaluations is on the assessment of achievements, the quality and the **results**¹⁸ of Actions in the context of an evolving cooperation policy with an increasing emphasis on **result-oriented approaches**¹⁹. From this perspective, evaluations should **look for evidence of why, whether or how these results are linked to the EU intervention** and seek to **identify the factors driving or hindering progress**.

Evaluations should provide an understanding of the **cause and effects links** between inputs and activities, and outputs, outcomes and impacts. Evaluations should serve accountability, decision making, learning and management purposes.

The main objectives of this evaluation are to provide the relevant services of the European Union, the interested stakeholders and the wider public with:

- an overall independent assessment of the past performance of the Agriculture For Development programme, paying particular attention to its results measured against its objectives;
- key lessons and recommendations in order to improve current (BAFS) and future Actions. It should not only describe what has been achieved or what the Action contributed to achieve but particularly why and upon what conditions results have been achieved or not.

In particular, this evaluation will serve to:

1. Understand the performance of the Action, its enabling factors and those hampering a proper delivery of results as to inform the planning of the future EU interventions and Actions in the same sector;
2. Make an overall independent assessment about the performance of the Agriculture For Development programme paying particular attention to the analysis of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability, coherence and added value of the processes, systems and approach;

¹⁶ COM(2013) 686 final "Strengthening the foundations of Smart Regulation – improving evaluation" - http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/docs/com_2013_686_en.pdf; EU Financial regulation (art 27); Regulation (EC) No 1905/2006; Regulation (EC) No 1889/2006; Regulation (EC) No 1638/2006; Regulation (EC) No 1717/2006; Council Regulation (EC) No 215/2008

¹⁷ SEC (2007)213 "Responding to Strategic Needs: Reinforcing the use of evaluation", http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/evaluation/docs/eval_comm_sec_2007_213_en.pdf ; SWD (2015)111 "Better Regulation Guidelines", http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/guidelines/docs/swd_br_guidelines_en.pdf

¹⁸ Reference is made to the entire results chain, covering outputs, outcomes and impacts. Cfr. Regulation (EU) No 236/2014 "Laying down common rules and procedures for the implementation of the Union's instruments for financing external action" - https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/pdf/financial_assistance/ipa/2014/236-2014_cir.pdf.

¹⁹ COM (2011) 637 final "Increasing the impact of EU Development Policy: an Agenda for Change" - http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/acp/dv/communication_/communication_en.pdf

3. Identify key lessons and propose practical recommendations to the main stakeholders of the programme;
4. Highlight the strengths and main shortcomings, and make recommendations on organisational structure, staffing and resources;
5. Identify successes that can be sustained in future agricultural support programming in Sierra Leone.

The main users of this evaluation will be the services of the European Union Commission DEVCO C1 unit and the Delegation in Sierra Leone, the Sierra Leone Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security at the central and district levels, the EU Boosting Agriculture and Food Security programme currently underway, as well as the relevant services of Ministry of Trade and the National Authorising Office, the implementing agencies involved in A4D (WeltHungerHilfe, COOPI, the Natural Resources Institute of Greenwich University, GB) and the private sector companies involved in the cultivation and commercialisation of the cash crops under development.

Requested services

Scope of the evaluation

The evaluation will assess the Action using the five standard DAC evaluation criteria, namely: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact. In addition, the evaluation will assess two EU specific evaluation criteria:

- the EU added value (the extent to which the Action adds benefits to what would have resulted from Member States' interventions only);
- the coherence of the Action itself, with the EU strategy in Sierra Leone and with other EU policies and Member State Actions, and the agricultural programmes of the World Bank in Sierra Leone.

The evaluation team shall furthermore consider whether the following cross-cutting issues: gender equality, environmental sustainability and fostering of the private sector, were taken into account in the identification/formulation documents and the extent to which they have been reflected in the implementation of the Action and its monitoring.

The specific Evaluation Questions as formulated below are indicative. Based on them and following initial consultations and documental analysis, the evaluation team will propose in their Inception Report a complete and finalised set of Evaluation Questions with indication of specific Judgement Criteria and Indicators, as well as the relevant data collection sources and tools.

Once agreed with the approval of the Inception Report, the Evaluation Questions will become contractually binding.

Indicative Evaluation Questions

An indicative list of Evaluation Questions is presented hereafter. The contractor is expected to critically reflect on them during the Inception phase, discuss them with the Project Manager²⁰ and propose a final version for approval in their Inception Report.

RELEVANCE: The extent to which the objectives of the development intervention (projects/ programme) are consistent with beneficiaries' requirements, country needs, global priorities and partners' and EC's policies.

1. the quality of the problem analysis and the project's intervention logic and logical framework matrix, appropriateness of the objectively verifiable indicators of achievement;

²⁰ The Project Manager is the staff of the Contracting Authority managing the evaluation contract.

EFFECTIVENESS: The effectiveness criterion, concerns how far the project's results were attained, and the project's specific objective(s) achieved, or are expected to be achieved.

2. whether the planned benefits have been delivered and received, as perceived by all key stakeholders (including women and men and specific vulnerable groups);
3. if unforeseen external factors intervened, how flexibly management has adapted to ensure that the results would still achieve the purpose; and how well has it been supported in this by key stakeholders including Government, Commission (HQ and locally), etc.;
4. how far the recommendations of the Mid-Term Review have been taken on board to reorient the program

EFFICIENCY: The efficiency criterion concerns how well the various activities transformed the available resources into the intended results (sometimes referred to as outputs), in terms of quantity, quality and timeliness. Comparison should be made against what was planned.

5. Technical assistance: how well did it help to provide appropriate solutions and develop local capacities to define and produce results?
6. Did any unplanned outputs arise from the activities so far?

IMPACT: At Impact level the final or ex-post evaluation will make an analysis of the following aspects:

7. Extent to which the objectives of the project have been achieved as intended in particular the project planned overall objective.
8. whether the effects of the project:
 - a) have been facilitated/constrained by external factors
 - b) have produced any unintended or unexpected impacts, and if so how have these affected the overall impact.
 - c) have been facilitated/constrained by project/programme management, by co-ordination arrangements, by the participation of relevant stakeholders
 - d) have contributed to economic and social development
 - e) have contributed to poverty reduction
 - f) have made a difference in terms of cross-cutting issues like gender equality, environment, good governance, conflict prevention etc.
 - g) were spread between economic growth, salaries and wages, foreign exchange, and budget.

SUSTAINABILITY: The sustainability criterion relates to whether the positive outcomes of the project and the flow of benefits are likely to continue after external funding ends or non-funding support interventions (such as: policy dialogue, coordination).

The final evaluation will make an assessment of the prospects for the sustainability of benefits on basis of the following issues:

9. policy support and the responsibility of the beneficiary institutions, e.g. how far donor policy and national policy are corresponding, the potential effects of any policy changes; how far the relevant national, sectoral and budgetary policies and priorities are affecting the project positively or adversely; and the level of support from governmental, public, business and civil society organizations.
10. Wherever relevant, cross-cutting issues such as gender equity, environmental impact and good governance; were appropriately accounted for and managed from the outset of the project.

Coherence: The extent to which activities undertaken allow the European Commission to achieve its development policy objectives without internal contradiction or without contradiction with other

Community policies; extent to which they complement partner country's policies and other donors' interventions.

Considering other related activities undertaken by Government or other donors, at the same level or at a higher level:

11. likelihood that results and impacts will mutually reinforce one another

Phases of the evaluation and required deliverables

The evaluation process will be carried out in three phases: an Inception Phase, a Field Phase, and a Synthesis Phase. Deliverables in the form of reports should be submitted at the end of the corresponding phases as specified in the synoptic table below.

The submission of deliverables by the selected contractor will be performed through their uploading in the EVAL Module, an evaluation process management tool of the European Commission; the selected consultant will have access to online guidance in order to operate with the module.

Synoptic table

The following table presents an overview of the key activities to be conducted during each phase (not necessarily in chronological order) and lists the deliverables to be produced by the team, including the key meetings with the Contracting Authority and the Reference Group. The main content of each deliverable is described in Chapter 0.

| Phases of the evaluation | Key activities | Deliverables and <i>meetings</i> |
|-------------------------------|---|---|
| <u>Inception Phase</u> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial document/data collection and definition of methods of analysis Background analysis Initial interviews Reconstruction of Intervention Logic, including objectives, specific features and target beneficiaries Methodological design of the Field Phase | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Kick-off meeting</i> either face-to-face or via remote conference Inception note Slide presentation to the Reference Group |
| <u>Field Phase</u> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial meetings at country level with all available concerned stakeholders Gathering of primary evidence using the most appropriate techniques Data collection and analysis | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft slide Presentation (to be used in the final seminar) Debriefing with the Reference Group or with the EUD |
| <u>Synthesis phase</u> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final analysis of findings (with focus on the Evaluation Questions) Formulation of the overall assessment, conclusions and recommendations Organisation of the final presentation seminar | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft Final Report Executive Summary Final Report Slide presentation Meeting with Reference Group Final presentation seminar |

Inception Phase

This phase aims at structuring the evaluation and clarifying its key issues.

The phase will start with a kick-off session in Freetown between the EU Delegation and the evaluators. Half-day presence of experts whose presence is necessary is required. The meeting has the purpose to arrive at a clear and shared understanding of the scope of the evaluation, its limitations and

feasibility. There is also the possibility to conduct the first meeting by video conference, if convenient and workable.

In the Inception phase, the relevant documents will be reviewed (see annex II). They include project documents, report, policy documents and data provided by the EUD, the NAO, the MAFFS and WeltHungerHilfe, COOPI and the NRI. Most of those documents are available in electronic format.

Further to a first desk review of the political, institutional and/or technical/cooperation framework of EU support to Sierra Leone in the agricultural sector, the evaluation team, in consultation with the Project Manager, will reconstruct the Intervention Logic of the Action to be evaluated.

Based on the reconstructed Intervention Logic, the evaluators will finalise the evaluation methodology, the Evaluation Questions, the definition of judgement criteria and indicators, the selection of data collection tools and sources, and the planning of the following phases. They will also summarise their approach in an Evaluation Design Matrix, which will be included in the Inception Report.

The limitations faced or to be faced during the evaluation exercise will be discussed and mitigation measures defined. Finally, the work plan for the overall evaluation process will be presented and agreed in this phase; this work plan shall be in line with that proposed in the present ToRs. Any modifications shall be justified and agreed with the Project Manager.

On the basis of the information collected, the evaluation team should prepare an **Inception Report**; its content is described in Chapter 0.

The evaluation team will then present in Freetown the **Inception Report** to the Reference Group.

Field Phase

The Field Phase starts after approval of the Inception Report by the Project Manager.

If any significant deviation from the agreed work plan or schedule is perceived as creating a risk for the quality of the evaluation, these elements are to be immediately discussed with the Project Manager.

In the first days of the field phase, the evaluation team shall hold a briefing meeting with the MAFFS, the Delegation, and other relevant stakeholders (UN agencies, World Bank, etc.).

During the field phase, the evaluation team shall ensure adequate contact and consultation with, and involvement of the different stakeholders; with the relevant government authorities and agencies. Throughout the mission the evaluation team shall use the most reliable and appropriate sources of information, respect the rights of individuals to provide information in confidence, and be sensitive to the beliefs and customs of local social and cultural environments.

At the end of the field phase, the evaluation team shall summarise its work, analyse the reliability and coverage of data collection, and present preliminary findings in a short meeting with the EU Delegation and the Reference Group if possible. The Evaluation Manager consolidates the comments expressed by the Reference Group members and sends them to the evaluation team for the report revision, together with a first version of the Quality Assessment Grid (QAG) assessing the quality of the Draft Final Report. The content of the QAG will be discussed with the evaluation team to verify if further improvements are required, and the evaluation team will be invited to comment on the conclusions formulated in the QAG (through the EVAL Module).

Synthesis Phase

This phase is devoted to the preparation of the Final Report and entails the analysis of the data collected during the desk and field phases to finalise the answers to the Evaluation Questions and prepare the overall assessment, conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation.

The evaluation team will present in a single Report plus Annexes their findings, conclusions and recommendations in accordance with the agreed structure (see Annex III); a separate Executive Summary will be produced as well.

The evaluation team will make sure that:

- Their assessments are objective and balanced, statements are accurate and evidence-based, and recommendations realistic.
- When drafting the report, they will acknowledge clearly where changes in the desired direction are known to be already taking place.

The evaluation team will deliver and then present in Freetown the **Draft Final Report** to the Reference Group to discuss the draft findings, conclusions and recommendations.

One day of presence is required of the evaluation team members.

On the basis of the comments received the evaluation team will revise and amend the Draft Final Report.

The Project Manager consolidates the comments expressed by the Reference Group members and sends them to the evaluation team for revision, together with a first version of the Quality Assessment Grid assessing the quality of the Draft Final Report (see Annex V). The content of the Quality Assessment Grid will be discussed with the evaluation team to verify if further improvements are required.

The evaluation team will then finalise the **Final Report** and prepare the **Executive Summary** by addressing the relevant comments. While potential quality issues, factual errors or methodological problems should be corrected, comments linked to diverging judgements may be either accepted or rejected. In the latter instance, the evaluation team should explain the reasons in writing.

Management and Steering of the evaluation

At the EU level

The evaluation is managed by a Rural Development Section staff member of the EUD and this will be done with the assistance of a Reference Group consisting of members of EU Services DECVCO C1 and staff of the MAFFS, and of the Boosting Agriculture & Food Security Technical Assistance Team

The Reference Group members' main functions are:

- To approve the Terms of Reference of the Evaluation
- To facilitate contacts between the evaluation team and the EU services and external stakeholders.
- To ensure that the evaluation team has access to and has consulted all relevant information sources and documents related to the Action.
- To define and validate the Evaluation Questions.
- To discuss and comment on notes and reports delivered by the evaluation team. Comments by individual group members are compiled into a single document by the Project Manager and subsequently transmitted to the evaluation team.
- To assist in feedback on the findings, conclusions, lessons and recommendations from the evaluation.
- To support the development of a proper follow-up action plan after completion of the evaluation.

At the Contractor level

The contractor is expected to oversee the quality of the process, the evaluation design, the inputs and the deliverables of the evaluation. In particular, it shall:

- Support the Team Leader in its role, mainly from a team management perspective. In this regard, the contractor should make sure that for each evaluation phase specific tasks and deliverables for each team member are clearly defined.
- Provide backstopping and quality control of the evaluation team's work throughout the assignment.

Language of the specific contract

The language of the specific contract is to be: English.

EXPERTISE REQUIRED AND ORGANISATION AND METHODOLOGY

Number of requested experts per category and number of working days per expert or per category

Senior Evaluation Expert/Team Leader; Category I; approx. 29 days

Evaluation Expert; Category II; approx. 22 days

Expertise required

A team of two key experts is required.

One member of the evaluation team will be appointed as Team Leader. The minimum requirements of the team of key experts for this contract are as follows.

Minimum requirements of the team:

- At least one member of the team has sizeable experience in evaluation of agricultural policies and programmes/projects;
- At least one member of the team: 7 years of experience in agricultural policies and governance, strategic planning, project design and institutional capacity building;
- At least one member of the team: 3 years field experience in agricultural projects in West Africa, familiarity with Sierra Leone will be an asset;
- At least one member of the team: knowledge and experience of the project cycle management of EU funded development aid modalities;
- At least one team member: excellent oral and verbal communication skills in English;

Language skills of the team:

- English
- At least one team member: familiarity with one or more local languages is considered an asset.

Presence of management team for briefing and/or debriefing

The presence of member(s) of the management team is required for briefing or debriefing purposes.

Specific Organisation and Methodology (technical offer)

The Contracting Authority selects the offer with the best value for money using a 80/20 weighing ratio between technical quality and price. Technical quality is evaluated on the basis of the grid in annex I.

The technical offer should make clear the understanding of the ToRs. It should also describe a clear description and justification of the methodology proposed for conducting the assignment.

LOCATION AND DURATION

Starting period

Provisional start of the assignment: November 2018.

Foreseen duration

Maximum duration of the assignment: 90 calendar days, including 29 working days for the Team Leader and 25 days for the Expert II. The Inception Phase and the Field Phase must take place in Sierra

Leone. The Synthesis Phase can take place both in Sierra Leone and in any other location-(including time for finalising the final report). Given the multiple locations to be visited, the consultants are allowed to work/travel on weekends.

Planning²¹

As part of the technical offer, the framework contractor must fill-in the timetable in the Annex IV (to be finalised in the Inception Report). The 'Indicative dates' are not to be formulated as fixed dates but rather as days (or weeks, or months) from the beginning of the assignment.

Attention is drawn to the fact that sufficient forward planning is needed in order to ensure active participation and consultation with government representatives and national stakeholders.

Below is the indicative work plan:

| Activity | Location | Indicative Days |
|--|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| Inception Phase (including Desk Analysis) | Freetown | 5 |
| Briefing Session | EU Delegation | 0.5 |
| Analysis of available documentation | EU Del, MAFFS | 1.5 |
| Preparation & presentation of the inception report | Freetown | 2.5 |
| Meeting with the Reference Group | Freetown | 0.5 |
| Field Phase | Freetown + districts | 14 |
| Field visits | Provinces | 13.5 |
| Debriefing | EU Delegation | 0.5 |
| Synthesis Phase | Freetown + other | 10 |
| Presentation | Freetown | 0.5 |
| Draft final report writing | Freetown + other | 5.5 |
| Report completion and submission | Other | 4 |
| TOTAL | | 29 |

Over a total of roughly 90 days.

Location(s) of assignment

The assignment will take place in Freetown, with field visits required in the districts where A4D was implemented, e.g. Port Loko, Bombali, Kambia, Kenema, Kailahun and Kono .

REPORTING

Content, timing and submission

The reports must match quality standards. The text of the report should be illustrated, as appropriate, with maps, graphs and tables; a map of the area(s) of Action is required (to be attached as Annex).

²¹ including the period for notification for placement of the staff as per art 16.4 a)

The evaluation team will submit the following reports:

| | Number of Pages (excluding annexes) | Main Content | Timing for submission |
|---------------------------|--|--|---|
| Inception Report | 10 pages | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intervention logic reconstruction • Methodology for the evaluation • Evaluation Questions, judgement criteria and indicators • Evaluation Matrix • Data analysis and collection methods • Work plan • Stakeholder map • Consultation strategy • Field visit approach • Risk Analysis and mitigating measures • Work plan | End of Inception Phase |
| Intermediary Note | 5 pages 12 slides | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities conducted during the field phase • Difficulties encountered during the phase and mitigation measures adopted • Key preliminary findings | End of the Field Phase |
| Draft Final Report | 50 pages | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Cf. detailed structure in Annex III</u> • | End of Synthesis Phase |
| Executive Summary | 5 pages | <u>Cf. detailed structure in Annex III</u> | Together with the final report. |
| Final report | 50 pages | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same specifications as of the Draft Final Report, incorporating any comments received from the concerned parties on the draft report that have been accepted | 2 weeks after having received comments to the Draft Final Report. |

Comments

For each report, the Project Manager will submit comments within two calendar days. The revised reports incorporating comments received from the Reference Group shall be submitted within 10 calendar days from the date of receipt of the comments. The evaluation team should provide a separate document explaining how and where comments have been integrated or the reason for non-integration of certain comments.

Language

All reports shall be submitted in English.

Number of copies

The final version of the Final Report will be provided in 6 paper copies and in electronic version in .pdf on a CD ROM.

Addressed to: Head of Delegation
European Union Delegation to Sierra Leone
Leicester Peak Road, Regent
Freetown, Sierra Leone

Formatting of reports

All reports will be produced using Font Arial or Times New Roman minimum 11 and 12 respectively, single spacing and use the visibility requirements set out in the Communication and Visibility Manual for EU External Actions available online.

INCIDENTAL EXPENDITURE

No incidental expenditure are foreseen in this global price contract.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The quality of the final report will be assessed by the Project Manager using the quality assessment grid provided in Annex V, which is a tool to review the quality of the Draft and the Final report. Its compilation will support/inform the Performance Assessment required in CRIS, in particular with reference to the third criterion 'Quality of Service' (and should the score be 2 or 3 a synthesis of the QAG comments can be pasted in the Comment box of the Performance Assessment).

Annexes

Annex I: Specific Technical Evaluation Criteria

SPECIFIC TECHNICAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

[Request for Services n.]

FWC BENEFICIARIES 2013 - LOT [number and title of the lot]

EuropeAid/132633/C/SER/multi

Technical evaluation criteria

The Contracting Authority selects the offer with the best value for money using an 80/20 weighing between technical quality and price. Technical quality is evaluated on the basis of the following grid: [change the grid as needed]:

| Criteria | Maximum |
|---|------------|
| <i>Total score for Organisation and Methodology</i> | 50 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding of ToR and the aim of the services to be provided | 15 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall methodological approach, quality control approach, appropriate mix of tools and estimate of difficulties and challenges | 25 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization of tasks including timetable | 10 |
| <i>Total score for the proposed team of experts</i> | 50 |
| <i>OVERALL TOTAL SCORE</i> | 100 |

Technical threshold

Any offer falling short of the technical threshold of 80 out of 100 points, will be automatically rejected.

Interviews during the evaluation of the offers

During the evaluation process of the offers received the Contracting Authority reserves the right to interview by phone one or several members of the proposed evaluation teams.

Phone interviews will be tentatively carried out during the period from [xx/xx/xxx] to [xx/xx/xxx].

Annex II: Information that will be provided to the evaluation team

- Legal texts and political commitments pertaining to the Action to be evaluated
- Country Strategy Paper and Indicative Programmes (and equivalent) for the periods covered
- Relevant national / sector policies and plans from National and Local partners and other donors
- Action identification studies
- Action feasibility / formulation studies
- Action financing agreement and addenda
- Action's quarterly and annual progress reports, and technical reports
- EC's Result Oriented Monitoring (ROM) Reports, and other external and internal monitoring reports of the Action
- Action's mid-term evaluation report and other relevant evaluations, audit, reports.
- Relevant documentation from national/local partners and other donors
- Any other relevant document

Note: The evaluation team has to identify and obtain any other document worth analysing, through independent research and during interviews with relevant informed parties and stakeholders of the Action.

Annex III: Structure of the Final Report and of the Executive Summary

The consultant is requested to deliver two distinct documents: the Final Report and the Executive Summary.

The Final Report should not be longer than the number of pages indicated in Chapter 5. Additional information on the overall context of the Action, description of methodology and analysis of findings should be reported in an Annex to the main text.

The cover page of both deliverables shall carry the following text:

"This evaluation is supported and guided by the European Commission and presented by [name of consulting firm]. The report does not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of the European Commission".

Executive Summary

A tightly-drafted, to-the-point and free-standing Executive Summary. It should be short, no more than five pages. It should focus on the key purpose or issues of the evaluation, outline the main analytical points, and clearly indicate the main conclusions, lessons to be learned and specific recommendations.

The main sections of the evaluation report shall be as follows:

1. Introduction

A description of the Action, of the relevant country/region/sector background and of the evaluation, providing the reader with sufficient methodological explanations to gauge the credibility of the conclusions and to acknowledge limitations or weaknesses, where relevant.

2. Answered questions / Findings

A chapter presenting the Evaluation Questions and conclusive answers, together with evidence and reasoning.

3. Overall assessment (*optional*)

A chapter synthesising all answers to Evaluation Questions into an overall assessment of the Action. The detailed structure of the overall assessment should be refined during the evaluation process. The relevant chapter has to articulate all the findings, conclusions and lessons in a way that reflects their importance and facilitates the reading. The structure should not follow the Evaluation Questions, the logical framework or the evaluation criteria.

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

4.1 Conclusions

This chapter contains the conclusions of the evaluation, organised per evaluation criterion.

A paragraph or sub-chapter should pick up the 3 or 4 major conclusions organised by order of importance, while avoiding being repetitive. This practice allows better communication of the evaluation messages that are addressed to the Commission.

If possible, the evaluation report identifies one or more transferable lessons, which are highlighted in the executive summary and can be presented in appropriate seminars or other dissemination activities

4.2 Recommendations

They are intended to improve or reform the Action in the framework of the cycle under way, or to prepare the design of a new Action for the next cycle.

Recommendations must be clustered and prioritised, carefully targeted to the appropriate audiences at all levels, especially within the Commission structure.

5. Annexes to the report

The report should include the following annexes:

- The Terms of Reference of the evaluation
- The names of the evaluators and their companies (CVs should be shown, but summarised and limited to one page per person)
- Detailed evaluation methodology including: options taken, difficulties encountered and limitations. Detail of tools and analyses.
- Evaluation Matrix
- Intervention logic / Logical Framework matrices (planned/real and improved/updated)
- Relevant geographic map(s) where the Action took place
- List of persons/organisations consulted
- Literature and documentation consulted
- Other technical annexes (e.g. statistical analyses, tables of contents and figures, matrix of evidence, databases) as relevant
- Detailed answer to the Evaluation Questions, judgement criteria and indicators

Annex IV: Planning schedule

[Add as many rows as needed]

| | | Indicative Duration in working days ²² | | |
|---------------------------------|----------|---|------------|------------------|
| Activity | Location | Team Leader | Expert ... | Indicative Dates |
| Inception phase: total days | | | | |
| • | | | | |
| • | | | | |
| • | | | | |
| Desk phase: total days | | | | |
| • | | | | |
| • | | | | |
| • | | | | |
| Field phase: total days | | | | |
| • | | | | |
| • | | | | |
| • | | | | |
| Synthesis phase: total days | | | | |
| • | | | | |
| • | | | | |
| • | | | | |
| Dissemination phase: total days | | | | |
| • | | | | |
| • | | | | |
| • | | | | |
| TOTAL working days (maximum) | | | | |

²² Add one column per each expert

Annex V: Quality assessment grid

The quality of the Final Report will be assessed by the Project Manager using the following quality assessment grid; the grid will be shared with the evaluation team.

The rates have the following meaning:

- *Very weak* – criteria mostly not fulfilled
- *Weak* – criteria partly fulfilled
- *Average* – criteria mostly fulfilled but not up to expectations
- *Good* – criteria entirely fulfilled as expected
- *Very good* – criteria entirely fulfilled in a clear and original way

| In relation to the criteria and sub-criteria below, the evaluation report is rated as: | Rating |
|--|--------|
| 1. Meeting needs: | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the report describe precisely what is to be evaluated, including the intervention logic? • Does the report cover the requested period, and clearly includes the target groups and socio-geographical areas linked to the project / programme? • Has the evolution of the project / programme been taken into account in the evaluation process? • Does the evaluation deal with and respond to all ToR requests? If not, are justifications given? | |
| 2. Appropriateness of the design: | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the report explain how the evaluation design takes into account the project / programme rationale, cause-effect relationships, impacts, policy context, stakeholders' interests, etc.? • Is the evaluation method clearly and adequately described in enough detail? • Are there well-defined indicators selected in order to provide evidence about the project / programme and its context? • Does the report point out the limitations, risks and potential biases associated with the evaluation method? | |
| 3. Reliability of the data: | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the data collection approach explained and is it coherent with the overall evaluation design? • Have data collection limitations and biases been explained and discussed? • Are the sources of information clearly identified in the report? • Are the data collection tools (samples, focus groups, etc.) applied in accordance with standards? • Have the collected data been cross-checked? | |
| 4. Soundness of the analysis: | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the analysis based on the collected data? • Does the analysis focus well on the most relevant cause/effect assumptions underlying the intervention logic? • Is the context taken into account adequately in the analysis? • Are inputs from the most important stakeholders used in a balanced way? • Are the limitations of the analysis identified, discussed and presented in the report, as well as the contradictions with available knowledge, if there are any? | |
| 5. Credibility of the findings: | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the findings derived from the qualitative and quantitative data and analyses? • Is there a discussion whether the findings can be generalised? • Are interpretations and extrapolations justified and supported by sound arguments? | |
| 6. Validity of the conclusions: | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the conclusions coherent and logically linked to the findings? • Does the report draw overall conclusions on each of the five DAC criteria? • Are conclusions free of personal or partisan considerations? | |
| 7. Usefulness of the recommendations: | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the recommendations consistent with the conclusions? • Are recommendations operational, realistic and sufficiently explicit to provide guidelines for taking action? • Are the recommendations drafted for the different target stakeholders of the evaluation? • When necessary, have the recommendations been clustered and prioritised? | |
| 8. Clarity of the report: | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the report include a relevant and concise executive summary? • Is the report well-structured and adapted to its various audiences? • Are specialised concepts clearly defined and not used more than necessary? Is there a list of acronyms? • Is the length of the various chapters and annexes well balanced? | |

| | <i>Rating</i> |
|--|---------------|
| Considering the 8 previous criteria what is the overall quality of the report? | |

| |
|---|
| Comments on meeting needs (1): |
| |
| Comments on appropriateness of the design (2): |
| |
| Comments on reliability of the data (3): |
| |
| Comments on soundness of the analysis (4): |
| |
| Comments on credibility of the findings (5): |
| |
| Comments on validity of the conclusions (6): |
| |
| Comments on usefulness of the recommendations (7): |
| |
| Comments on clarity of the report (8): |
| |
| Comments on the overall quality of the report |
| |

Annex 3 – Evaluators

Company – CYE Consulting.

1. **Family name:** Cracknell
2. **First names:** Walter John
3. **Date of birth:** 6 June 1952
4. **Passport holder:** British
5. **Residence:** UK
6. **Education:**

Contact

cracknell.consulting@gmail.com

+44 (0) 7508 66 22 80

Skype - johncracknell

| | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Institution: | Newcastle University |
| Date (from – to): | 1993 |
| Degree(s) or Diploma(s): | MSc (Distinction) International Food and Agricultural Marketing |
| Institution: | Newcastle University |
| Date (from – to): | 1970 – 1973 |
| Degree(s) or Diploma(s): | BSc Honours, Agricultural Engineering. |
| Institution: | London University External Study Programme |
| Date (from – to): | 2006 |
| Degree(s) or Diploma(s): | Environmental Auditing and Management, Postgraduate Module Certificates |

7. **Language skills:** Indicate competence on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 - excellent; 5 - basic)

| Language | Reading | Speaking | Writing |
|----------|---------|----------|---------|
| English | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Russian | 5 | 5 | |
| French | 4 | 5 | |

8. **Key qualifications:**

John Cracknell is professionally qualified in agricultural marketing economics and agricultural engineering. A Chartered Engineer, he has project management and consulting experience in a wide range of regions and countries.

His principal area of expertise is as Team Leader/Manager of agricultural and rural development projects, with particular reference to agricultural and rural business development, agricultural and food marketing, post-harvest technology, food processing, packaging, storage, distribution, and value systems analysis.

In addition to his technical experience John has substantial practical experience of a wide range of rural development issues, including rural cooperatives and business associations, agricultural extension services, rural business support agencies, and investment feasibility studies for private business and donor organisations. He also has substantial experience of institutional development and capacity building with government bodies and NGOs, of planning, delivery, and management of training programmes at all levels, and of Monitoring and Evaluation in project management.

John has managed projects funded by the Asian Development Bank, the World Bank, the European Union, and bilateral agencies such as DfID and KfW. He has fluent English, his mother tongue, some French, and some basic knowledge of Russian.

In addition to his work as a development consultant, John established and managed a fresh food marketing and distribution business in the UK as a subsidiary of his family owned farming and road haulage business. He maintains contact with this family business, and works with it when not on contract outside of the UK.

1. CURRICULUM VITAE

Vincent Lefebvre

19/10/1967

Belgian

+3228081979 / +32474949009

lefebvrevinc@gmail.com

Education:

| Institution from – to | Degrees and Diplomas obtained |
|---|---|
| Université Catholique de Louvain 85-91 | M.A. in AGRONOMY (tropical) |
| Université Catholique de Louvain 92-93 | Post-graduation in BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION |
| Université de Liège (CERES) 2001 | Certificate in COMMUNICATION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION |

Language skills (1 - excellent; 5 - basic)

| Language | Reading | Speaking | Writing |
|------------|---------------|----------|---------|
| French | Mother tongue | | |
| English | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Portuguese | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Spanish | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Russian | 5 | 4 | 5 |
| Dutch | 3 | 3 | 3 |

Position: Company Manager (VLF Consulting)

Key qualifications: (relevant to the assignment)

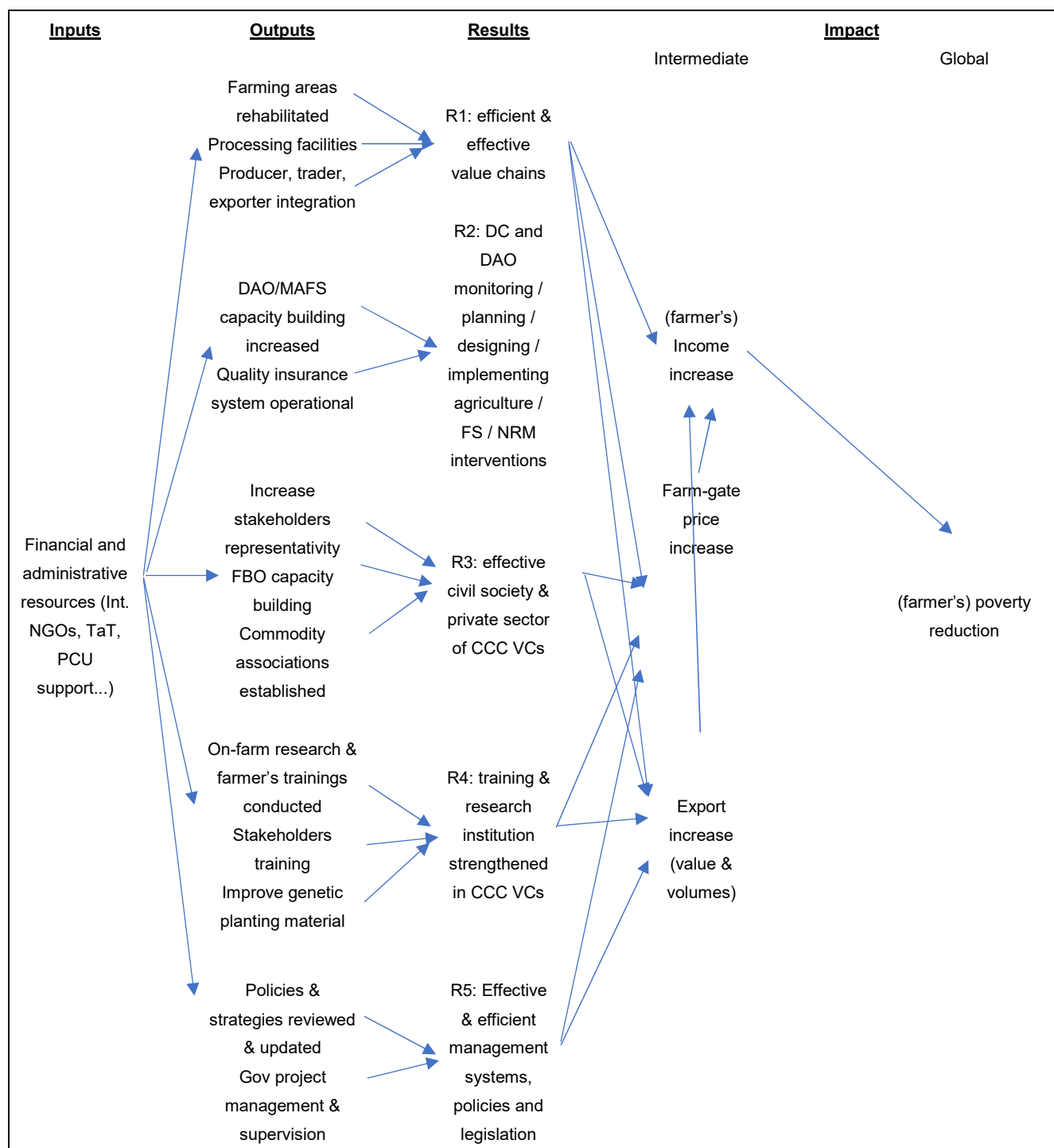
- Programme management & co-ordination / project formulation & implementation, M&E - knowledge of PCM, logical framework & ZOPP methodologies / equipment specifications
- Programme & project evaluation / technical audit / institutional appraisal: analysis of relevance / effectiveness / efficiency / social, institutional & economic impact / political, social & cultural, technological, institutional & financial sustainability / cross cutting issues (gender, AIDS, environment & institutional capacity building); questionnaires design
- Knowledge of 9th, 10th & 11th EDF administrative & financial procedures
- Data acquisition methods for evaluation/ project formulation: questionnaires drafting & interviews of beneficiaries; SWOT analysis; (semi-) structured interviews, focus groups
- Knowledge of monitoring & evaluation methodologies (incl. Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool)
- Food security and nutrition / WATSAN / Agronomy / agro-industry / agro-climate and climate change mitigation / adaptation / horticulture, disaster risk reduction & management
- Cartography / remote sensing / mapping / GIS (Arcinfo, Mapinfo, Ilwis) / Database management systems (MECOSIG, COONGO)
- Land & water resources evaluation / crop potential analysis / participatory rural appraisals / natural resources management and sustainable land management
- Mountain agro-ecosystems / REDD+ / Ridge to Reef approach / agro-forestry & biodiversity conservation
- Soil survey / soil conservation / soil fertility
- Statistics including programming in SAS & Delphi
- Renewable energies (wind, solar, bio-diesel, rape seed oil)

Annex 4 Evaluation Methodology

Overall approach

The methodology has been in line with EU standard evaluation methodologies.

The ex-post evaluation has focussed on the results and impacts of the A4D project. Therefore, the project review went beyond the monitoring, reporting and auditing which deal with inputs, outputs. The relation between the inputs (financial and administrative resources) of the project and the impacts of it, is described in the figure below.



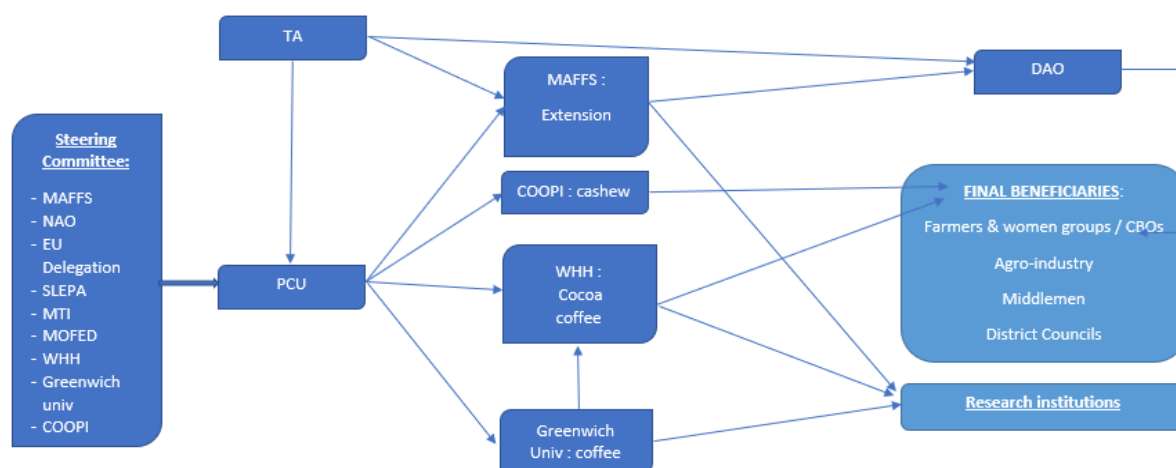
Evaluation questions

The team reviewed the log-frame against the main stakeholder's final reports, updated the evaluation questions and reviewed the judgment criteria and indicators.

Stakeholders' mapping

The team made an assessment of all project stakeholders. This facilitated the elaboration of the questionnaires as per evaluation questions.

Mapping of the major stakeholders:



Drafting of questionnaires

From the combination of the stakeholder's mapping exercise and the updated evaluation questions, the team drafted the checklists of issues / areas to discuss with the main stakeholders.

Data collection and analysis

For the gathering of information and data as well as for analysing them, the team used a mix of sources and tools that ranged from simple usual ones like database extracts, documentary review, key informant interviews and field visits, to more technical ones like focus groups. For the analysis of data and information, a combination of the following strategies was considered:

- change analysis, which compares indicators over time, and/or against targets, and / or
- meta-analysis, which extrapolates upon findings of other evaluations and studies, after having carefully checked their validity and transferability, and / or
- attribution analysis, which compares the observed changes with a "policy-off" scenario, also called counterfactual and / or
- contribution analysis, which confirms or disconfirms cause-and-effect assumptions on the basis of a chain of reasoning.

The main modalities for the information and data collection and processing were:

- meetings with the different stakeholders as identified in the Evaluation Terms of Reference.
- In-situ review of actual results (homestead and agro-processing visits)
- collection of secondary data through the research of other sources available at country / international level.

- collection of primary data:
 - direct interviews with the main stakeholders
 - interviews by email and or telephone
 - focus group meetings at provincial level in the areas where the A4D was implemented (if possible)
 - inspection of results on the ground
- processing / organization of the data / information on the basis of the evaluation questions.

Evaluation undertaking

A 4-step approach was used for the ex-post evaluation

1. documentary analysis: review of a selection of project documents
2. Data acquisition:
 - 1st round of institutional stakeholders at national level (MAFS, PMB, Grant contractors...)
 - On-site review of results: farmers, agro-processors, commodity associations and FBOs
 - 2nd round of interview (if necessary)
3. Data analysis and presentation of initial findings
4. Draft & final report drafting

Annex 5 Intervention Logic.

LOGICAL FRAMEWORKS

| Project Description | Indicators | Source of Verification | Assumptions / Risks |
|---|---|---|---|
| <p><u>Overall Objective</u></p> <p>The reduction of poverty in Sierra Leone through increased agricultural productivity, diversification and private sector participation, improved research and extension delivery</p> | <p>O1 Proportion of households below food poverty line</p> <p>O2 Proportion of households below basic needs poverty line</p> <p>O3 Growth in value-added in agriculture.</p> <p>O2 Seasonal production of key cash and food crops.</p> <p>O3 Kilometres of rehabilitated rural roads.</p> <p>O3 GoSL Legislation adapted to include private sector participation.</p> | <p>GoSL PRSP Progress Reports</p> <p>GoSL MDG Progress Reports</p> | <p>GoSL encourages creating an enabling and conducive environment</p> |
| <p><u>Project Purpose</u></p> <p>To improve the incomes and food entitlements of rural families in selected districts by improving the quantity and quality of cash-crop production, reducing transaction costs and maximizing the efficiency and effectiveness of the value chain, with special emphasis made to selected cash crops with</p> | <p>P1 100% increase in cash-crop income of targeted farmers by 2015.</p> <p>P2 Farm-gate prices of targeted tree-crops increased by 30% by 2015.</p> <p>P3 100% increase in export value of targeted crops 2015.</p> | <p>P1 Baseline Survey Report / Independent Agricultural Sample Survey 2015.</p> <p>P2 National Revenue Authority Annual Report.</p> <p>P3 Final Evaluation Report.</p> <p>P4 Final Evaluation Report.</p> | <p>GoSL prioritises cash-crop sector.</p> <p>Private sector responds to increased volumes and improved produce quality.</p> |

| Project Description | Indicators | Source of Verification | Assumptions / Risks |
|--|---|---|--|
| high value on the global and regional markets | <p>P4 Increase in export value relative to export volume of targeted crops compared to world market prices.</p> <p>P5 Increase in farm-gate price of targeted crops as a percentage of FOB price.</p> | P5 Independent Agricultural Sample Survey 2015 | World commodity markets / prices remain robust. |
| <p>Result 1</p> <p>Efficient and effective value chains for targeted crops developed, with specific focus on increased quality production, processing, marketing and trading (disincentives removed).</p> | <p>1.1 Increase in 1,6 million tree-crop seedlings produced and planted each year</p> <p>1.2 5,000 ha of targeted tree-crops rehabilitated and new areas brought under cultivation.</p> <p>1.3 20,000 farmers a year adopting new crop-diversification practices.</p> <p>1.4 300 FFS established and functioning.</p> <p>1.5 Two clonal gardens rehabilitated and fully functional.</p> <p>1.6 150 communal and private nurseries established and functioning/District</p> <p>1.7 50% increase in export volume of targeted crops by 2015</p> | <p>1.1 Project M&E Reports</p> <p>1.2 Project M&E Reports</p> <p>1.3 Independent Agricultural Sample Survey 2015</p> <p>1.4 District Extension Services Reports</p> <p>1.5 Project M&E Reports</p> <p>1.6 Project M&E Reports</p> <p>1.7 National Revenue Authority Annual Report</p> | <p>Improved transport infrastructure (feeder and paved roads).</p> <p>Improved port handling and warehousing.</p> <p>Increased competitiveness between shipping agents and shipping lines.</p> |
| <p>Result 2</p> <p>District Councils and District Agriculture Offices effectively plan,</p> | <p>2.1 Trained staff</p> <p>2.2 Plans prepared</p> | 2.1 Contracts and inspection | |

| Project Description | Indicators | Source of Verification | Assumptions / Risks |
|--|--|---|--|
| design, implement, monitor and evaluate agriculture, food security and natural resources management programmes. | 2.3 Monitoring work undertaken 2.4 Reports prepared and used 2.5 Land-use planning maps and data prepared and used 2.6 Data and information generated by District PEMSD and passed on to District / National stakeholders. 2.7 Participation of all relevant District actors in District Coordination. | 2.2 Plans in operation 2.3 Field survey reports 2.4 Reports and minutes of Council Meetings 2.5 Maps available and used by private sector 2.6 District Agricultural Office Reports. 2.7 District coordination Committee Reports. | Staff cannot be retained and leave Data and information is impossible to obtain from other District government bodies |
| Result 3 Organisation of the Civil Society and Private Sector as effective and economically viable actors of the targeted value chains significantly enhanced. | 3.1 Existing legislation reviewed and new legislation drafted and enacted. 3.2 No. of trade / commodity organisations established and functioning. 3.3 No. of farmer / producer groups established and functioning transparently. 3.4 Increase in total volume of produce handled by farmer / producer group. | 3.1 GoSL Gazette 3.2 Project M&E reports 3.3 Project M&E Reports 3.4 Independent Agricultural Sample Survey 2015. | GoSL prioritise revision of existing legislation Private sector gradually end mutual suspicion |
| Result 4 Selected training and research institutions strengthened to effectively support the | 4.1 Education and training packages prepared and best practice being adopted in the field | 4.1 Training course materials | Thousands of people will need training, and much TOT will be required to speed the process. This will |

| Project Description | Indicators | Source of Verification | Assumptions / Risks |
|---|---|--|--|
| development of the targeted value chains. | <p>4.2 Continual, repeated and widespread sessions targeted at each level in the value chain and undertaken over the widest of geographical areas.</p> <p>4.3 Clonal gardens re-established and functioning</p> <p>4.4 Results applied in the field through extension and potential realised</p> <p>4.5 Research institute established in Kenema, and used as a centre for training and education</p> | <p>4.2 No. people trained and skilled acquired and evidence of best practice being seen on the ground</p> <p>4.3 Clonal gardens, records of improved genetic material</p> <p>4.4 Training sessions, field inspection</p> <p>4.5 Centre established and operating</p> | <p>require continual quality control and guidance, lead by Njala and the NATC</p> <p>SLARI, District Agriculture Offices and the communities have the will and capacity to work together</p> |
| <p>Result 5</p> <p>Effective and efficient management systems, policies and legislation established as an enabling environment for the development of the value chains in place.</p> | <p>5.1 Annual Reports produced on time</p> <p>5.2 Timely procurement, input delivery and financial control</p> <p>5.3 Updated policies</p> <p>5.4 Updated legislation</p> | <p>5.1 Annual Reports</p> <p>5.2 Audits</p> <p>5.3 Policy statements</p> <p>5.4 Revised legislation</p> | <p>Ministries of Trade and Agriculture do not work together</p> |

A4D Project OPE N° 1

Adopted Logframe A4D - OPE 1

| No | Project description | | Indicators | Sources of verification | Assumptions / Risks | Remarks |
|--------------|--|-----|---|--|--|--|
| Level | Overall objective | | | | | |
| O.1 | The reduction of poverty in Sierra Leone through increased agricultural productivity, diversification and private sector participation, improved research and extension delivery | O.1 | Proportion of HH below poverty line | GoSL PRSP Progress Reports GoSL MDG Progress Reports | GoSL encourages creating an enabling and conducive environment | Two indicators deleted (feeder roads and seasonal production) as not covered by project activities |
| | | O.2 | Proportion of HH below basic needs poverty line | GoSL PRSP Progress Reports GoSL MDG Progress Reports | GoSL encourages creating an enabling and conducive environment | |
| | | O.3 | Growth in value-added agriculture of selected tree crop value chains (AVCs) | MAFFS Annual Report | | |
| | | O.4 | GoSL legislation adapted promoting development of selected tree crops | MAFFS Annual Report | | |
| Level | Project purpose | | | | | |
| P.1 | To improve the incomes and food entitlements of rural families in selected districts by improving (i) the quantity and quality of cash-crop production, (ii) reducing transaction costs, (iii) and maximising the efficiency and effectiveness of the value chain, with special emphasis made to selected cash crops with high value on the global and regional market | P.1 | 30% increase in cash-crop income of targeted farmers by 2017 | Baseline survey report / Independent agricultural sample survey 2015 | GoSL prioritises tree crop sector | As newly planted areas will not be productive during project lifecycle, the only improvement from CCC tree crop production are (i) increase in actual harvest through improved husbandry techniques and (ii) increase in farm-gate price due to better quality (or rising world market prices. Therefore it is proposed to lower the |

MAFFS
1. ②

A4D Project OPE N° 1

| No | Project description | | Indicators | Sources of verification | Assumptions / Risks | Remarks |
|----|---------------------|-----|---|---|---|--|
| | | | | | | targeted value |
| | | P.2 | Farm-gate prices of targeted tree crops increased by 30% by 2015 | National Revenue Authority Annual Report | World commodity markets / prices remain robust | |
| | | P.3 | 30% increase in export value of targeted crops by 2015 | Final Evaluation Report | Private sector responds to increased volumes and improved produce quality | Quantities cannot raise by extended areas (as these are not productive by 2015) and improved quality and husbandry techniques cannot raise export volume by 100% |
| | | P.4 | Increase in export value <i>per metric ton of cocoa, coffee and cashew exported</i> | Final Evaluation Report | | Reformulation of indicator |
| | | P.5 | Increase in farm-gate prices of targeted crops as a percentage of FOB prices | Independent agricultural sample survey 2015 | | Actual farm-gate prices in SL are quite favourable compared to neighbouring countries |

A4D Project OPE N° 1

| No | Project description | | Indicators | Sources of verification | | Assumptions / Risks | Remarks |
|-----|--|-------|---|---|--|--|---|
| | Result 1 | | | | | | |
| R.1 | Efficient and effective value chains for targeted crops developed with specific focus on increased quality production, processing, marketing and trading (disincentives removed) | R.1.1 | Increase in <i>0.84 million</i> tree-crop seedlings produced and planted each year | Project M&E Reports | | Grantees promote concept of private and communal nurseries | The period for project implementation for grantees is substantially less than originally planned. The proposed target value reflects this fact. |
| | | R.1.2 | 5,000 ha of targeted tree crops rehabilitated and new areas brought under cultivation | Project M&E Reports | | Grantees extend production area by 1,667 ha per year | |
| | | R.1.3 | 20,000 farmers adopting new crop-diversification practices | Independent agricultural sample survey 2015 | | Grantees provide extension services in crop diversification to farmers | |
| | | R.1.4 | <i>300 FFS trained in tree crop husbandry and on-farm processing techniques</i> | District Extension Service Report | | | FFS are already available but no training in CCC tree crop production is provided by MAFFS. Therefore a reformulation towards training of FFS is proposed |
| | | R.1.5 | <i>1 clonal garden</i> rehabilitated and fully functional | Project M&E Reports | | Clonal gardens cannot be fully functional before clones can be multiplied. This is hardly feasible until 2015 due to tree-crop production cycles | One clonal garden is already supported by IFAD including rehabilitation (Pendembu) |
| | | R.1.6 | 90 communal and private nurseries established and functioning per District | Project M&E Reports | | Grantees promote concept of private and communal nurseries | See remark Indicator R.1.1 |
| | | R.1.7 | 20% increase in export volume of targeted crops | National Revenue Authority Annual Report | | | Quantities cannot raise by extended areas (as these |

MAFFS

A4D Project OPE N° 1

| No | Project description | | Indicators | Sources of verification | | Assumptions / Risks | Remarks |
|-----|---|-------|---|---|--|--|--|
| | | | by 2015 | | | | are not productive by 2015) and improved quality and husbandry techniques cannot raise export volume by 50% |
| | Result 2 | | | | | | |
| R.2 | District Councils and District Agriculture Offices effectively plan, design, implement, monitor and evaluate agriculture, food security and natural resources management programmes | R.2.1 | M&E staff at DAO, MAFFS and DC level trained in programme planning, monitoring and related fields | Contracts and inspection | | Staff cannot be retained and leave | Reformulation of indicator to better reflect the intervention logic |
| | | R.2.2 | DC Agricultural development and/or investment plans prepared | Plans in operation | | | Reformulation of indicator to better reflect the intervention logic |
| | | R.2.3 | Monitoring work undertaken regularly (prices information, agricultural censuses, etc.) | Field survey report | | | Reformulation of indicator to better reflect the intervention logic |
| | | R.2.4 | M&E reports presented and used | Reports and minutes of Council meetings | | | Reformulation of indicator to better reflect the intervention logic |
| | | R.2.5 | Land-use planning maps and data prepared and used | Maps available and used by private sector | | | Collection of land use data and preparation of full land use maps are out of scope of available financial resources (see STE mission no 1) |
| | | R.2.6 | Data and information generated by District PEMSD and passed on to | District Agricultural Office Reports | | Data and information is impossible to obtain from other District | |

A4D Project OPE N° 1

| No | Project description | | Indicators | Sources of verification | | Assumptions / Risks | Remarks |
|-----|--|-------|--|---|--|---|---|
| | | | District / national stakeholders | | | Government bodies | |
| | | R.2.7 | Participation of all relevant District actors in District Coordination of agricultural activities | District Coordination Committee Reports | | | Reformulation of indicator to better reflect the intervention logic |
| | Result 3 | | | | | | |
| R.3 | Organisation of the Civil society and private sector as effective and economically viable actors of the targeted value chains significantly enhanced | R.3.1 | Existing legislation relevant for cocoa, coffee and cashes reviewed and new legislation drafted and enacted | GoSL Gazette | | GoSL prioritise revision of existing legislation | |
| | | R.3.2 | No of trade and / or commodity organisations established and functioning (at national level) | M&E reports | | Private sector gradually end mutual suspicion | Reformulation of indicator to better reflect the intervention logic |
| | | R.3.3 | No of tree crop cooperatives, associations and farmer base organisations functioning transparently | M&E reports | | | Reformulation of indicator to better reflect the intervention logic |
| | | R.3.4 | Increase in the total volume of cocoa, coffee and cashew produced and marketed by farmers and / or producer groups | Independent agricultural sample survey 2015 | | | Actual marketing is mainly directly and not via FBOs, ABCs or cooperatives. Reformulation of indicator to better reflect the intervention logic |
| | Result 4 | | | | | | |
| R.4 | Selected training and research institutions strengthened to effectively support the development of the targeted value | R.4.1 | CCC tree crop relevant education and training packages prepared and best practice being | Training courses and materials | | Thousands of people will need training and much TOT will be required to speed the process. This | Reformulation of indicator to better reflect the intervention logic |

A4D Project OPE N° 1

| No | Project description | | Indicators | Sources of verification | | Assumptions / Risks | Remarks |
|-----|--|-------|---|---|--|---|--|
| | chain | | adopted in the field | | | will require continual quality control and guidance, led by Njala and NATC | |
| | | R.4.2 | CCC relevant training sessions targeted at each level in the tree crop AVC | No of people trained and skills acquired and evidence of best practice being seen on the ground | | SLARI, District Agriculture Offices and communities have the will and capacities to work together | Reformulation of indicator to better reflect the intervention logic |
| | | R.4.3 | 1 clonal garden re-established and functioning | Clonal gardens, records of improved genetic material | | | See result R.1.5 |
| | | R.4.4 | Applied research results converted in applied extension approach and applied in the field through extension | Training sessions, field inspection | | | Reformulation of indicator to better reflect the intervention logic |
| | | R.4.5 | Research in Kenema region operational (undertaken) in CCC sectors | SLARI research activities in CCC tree crops | | | Construction of new research centre in Kenema out of scope of existing budgets. It is therefore proposed to concentrate on supporting research activities and rehabilitate existing clonal gardens |
| | Result 5 | | | | | | |
| R.5 | Effective and efficient management systems, policies and legislation established as an enabling environment for the development of the value chains in place | R.5.1 | Annual project reports produced on time | Annual project reports | | Ministries of Trade (MoT) and MAFFS do not work together | |
| | | R.5.2 | Timely procurement, | Financial audit reports | | | |

A4D Project OPE N° 1

| No | Project description | | Indicators | Sources of verification | | Assumptions / Risks | Remarks |
|----|---------------------|-------|--|---|--|---------------------|---|
| | | | input delivery and financial control | | | | |
| | | R.5.3 | Updated CCC tree crop relevant policies | tree crop relevant policy statements | | | Reformulation of indicator to better reflect the intervention logic |
| | | R.5.4 | Updated CCC tree crop relevant legislation | Revised tree crop legislation and related documents submitted | | | |

Annex 6 Geographic Map.



Annex 7 List of Persons/Organisations Consulted

List of Persons Consulted

GATINEAU Philippe, Rural Development Manager

KUROMA Daniel, Project Officer

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Patrick CARPENTER, SLARI Research Officer

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CONTE Philip, Kenema DAO Director

DJALLO Jack, MAFS member of ACTT / ex-Officer of Department of Agricultural Extension

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TIRE Abdul Qadwa, PMB Quality Control Officer
TSHAKEMA Patrick, Port Loko DC Deputy Chief Administrator
TUMAY Foday, SLARI Research Officer
VIBBI James, PMB Executive Chairman

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MASSING Georg, ex-A4D Coffee Head of Project for WHH
MENCARI Giacomo, COOPI Head of Mission
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SKAITAY, Amin A., TAS Manager

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KAMARA Charles A., National Farmers' Federation Representative
SAMAL Yatta, Moawomoi Rural Development Cooperative

SAUI Henry A.M., Eastern Farmers' Cooperative

SUIAL Mohamed, Eastern Farmers' Cooperative Agency

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NOAH-KAITOMBO Sahr, Refinance Officer

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