



Research Into Use



RIU Strategy



for Sierra

Leone

"If the gains from trade in commodities are substantial, they are small compared to the trade in ideas"
David S. Landes

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RIU Sierra Leone Country Strategy Development Team:
Steen Joffe, David Suale, Hassan Jalloh, Freida M'Cormack, Francis Johnston.

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Acronyms / definitions

AAG	Agricultural Advisory Group
ABU	Agriculture Business Units (as promoted by UNDP/FAO)
ATC	Agricultural Technical Committee
BIBWEG	BIBWEG Health Development Organization
CAADP	Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Programme
CORAD	Consortium for Rehabilitation and Development, comprising CARE, CRS, World Vision, Care, World Vision International, Catholic Relief Services and AfriCare
CORAF	Conseil Ouest et Centre Africain pour la Recherche et le Development Agricole
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
DONATA	Dissemination of New Agricultural Technologies in Africa
EDS	Enterprise Development Services
FAAP	Framework for African Agricultural Productivity
FARA	Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa
FBC	Fourah Bay College
FFS	Farmer Field School
FINIC	Fomel Industry and National Industrialisation Centres
GSM	Global System for Mobile communications
I/NNGO	International/National Non-governmental Organisation
ILO	International Labour Organization
LEWODA	Leleima Women's Development Association
MAFFS	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security
ManoCap	A Private Equity Fund Manager
MAPCO	Movement for Assistant and Promotion of rural Communities
MORWOMA	A women's producer community in Northern Province
NAFSL	National Association Farmers in Sierra Leone
NARCC	National Agricultural Research Coordination Council
NASSIT	National Social Security and Insurance Trust of Sierra Leone
NATCOM	National Telecommunications Commission
NERICA	'New Rice for Africa'
NPA	National Power Authority
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
PaRD	Partner in Relief and Development
PEMSD	Planning, Evaluation, Monitoring and Statistical Division, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
S&T	Science and Technology
SLARI	Sierra Leone Agricultural Research Institute
SLB	Sierra Leone Breweries
SLOIC	Sierra Leone Opportunities Industrialisation Centres
SLRA	Sierra Leone Roads Authority
VSO	Voluntary Service Overseas
WV	World Vision

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is a pivotal time of transition for Sierra Leone as it moves from post conflict relief efforts to longer term development. There is a great sense of determination in the air. In many ways the country's future is being invented now as institutions are established or rebuilt – and the Research into Use Programme (RIU) can contribute much to this process.

There is no shortage of knowledge relevant to Sierra Leone's current needs, both inside and outside of Sierra Leone, but this knowledge is not being used on any scale for innovation because the conditions to use it are lacking; the principle bottlenecks stem from information and related coordination failures that make it near impossible for a coherent system of innovation to operate.

The RIU Sierra Leone strategy will address information and knowledge flows as a principle driver and means to enhance performance of the Innovation System as a whole. It will do so by supporting institutional developments to 'make the market' for knowledge. It will focus in particular on the intermediary function, i.e. those actors operating within or with influence upon the rural service economy, whose interactions with each other and with other actors provide a conduit for knowledge linkages and flows. Its operational mechanism will be to support the emergence of gap-filling 'knowledge market services' as a 'smart subsidy' mechanism to facilitate these interactions, focusing on critical areas where the existing system is currently weak:

- Demand Support Facility: enhance effective demand for knowledge-based services
- Knowledge Brokerage: match this demand with sources in Sierra Leone and elsewhere
- Innovation Finance Facility: match good ideas with appropriate finance

There is existing knowledge and experience within each these service areas that can be brought to bear, but each is innovative to some degree in the Sierra Leone context. A specific business/sustainability plan for each will be developed through an action research approach led by the country programme secretariat with partners in Sierra Leone.

The Partnership mechanism in Sierra Leone is an evolution from approaches being used in other RIU countries. The process has begun with the establishment of the Partnership for Agricultural Innovation and Development (PAID). This partnership, broadly representative of the Sierra Leone system, will operate essentially as an open, membership based social business network - accessing, exchanging and utilising information and services, and undertaking other mutually supporting activities to build opportunities and capacity for delivery of knowledge-based services into agriculture. In effect the PAID of Sierra Leone is a 'knowledge marketplace'; it will have straightforward, inclusive and democratic membership arrangements. Organisations will participate in their own best interests to the extent that they benefit from interactions with other participants.

The strategic logic of the Sierra Leone strategy is as follows: the RIU programme finances development of gap filling knowledge market services for the Sierra Leone Innovation system. These services are deliverable outputs of the Sierra Leone RIU County Programme, to be fostered and piloted through the RIU Programme Secretariat. The use of the Knowledge market services supports a virtuous circle thus: members of the PAID use the services to help identify and work up innovative ideas (new products, technologies, ventures, processes, etc.), and develop them through action research activities - these action research activities generate learning; the learning results in institutional developments which feed

further demand for services and increasingly for 'high value' research-based knowledge; the learning from the Sierra Leone programme, and the demand for research, contribute directly to fulfilling the RIU programme purpose.

The development of each of the knowledge market services is an area for innovation and learning in its own right; additionally, the *use* of the services will take place within thematic areas of key strategic importance for Sierra Leone, where there are both needs and opportunities for platform development:

- Making markets work for the poor and increasing their effective participation in value chains
- Engaging youth meaningfully in the development process in a post-conflict environment
- Rebuilding and managing relationships between the research system and the production/agribusiness system.

There is substantial available research-based knowledge in these areas (RNRRS and other) that members of the PAID can apply now, and the Sierra Leone RIU program will actively seek to put this to use in the short to medium term. The use of this 'process/institutional knowledge' within innovation platforms will also create enhanced conditions for applying more specific commodity or technology oriented research products, and generate specific demands for such products. These opportunities will be identified and links facilitated into the UK (and other) science base as the demands arise.

A policy platform will provide a new 'space' to focus on areas of policy that require more evidence and more advocacy in the Sierra Leone context, that is: means to improve the position and performance of rural services and entrepreneurs as essential intermediary actors within the Sierra Leone innovation system. Members of the PAID have a real stake in the outcomes of policy in this area and will effectively be operating as a 'self-interested' lobby to influence and advocate for change. Additionally, there are concrete opportunities for linkage and learning between the Sierra Leone RIU Programme and the DFID Country Programme, specifically relating to DFID's support for the decentralisation process and for strengthening business development services provision.

A communications plan will address the quality of communications, best practices in the use of relevant media, and the packaging of information to meet the needs of different target audiences. The Sierra Leone RIU Programme will operate at the leading edge of opportunities to develop and use mobile phone, web and related content services to support the use of the knowledge market services as outlined above. At the same time, the currently constrained communications environment requires that approaches used will also make 'joined-up' use of other relevant media such as community radio.

The criteria, and process for developing specific initiatives, will include livelihoods analysis to identify and validate opportunities that are (i) broadly accessible amongst rural communities and not exclusive or liable to capture by elites and (ii) generate economic linkages into poorer households. While the strategy has a focus on youth, it will also pay explicit attention to gender issues, which are serious and important in Sierra Leone, and to environmental sustainability.

The Sierra Leone RIU Programme will operate under the framework of an MOU with the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security (MAFFS). Under the provisions, the PAID essentially represents the operational mechanism by which RIU will contribute to the development of the Sierra Leone innovation system and related objectives. The RIU secretariat has been offered a seat on the Agricultural Advisory Group (AAG), which is the new high level policy coordination group under the MAFFS; the PAID membership will have a seat on the Agricultural Technical Committee (ATC) to the same group.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1. Background to the RIU Programme

Research into Use (RIU) is the first programme to come about under the new Strategy for Research on Sustainable Agriculture of the UK Department for International Development (DFID). It marks a shift in emphasis away from the generation of new knowledge to the ways in which knowledge is put to use. The purpose of the Research into Use (RIU) Programme is two-fold: “to maximize the poverty reducing impact of RNRRS¹ and other research and, by doing so, significantly increase understanding of how the promotion and widespread use of research can contribute to poverty reduction and economic growth”.

In order to achieve its purpose, RIU will deliver three major outputs:

1. Output 1: Significant use of RNRRS and other natural resources research outputs for the benefit (direct/indirect) of poor men and women in diverse contexts;
2. Output 2: Research-into-use evidence and lessons generated with evaluation partners; and
3. Output 3: Policy processes enabled by research-into-use principles, lessons and discourse.

Through these three inter-linked outputs RIU will apply innovation systems thinking (as outlined in Annex 1) in an experimental way to use research-based knowledge to achieve a poverty-reducing impact at the country level (this is output 1). It will learn the lessons from these and other experiments (this is output 2); and it will communicate these lessons to others (output 3). Sierra Leone is one of six countries in Africa where RIU Country programmes are being implemented (the others being Malawi, Nigeria, Rwanda, Tanzania and Zambia).

In relation to output 1, the RIU programme will apply the innovation systems approach and its values through mechanisms that lead to:

- Improved access to research results (by bridging information gaps) (Component 1.1)
- Enhanced demand for research outputs (by strengthening capacity to demand research findings) (Component 1.2)
- Enterprises using research results (by kick starting enterprises) (Component 1.3)

The implementation of research into use activities shall be undertaken by “innovation platforms” using RIU resources channelled through coalitions or partnerships. The RIU defines an innovation platform as “a network of partners working on a common theme and using research knowledge in ways it has not been used before to generate goods/ services for the benefit of the poor”.

2.2. RIU Strategy Development in Sierra Leone

A draft RIU Country Strategy for Sierra Leone was developed in December 2007, following a Country Assessment earlier in the same year. The draft strategy found windows of opportunity for RIU Programme involvement, but also concluded that opportunities to innovate were constrained by weak linkages and systems of exchanging information and knowledge between relevant actors and agencies.

¹. DFID has been a major supporter of natural resources research through its preceding strategy – the Renewable Natural Resources Research Strategy (RNRRS) – which ran from 1995 to 2006.

After consideration of the draft strategy the Strategy Management Team (SMT) of the RIU decided that the Sierra Leone-RIU Programme should address the issue of information and knowledge flows directly, based on an ‘information markets approach’ (Annex 2). Thus, the CSPD team was tasked **to explore if, in the Sierra Leone innovation context, information and communication can be put at the centre of the strategy and thereby explore the hypothesis that “communication and information markets can be central drivers for getting research into use in an innovation system”**

The CSPD team was together in Sierra Leone from the 12th – 21st May and again from 7th – 16th July 2008. During each of these visits stakeholder workshops were held, providing the foundation for the establishment of a partnership of innovation system actors, who will be the primary implementers of the RIU programme in Sierra Leone. Additionally, an updated innovation systems mapping exercise was undertaken, supported by key informant interviews (Annex 11), field visits, and a further review of available documentation. Work by the in-country team has been ongoing, supported by the Country MIL Advisor Francis Johnston, and Country Task Manager (currently Dan Kisauzi).

This document sets out the rationale and basis for the Sierra Leone RIU Country Strategy, bringing all previous and current strands of the Sierra Leone RIU Programme under a single strategic umbrella. Although this document stands alone as a Country Strategy, the intention is that the same document will be further developed into a full implementation Plan.

3. POLICY ENVIRONMENT FOR AGRICULTURE

Note: See Annex 3 for a general UNDP 2008 situation analysis; see Annex 4 for agriculture sector notes.

Sierra Leone is a country of rich resources and potential, but decades of economic mismanagement and the 11 year civil war declared at an end in 2002 have left it in a fragile state.

A process of recovery has been underway since the war ended, both economic (although with limited impact on poverty indicators to date), and in terms of security. A largely peaceful election in 2007 resulted in a smooth transition to a new Government, President and majority parliament and local elections were held in July 2008. It is a time of change in Sierra Leone, and there is a great sense of determination to move on.

The Government of Sierra Leone (GoSL) is committed to meeting the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) targets, and has strong support from donors (of which DFID is the largest bilaterally) under the framework of the 2004 Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP –this is currently being updated and the GoSL is also drawing up a longer term Strategic National Development Plan).

Agriculture and natural resources-based livelihoods are fundamentally important to that vision. Since 2001 well over half a million people are estimated to have returned to mainly rural village areas; overall an estimated 75% of the population continue to rely on agriculture as their primary livelihood activity.

Although the sector faces many constraints, it has strong potential for growth and improved food security. According to a 2004 FAO sector review, Sierra Leone has, or can achieve with existing or available technologies, comparative advantages in domestic rice production, and some minor crops (groundnuts, cassava and chilli peppers); as well as coffee, cocoa and oil palm for export. The same review gave a broadly positive assessment in terms of the agricultural growth rates required to meet MDG poverty reduction targets (8% or less p.a. depending on other sectors’ performance), which may be possible if current reported growth rates are accurate.

The current government has a strong commitment to agriculture: “a two-pronged vision of promoting food security and poverty alleviation through the commercialization of agriculture”, as well as making the sector “the engine of socioeconomic growth and development of Sierra Leone”. There is increasing interest from donors to invest in agriculture; a National Agricultural Development Plan for Sierra Leone (NADPSL) is being developed; MAFFS is being restructured around the new agribusiness-oriented vision and now accords the extension service divisional status alongside research; new multi-stakeholder advisory committee structures have been established. The agricultural research system has been restructured under the Sierra Leone Agricultural Research Institute (SLARI) and has undergone a strategic overhaul to align fully with the Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP) and the Framework for African Agricultural Productivity (FAAP).

4. INNOVATION SYSTEM ANALYSIS

Figures on the next two pages illustrate the main actors and information flows based on the Innovation System analysis.

4.1. Pro-Poor Innovation: Some Key Issues

4.1.1. The Sierra Leone Innovation System and Poverty

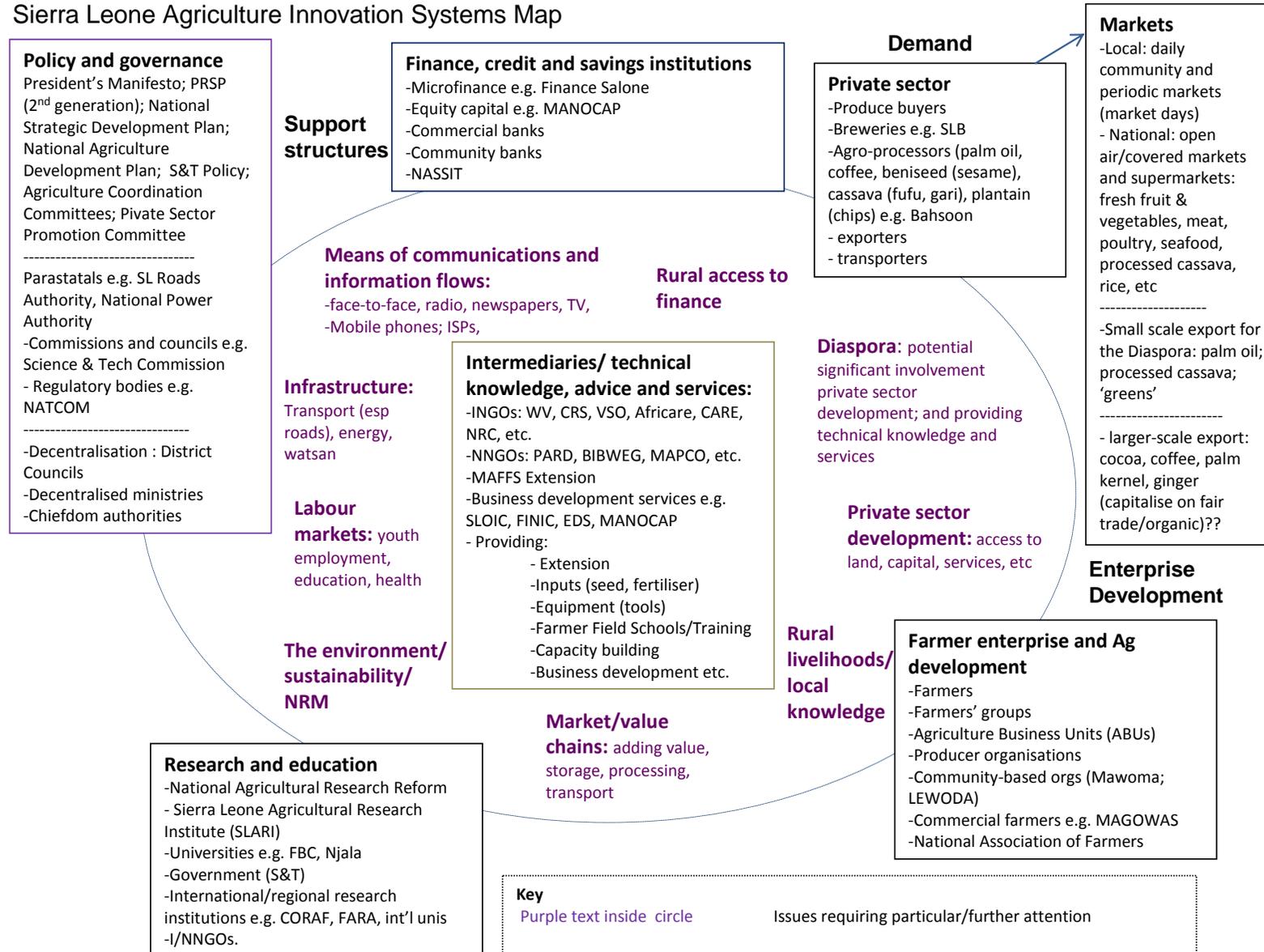
The rural poor of Sierra Leone have not historically been well served by their governments, nor, in the view of some commentators, by their research system. The colonial legacy - a two-tier system of governance with rural areas under ‘native administration’, and an elitist research system with little accountability to rural communities – evolved little over the following decades. These systems have generally failed over time to support equitable growth within agriculture. Available analysis (e.g. Richards, Röling and others) show that West African farming communities are, or can be, highly innovative. The national agricultural research system has achieved notable successes, for example in rice varietal improvement. However there has been less success in achieving the broad-based productivity gains needed to reduce poverty; an emphasis on inappropriate technical packages and misunderstanding of traditional/communal systems and livelihoods have been contributory factors.

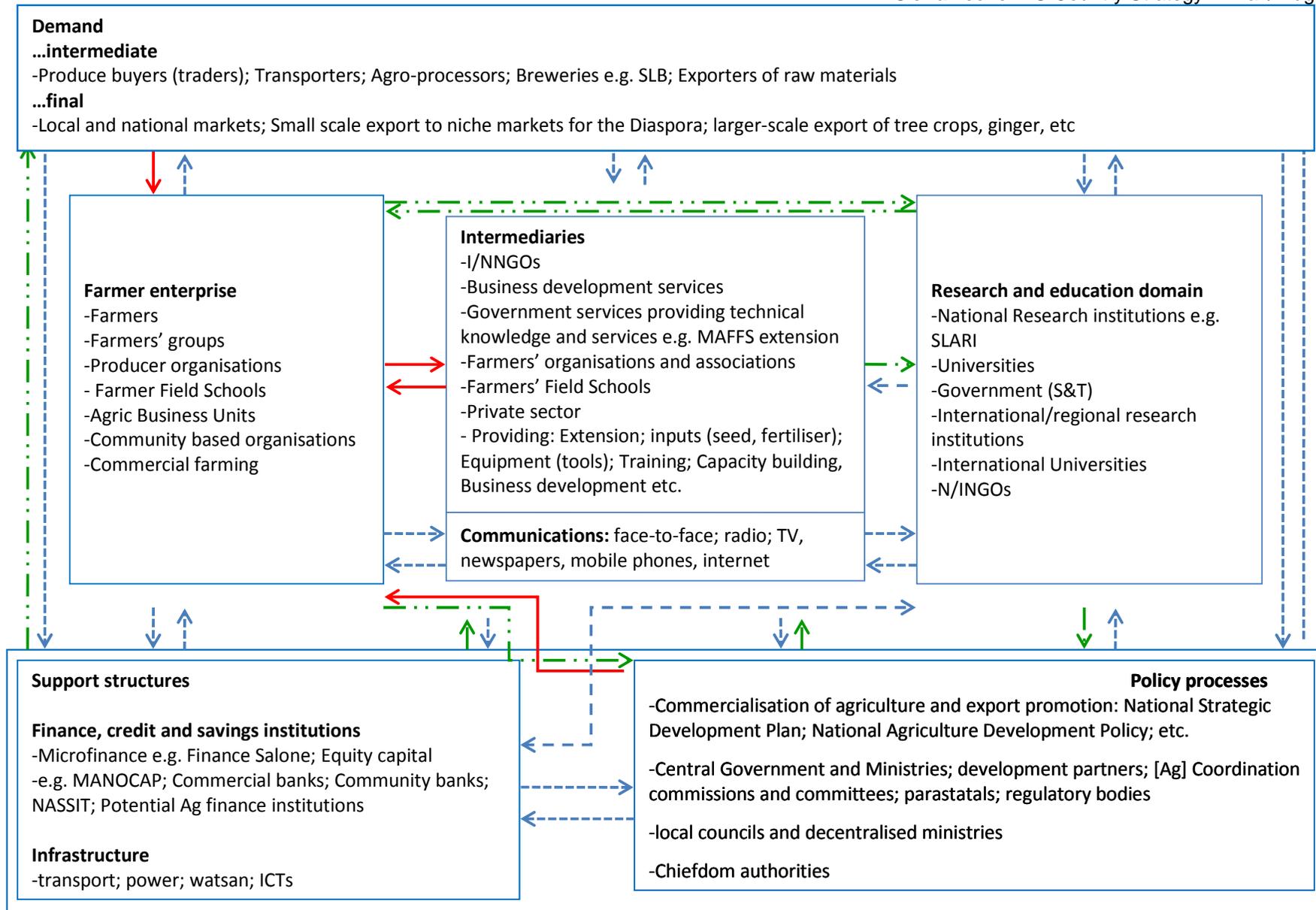
As Sierra Leone rebuilds there is an opportunity for a new approach. The challenge for the innovation system now, and the context for RIU involvement, is the need to raise the performance of agriculture to deliver food security AND broad based livelihood opportunities to underpin social justice and stability.

4.1.2. Local Governance and Rural Institutions

Rural communities in Sierra Leone can only engage effectively with other actors in the innovation system if they are empowered by effective rural institutions. For example recent work (Maconachie et al, 2008) shows that an important dimension of poverty in Sierra Leone relates to the terms upon which the poor can access means of production. Inland valley swamps have been identified as a vital resource for enhancing food security through expanded production of rice in particular, but access to this land and the means to ‘employ’ scarce labour (see the section on youth, below) through cash or food for work is vital and largely socially determined through local institutions. The decentralisation process is one key dimension in Sierra Leone which, along with related drives to strengthen community-based and producers organisations and reform key national bodies such as the National Farmers Association, is expected to

Sierra Leone Agriculture Innovation Systems Map





Key → Strong existing links (but not necessarily working well) -.-.-> Weak existing links - - - -> Gaps

deliver greater democracy and self reliance in rural areas. There are however a number of constraints on the decentralisation process² (see also Annex 8). Meanwhile “many of the patrimonial institutions, practices and networks that were instrumental in shaping natural resource access and control during the pre-conflict era may have been preserved, and in some cases even strengthened, in the post-conflict period” (ibid.). One dimension of this is ‘the youth issue’ (see also Annex 6). The exodus of youth out of agriculture and into Freetown and/or mining is an important structural dimension of economy. These young men are largely outside of the formal system, disinterested in and distrustful of ‘communal’ agricultural labour under the Chiefs and a wild card element in terms of prospects for sustainable peace.

4.1.3. Getting Out of Dependency Mode: getting into Agribusiness

During the immediate post conflict period, relief efforts were organised through national and international NGOs, who handed out food, seeds and tools, and provided basic humanitarian assistance. NGOs have been critiqued for being stuck in ‘relief mode’ and as such, of being unresponsive to the development needs of farmers. They tend to be fragmented efforts, with little coordination or communication, either with one another or with the government. While some NGOs have recognised this, such as the CORAD group of NGOs who coordinate their Farmer Field School activities, these are time-bound projects subject to funding, and the exception rather than the rule.

The new agribusiness vision requires that the agriculture sector now needs to shift into a more pluralistic and competitive rural service economy. This will not be straightforward: the dependency mode is enduring and there is a generally limited culture of ‘farming as a business’ (with exceptions along tribal and ethnic lines); there is a weak effective demand for services in rural areas, lack of ‘service-orientation’ and accountability within NGOs, public sector agencies, and farmers organisations, which have become stronger and more influential on the back of the relief economy. There is also an associated lack of accessible business development skills and services.

The drive towards agribusiness is being coordinated via the Private Sector Promotion Committee (PSPC) of MAFFS; the Private Sector in Agriculture forum is a key actor. The forum has four technical/coordination committees, incorporating a range of actors, organised around (i) technical services to farming, (ii) input supply, (iii) marketing chain, (iv) finance³. Moves towards an expanded role of the private sector are promising; certainly interviews with more entrepreneurial farmers and service providers highlighted considerable frustration with ‘waiting for the government to do something’, but the degree to which the roll out of the agribusiness vision is transparent, accessible

². (i) reluctance on the part of line ministries to devolve functions (and budgets); (ii) serious problems of cashflow from central to local government², (iii) confusion and occasional conflict between the respective roles of the democratic and the “traditional” governance structures – the councils and the chiefs

³. This is a critical area: the current lack of well regulated or coordinated access to rural finance is a major constraint on agriculture. Despite the fact that 80 percent of the population live and work in the rural areas, formal financial institutions do not provide financial services within these areas; currently farmers in Sierra Leone are generally paying interest rates above 40 percent. Initiatives are fragmented: micro-finance activities through NaCSA and some NGOs are taking place around the country; recent (re)launching of Community Banks. However, there is no defined government policy. For most rural populations, informal forms rotating loan schemes are the only access to credit. A review of agricultural financing will be undertaken potentially leading to establishment of a new financing institution.

and undistorted by political interests is by no means guaranteed. The Agriculture Business Units (ABUs) programme, for example, are criticised by some as having become politicised⁴.

4.1.4. High Cost Communications Environment

The communications environment in Sierra Leone is reviewed in Annex 5. The predominant and preferred means of exchanging information is via face to face meetings, supplemented by combinations of newspapers, radio and other broadcast media. Extension approaches also emphasise traditional group approaches; farmer field schools are popular. These are largely delivered by NGOs; the public extension services are limited in number and under-funded. The use of mobile phones is taking off, with the largest provider now claiming 85% coverage of the country, although penetration rates remain very low. Major infrastructure challenges and weak effective demand combine to make Sierra Leone a relatively high cost and fragmented environment for the use of ICTs in general. At the same time the regulator is weakly capacitated and is finding its way in working with the ISPs to roll out more affordable services. The sector is beginning to gear up though; the mobile phone operators have recently formed a GSM operators association, and a national ICT task force has been formed with a view to improving policy and implementation.

4.2. Information and Knowledge Flows

In the recent (July 2008) Partnership workshop, participants, working in groups, were asked to assess the relevant strengths and weakness of the linkages between each of the main 'boxes' in the diagrams above and represent these diagrammatically. Some of the main findings are discussed below:

The reported weak or ineffective knowledge flows from markets into the small farm sector is a function of weak marketing systems and lack of market information available to farmers. This asymmetry also lends itself to exploitative behaviour on behalf of traders and associated loss of trust and social capital within marketing chains. As discussed above, much of the intermediary system has been oriented towards free provision of inputs and not towards production for the market. The research system has not historically delivered knowledge oriented towards value-addition in the marketing chain.

The perceived strength of linkages into the small farm sector from intermediaries and from policy processes is an illusion based on the strong dependency (and vote-winning) mode in which these relationships currently operate; thus these knowledge flows are currently very unidirectional and supply driven. As elements of the intermediary sector do become more market oriented they will face coordination problems and high transaction costs: in a weak fragmented communications environment, as reported above, these actors face difficulty in finding (out about) each other, or the attributes/nature of goods and services each may be able to offer, and can't verify quality or enforce performance of contracts.

All groups reported weak links between financial institutions and other elements of the agricultural innovation system. Some of the factors behind this were discussed above. Formal lenders lack

⁴. Agricultural Business Units are supported by the UNDP (mainly with entrepreneurship training and input loans). They emerged out of Farmer Field Schools, with the aim of strengthening farmers' capacities to make a business out of farming. There are currently about 700 ABUs countrywide, each comprising up to 400 farmers. As taxable enterprises, they provide a source of revenue to local councils.

information about the profile of rural entrepreneurs as potential/credit-worthy borrowers and there is limited engagement between the two groups (or even with larger-scale agricultural entrepreneurs such as agro-processors) in terms of borrowing for business development.

Formal policy processes are perceived to be poorly linked with other key innovation system elements, including research, private sector and financial institutions. This suggests that, despite much activity oriented toward improving planning frameworks (and undoubtedly strong individuals in key positions), weaknesses at the centre and coordination problems limit public sector effectiveness and the ability to formulate and implement evidence based policy⁵. There was no disaggregation at the workshop of the distinction between central and decentralised government apparatus to inform an assessment of knowledge flows around the new District councils.

The research system is also perceived to be poorly linked with all other actors. This is a serious problem, only partially explained by the lack of resources available to SLARI. Available analyses suggest that a stock of available/adaptable knowledge relevant to Sierra Leone agriculture exists (see also Annex 4), both in terms of technologies and livelihoods research. However, this appears to be firmly 'stuck on the shelf'. Key informant interviews indicate that some on the production/agribusiness 'side' are disillusioned with the research system, believing that it has 'failed to deliver'; while researchers claim that efforts to engage others in multi-stakeholder platforms to plan and prioritise are not taken up.

5. THE SIERRA LEONE RESEARCH INTO USE STRATEGY

5.1. Strategic Principles

This is a pivotal transition time for Sierra Leone as it moves from post-conflict relief efforts to longer term development. In many ways Sierra Leone's future is being invented now as institutions are established or rebuilt. The Research into Use Programme could contribute much to this process.

There is no shortage of knowledge relevant to Sierra Leone's needs (either technical or process knowledge), nor will there be a lack of (potential) opportunities to apply this knowledge within a growing, relatively stable and liberalising economy (to the extent that this remains the case). This knowledge is not being used on any scale for innovation because the conditions to use it are lacking; the principle bottlenecks in the Sierra Leone innovation system are coordination and information failures that make it near impossible for any coherent system of innovation to operate.

Thus, returning to the hypothesis introduced earlier on, this Sierra Leone strategy will address and enhance information and knowledge flows as a principle driver and means to enhance performance of the Innovation System as a whole, and thus create the conditions for uptake and use of research for pro-poor innovation.

5.2. Approach

The Sierra Leone RIU Programme will support institutional developments to 'make the market' for knowledge, such that there are both opportunities and incentives to apply best international practice and global knowledge to challenges facing Sierra Leone.

⁵ . There are currently many overlapping initiatives underway involving different committees and forums, many involving the same people on them, often seeming to be in parallel or overlapping substantially and with little 'joined-upness' or systematic attention to lesson learning.

The Programme will support capacity development of key existing actors within the Innovation System, with a particular focus on the intermediary function, i.e. those actors operating within or with influence upon the rural service economy [whose interactions with each other and with other actors provide a conduit for knowledge linkages and flows].

The rationale is that this process of capacity development takes place as a product of the interactions between different actors in a functioning Innovation System. In the constrained environment facing Sierra Leone, RIU will support the emergence of gap-filling Knowledge Market Services (KM Services) as a 'smart subsidy' mechanism to facilitate these interactions, focusing on areas where the existing system is currently weak (each of these services is further discussed below):

- Demand Support Facility: enhance effective demand for knowledge-based services
- Knowledge Brokerage: match this demand with sources in Sierra Leone and elsewhere
- Innovation Finance Facility: match good ideas with appropriate finance

The Partnership mechanism in Sierra Leone will offer a coordinated environment for organisations to utilise these services through joint endeavours and action research.

This process has begun with the establishment of the Partnership for Agricultural Innovation and Development (PAID). This partnership, broadly representative of the Sierra Leone system, will operate essentially as an open, membership-based social business network; accessing, exchanging and utilising information and services, and undertaking other mutually supporting activities to build opportunities and capacity for delivery of knowledge-based services into agriculture. In a May 2008 workshop the participants decided on the following:

Vision

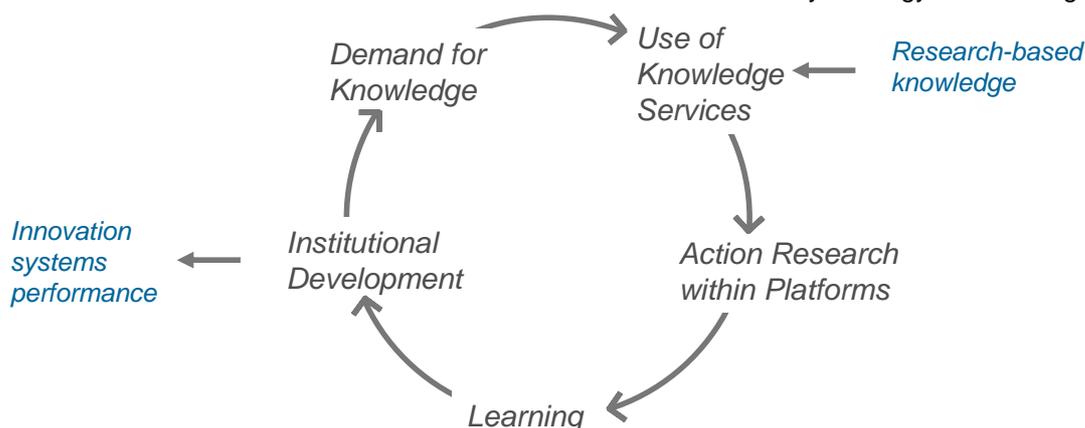
A formidable partnership of service providers, operating with mutual trust and understanding, innovatively using research information and knowledge, efficiently and effectively using resources to address their common interests, in order that markets are more competitive, communities are able to adapt and livelihoods are improved

Mission

To enhance the capacity and performance of organisations who are working together to generate innovations that boost the contribution of agriculture and natural resources to economic growth and improve livelihoods in Sierra Leone

This partnership is profiled in Annex 9 and the partnership mechanism is further discussed below.

The logic is that RIU will facilitate the development of (make the market for) these gap filling services as means that the Partnership can use to meet its goals. The 'doing bit' is up to the Partnership itself. Essentially the programme will aim to support the PAID in establishing a virtuous circle as illustrated in the figure below: members of the PAID will use knowledge market services to work up ideas and to develop them through action research activities; these action research activities will generate learning; the learning will result in institutional development, which will feed further demand for services and increasingly for 'high value' external knowledge.



The logic is that increasing demand for research-based knowledge stems from a desire for higher quality information to make changes in productivity: this desire comes from the recognition of, and ability to capture, value from those changes: the capacity to make these choices can be learned through action research within innovation platforms.

6. Innovation Platforms, Enterprise Development and Pro-Poor Entry Points

Members of the PAID will undertake activities within three thematic areas of key developmental importance for Sierra Leone (as identified through the above Innovation Systems analysis, KIIs and workshops). In each of these areas the demand for enhanced capacity and new knowledge is strong. Champions exist (or can be found through) the Partnership, there are synergies with other development initiatives (including those funded by DFID) and existing applicable knowledge exists:

6.1. Thematic Priorities for Innovation Platforms

Note: During the 8/9th July 2008 Workshop each of these thematic areas was discussed and participants began the process of formulating specific ideas and opportunities. The following outline will be further developed during the Implementation Plan stage.

6.1.1. Market Access: Making Markets Work For Poor Rural Households

This is at the heart of the challenge that RIU can help to address in Sierra Leone. GoSL and donor partners are gearing up to facilitate private investment in improving marketing facilities, infrastructure and related services. A number of commodity oriented initiatives and platforms are underway or planned. For example FAO is looking at support geared towards rice exportation, organic cocoa production, and food crops diversification, as well as value chain studies and fairtrade opportunities for various other crops including cashew, mango and pineapple (ref: Kevin Gallagher, FAO). Some members of the PAID are already involved in production of ginger, peppers and other high value crops.

Innovations will be required in many areas: financing and delivery of services in the marketing chain; improved access to low cost finance; value-adding processing and storage; means to overcome transport problems; improved market information, etc., as well as in terms of the institutional arrangements needed to level the playing field for the poorest households through equitable access

to labour, land, information and services, particularly in context of mixed diversified crop/livestock/fisheries based livelihoods.

Specific priorities will be identified through mechanisms discussed below. However, strategically, the main focus for the Sierra Leone RIU strategy from a ‘pro-poor’ perspective will be on relatively small, diversified niche type opportunities in specific areas⁶, that respond to local needs, requires moderate investment and can be undertaken by local people with technical assistance and financial support. These productive projects may be of various types, starting from ideas for an innovative service, product, technology, process or venture. There will be a focus on developing such opportunities through productive alliances within the Sierra Leone RIU Partnership (PAID) - agreements among producers, processors/wholesalers/exporters and rural service providers that identify profitable markets for specific products, and organise all production and marketing. Particular attention will be given to small-scale private sector investments and the associated micro, small and medium sized entities (MSMEs) that are owner-managed, but also entities in the entire supply chain from the international market through to the end-user.

The overall logic of the Sierra Leone strategy approach will be to support strengthening of the marketing system by enhancing the availability of KM services to SMEs and rural entrepreneurs that are themselves providing market linkage services within these systems.

6.1.2. Engaging Youth in Productive NR-based livelihoods

Young adults in Sierra Leone are among the poorest of the poor, and have the highest unemployment rate. At age 20-24, three of every ten young men are neither formally employed nor in school. The problem is especially acute in urban areas (see also Annex 6).

Before the war, investment in education and economic opportunities was lacking, youth gangs were cultivated for use in political intimidation, political and social life was controlled by the traditional chiefdom system, and many young men abandoned traditional farming livelihoods, many in favour of diamond mining. These factors contributed to the disaffection of young people in Sierra Leone. While youth were grossly manipulated and many forced to fight in the various warring factions, the conflict has also been interpreted as a manifestation of the great level of dissatisfaction and hopelessness felt by many young people at the time.

In the post-conflict environment, therefore, there is widespread recognition that the ‘youth problem’ must be taken seriously. At policy level this included a youth ministry being set up (which has now combined with the education ministry). Many donor and I/NGO initiatives are geared towards youth engagement, from training programmes to job creation opportunities. For instance, the World Bank’s 2006-2009 Sierra Leone Country Assistance Strategy comprises ‘an integrated rural and private sector development initiative [that] will target agriculture and youth unemployment’ (World Bank Sierra Leone Country Brief).

Agriculture is considered one of the few productive activities to have the necessary absorptive capacity to employ youth. However, ‘getting youth back into agriculture’ MUST be based on pull mechanisms and not push. The youth are not much interested in the drudgery of farm labour, but are interested in making money. As economic opportunities open up within agriculture, including

⁶. These in turn may be linked to larger area or product-based opportunities to scale up or out within specific sectors or geographic areas where there are larger scale investment and coordination requirements.

those developed through the above Market Access Theme, the PAID can be a conduit for identifying and supporting decent livelihood opportunities, whether through employment (on an organised and paid for service basis – in response to labour shortages), or more attractively within agro-enterprises, or high value peri-urban horticulture, and generally as service providers, market intermediaries and small enterprises, adding value in the marketing chain.

Most of the activity oriented towards youth has focused on training and skills but has lacked a joined-up approach to the problem. Initiatives will need to adopt a whole marketing chain approach and action research with youth organisations that develop and demonstrate the money earning potential of these activities. There will also be the need for linkages with other approaches to the 'youth problem', based on investments in education, civic amenities, other area-based development activities and cross-sectoral linkages.

6.1.3. Getting Research into Use in Sierra Leone

The current restructuring process appears very promising on paper; the strategic and operational plans are fully aligned with Comprehensive Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP) and the principle of the framework for African agricultural productivity (FAAP). They promise a paradigm change embracing "not only conventional research, but also the use of innovation platforms, and attention to policy, markets, capacity strengthening, coordination, advocacy, knowledge management and the involvement of a broad-base of stakeholders". SLARI will also diversify from its predominant historical focus on crop improvement, to a much broader scope of work embracing also mixed crops, livestock and fisheries systems.

Currently, however, the capacity of SLARI to implement these approaches is limited. This clearly has a great deal to do with the destruction of much of the infrastructure during the war and chronic underfunding, but there is more to the problem; it is questionable whether there are sufficiently strong or effective linkages in place with other actors in the system to support widespread uptake and use of SLARI research products.

There are good opportunities here for RIU support, not by financing SLARI directly, but by working from the 'other end' and more particularly 'in the middle'. Essentially SLARI now has a demand for innovation platforms to operationalise its new Strategy, and Sierra Leone RIU is in the business of facilitating the establishment of innovation platforms. Work within this theme will involve SLARI and other PAID members in action research activities to get existing technologies off shelves in the short term, and apply research based knowledge and global best practices to the longer term institutional challenge of embedding SLARI fully within the Sierra Leone Innovation System.

NOTE ON USE OF RNRRS AND OTHER RESEARCH: Most of the short term knowledge to be sourced from RNRRS (and other) research within these themes is of a practical 'how-to' nature:

- How to make markets work for the poor and increase their effective participation in value chains
- How to engage youth meaningfully in the development process in a post-conflict environment
- How to rebuild and manage relationships between research and the production system, agribusiness and policy processes.

There is a great deal of this kind of knowledge within or associated with RNRRS or other UK financed research, that Sierra Leone can use now: the Sierra Leone RIU program will actively seek to put this to use in the short-medium term.

The logic is that the major innovations required to support the Sierra Leone innovation system at this point are as much to do with process and institutional knowledge as they are to do with technology. The application of this knowledge (through the 'virtuous circle' described above), and the use of the knowledge market services supported by Sierra Leone RIU, will also create enhanced conditions for application of more specific commodity or technology oriented research products, and generate specific demands for such products. These opportunities will be identified through the Innovation Platform activities and links facilitated into the UK science base as the demands arise.

6.2. Process for Supporting and Developing Innovative Ideas

Note: the processes described here will be further explored and developed during the implementation planning stage through specific discussions with actors who may be involved. Ideas and experience from other RIU country programmes will also be reviewed. The following is more concerned with establishing the strategic approach and 'ground-rules' at this stage.

The Sierra Leone RIU programme will help to provide the 'fertile ground' upon which innovative ideas may come to fruition. But the origin of those ideas will come from the Partnership itself.

A key principle will be to balance the cooperative/joint exploration of ideas, constraints and opportunities through an Innovation Platform approach, with the financial incentive for PAID members to create and capture rents from innovations within productive enterprises.

Essentially, there will be two different levels/types of activity:

(i) **Open Use of the Knowledge Market Services:** PAID members will be free to use the KM services to identify and respond to requests for information and services and develop collaborative business opportunities across a broad front consistent with the Partnership's adopted Vision and Code of Conduct.

The unrestricted use of these services (in terms of scope) is necessary initially to establish demand (and to promote their use) and as part and parcel of activities to establish long term business models for the services, which may well include the payment of fees (perhaps beyond a certain level or type of use), and/or other mechanisms to generate finance to maintain the services, such as commissions etc.

(ii) Use of the Knowledge Market Services within Innovation Platforms

There will also be an active process to identify and solicit ideas for productive activities falling within the three thematic areas outlined above. These processes are still being defined, but are likely to involve:

- Champions within each of the three thematic areas who will be appointed and tasked with holding discussions and bringing ideas to the table
- Facilitated meetings of the PAID
- Ideas brought independently to the table by one or more PAID members
- Increasingly, ideas identified through interactions with the KM services and communications activities (see below), including interest from organisations outside of Sierra Leone

These processes could then generate short concept notes aimed at demonstrating the viability of an innovative⁷ new service, product, technology, process or venture consistent with one or more of the Innovation Platform themes.

A process will be needed to filter and progress certain ideas/concepts through a transparent competition mechanism. Winners could be eligible for small innovation grants to develop concepts further through intensive use of the KM services (thus also providing revenues for these services).

Note: this mechanism is not dissimilar to approaches used by large private sector firms in which employees, business units or combinations of them compete internally for resources and assistance to work up innovative ideas.

Note: the logic of holding an ‘internal’ competition in this case is that the rights to apply are a benefit of membership for which members have paid. However this is balanced by the open membership procedure and communications campaigns which effectively mean the fund is open to all, provided they are willing to register and sign up the PAID code of conduct and governance mechanisms.

At this stage it is important that the approach taken to further develop any particular concept should be defined by the attributes of the concept itself and the requirements to ‘make it fly’, rather than being formulaic, i.e. to facilitate the use of the KM services according to needs and aspirations of the applying individual or organisation. For example, an idea presented with a sound plan and institutional basis may be fast tracked for introduction to the Innovation Finance Facility; whilst others (probably the majority) will need further development through a more iterative approach. This latter approach may involve some or all of:

- identify additional potential partners
- identify sources of existing/adaptable research-based knowledge
- formulate and undertake relevant action research activities
- undertake livelihoods analysis and/or market chain analysis to confirm market potential and establish links with buyers
- identify best bet institutional arrangements, i.e. through a business structure, cooperative, MOU or other mechanism, including appropriate scale and scope
- identify and source other business development requirements such as legal or accounting advice
- identify required resources and a suitable financing mechanism via existing / available investors in Sierra Leone or further afield (potentially with an element of RIU/DFID co-financing)

For each activity selected, the Innovation Grant process could be geared to provide a certain minimum commitment of time and resources to be provided through RIU. In return those engaged in these activities would agree to certain principles:

⁷ Innovation is defined as the first significant commercial use of new ideas, new technologies or new ways of doing things in a place, or by people, where they have not been used before. It is also important to extend the use of pre-existing innovations (that is, systems are in place, but use is limited geographically or otherwise). Not all innovations include commercial use (e.g., innovations in how demand enhancement is approached).

- (i) Pro-poor linkages: whatever the entry point for the activity, the work undertaken will explore and evaluate the entire gamut of linkages and value-adding steps necessary to establish both financial viability and pro-poor linkages
- (ii) Use of research-based knowledge – an active process to identify and establish links with sources of research based knowledge that may contribute to the endeavour
- (iii) Learning: Cooperation with activities to capture and learn from the experiences of the action research (without compromising necessary commercial / intellectual rights).
- (iv) Termination: if the initiative proves demonstrably to be non-viable or otherwise not aligned with RIU principles, there will be no further support through RIU at the end of this initial grant phase.

7. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

7.1. The PAID and the RIU Sierra Leone Programme: Interlocking logframes

Effectively there are two Programmes to consider; the programme of work that the PAID will undertake, supported at least initially by Sierra Leone RIU, and the Sierra Leone RIU programme itself. The interlocking nature of these two programmes is illustrated in the figure on page 16.

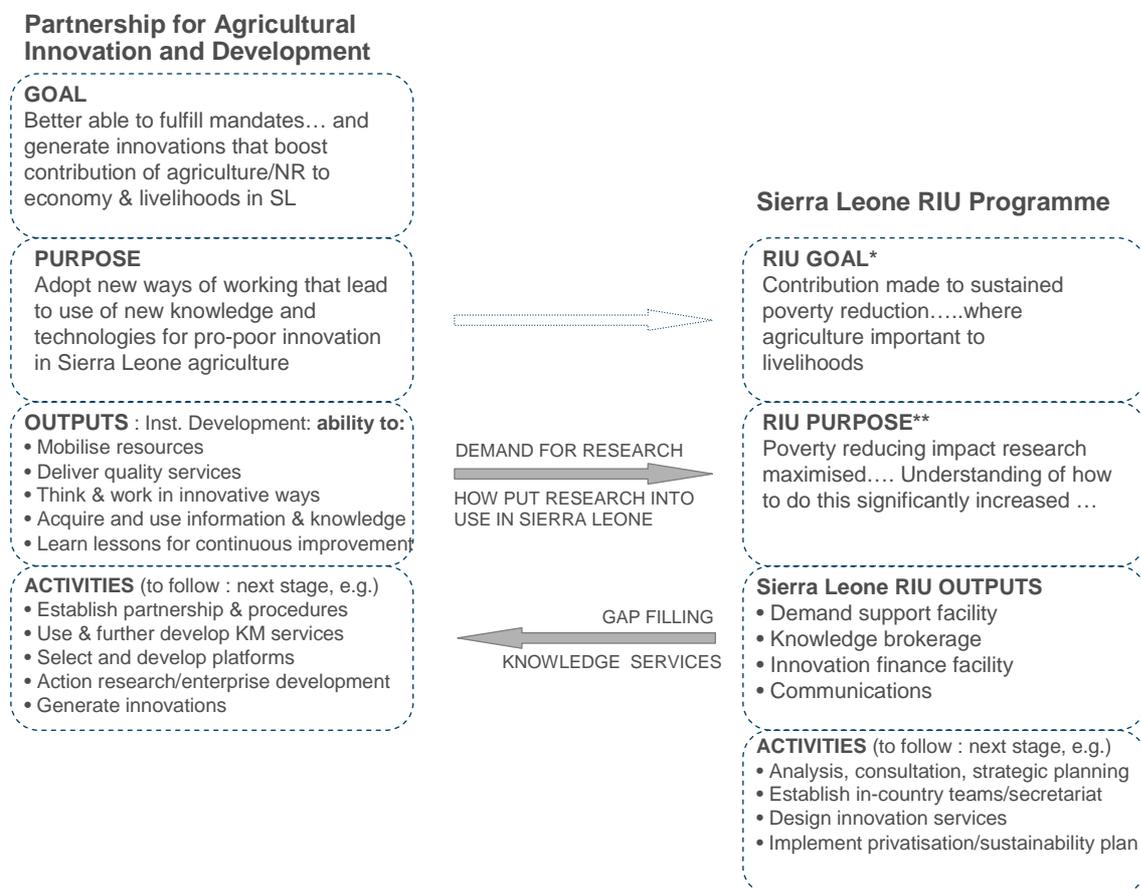
The strategic logic is as follows: the RIU programme finances development of gap filling knowledge market services for the Sierra Leone Innovation system. These services are deliverable outputs of the Sierra Leone RIU County Programme, to be fostered and piloted through the RIU Sierra Leone Secretariat. The use of the Knowledge market services supports a virtuous circle, as described above, which delivers institutional developments and learning. The learning from the Sierra Leone programme, and the demand for research, contribute directly to fulfilling the RIU programme purpose. Below the Sierra Leone RIU programme *outputs* are discussed in more detail.

7.2. Knowledge Market Services

In functioning innovations systems there are a range of services typically available to SMEs, often publicly financed and usually privately delivered, to enable them to 'level the playing field' with big business and access knowledge, services and finance. In the Sierra Leone context, the Sierra Leone RIU programme will support development of three types of service as illustrated in the figure on page 17. In each case the service has a role to support knowledge flows within the innovation system that are currently constrained.

These services are innovative, certainly in the Sierra Leone context, and their development should rightly be considered an output of the Sierra Leone RIU programme rather than something established as a one-off activity at the beginning. Their development will involve an element of action research with PAID members in order to 'get them right' supported by exploration of the available literature and knowledge base relating to provision of such services in other countries and contexts. The services will initially be 'fostered' and piloted within the Sierra Leone RIU secretariat, calling on external consultancy inputs as required. The explicit aim will be that each service is developed on the basis of a specific business plan detailing how financial sustainability will be achieved and what the institutional basis for the service will be in the longer term.

This document currently treats each KM Service as distinct; however they are linked to a large degree; the specific institutional basis for each and the financial provisions between the services will further be evaluated on the basis of specific discussions with potential partners and the business plan developed for each.



Notes on figure:

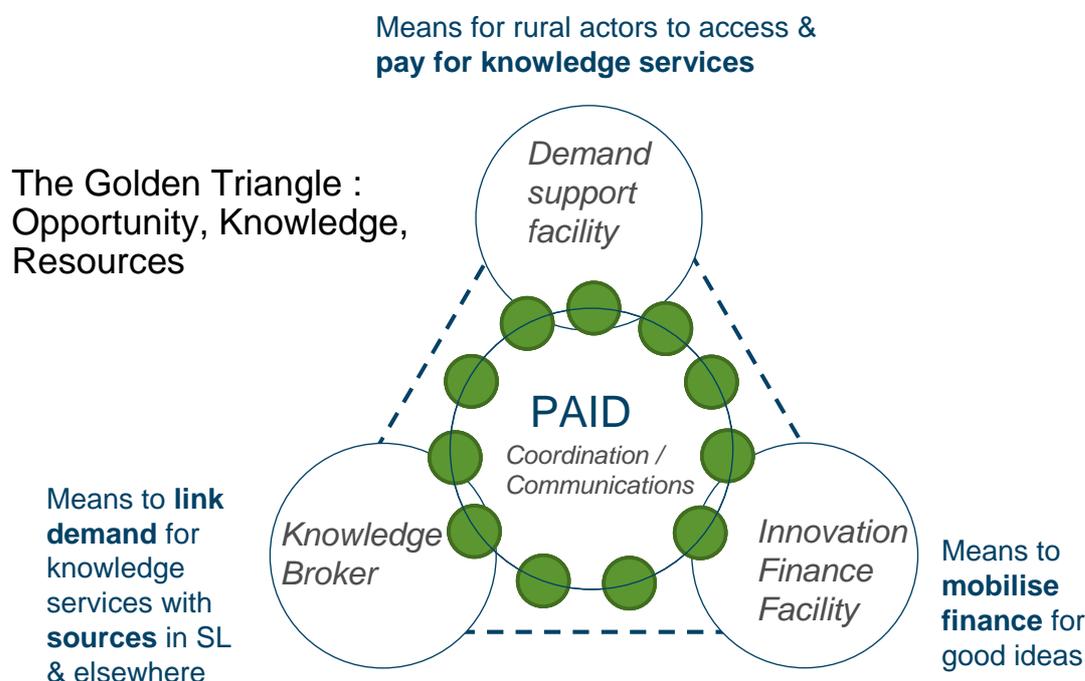
* The full correct RIU programme Goal is: “To contribute to sustained poverty reduction in countries of Africa and South Asia, where agriculture is important to the livelihoods of the poor”.

** The full correct RIU programme Purpose is: “To maximize the poverty reducing impact of RNRRS and other research and, by doing so, significantly increase understanding of how the promotion and widespread use of research can contribute to poverty reduction and economic growth”.

7.2.1. Output One: Demand Support Facility

This service will facilitate deep and wide access to the knowledge and services available from members of the PAID, and feed back information about demand, i.e. opportunities for provision of services, new partnerships and productive enterprises. The approach will be to embed this service alongside or within one or more existing initiatives that are working to support engagement of rural households in agri-market value chains and creating loci of demand for rural services. There are several candidates, including organisations that are already members of the PAID, including those operating Farmer Field Schools and potentially also ABUs, also the women’s producer organisations LEWODA and MORWODAS, or some of the other producer groups supported by USAID. The

potential to work directly with one or more District Councils will be explored, as will the potential to work with private sector operators. Impressions from interviews and workshops to date offer considerable optimism for good working relationships to be developed with one or several of these partners.



In developing this service there are existing approaches to apply that have shown promise elsewhere, for example: the use of vouchers for business development services (as being applied by the Zambia Chamber of Small and Medium Enterprises, ZACSMBA); an electronic voucher scheme as used by MPAIS in Uganda and potentially soon Rwanda; and means to develop capacity to utilise ICT based knowledge services as undertaken through the DFID Bolivia FIT programme.

7.2.2. Output Two: Knowledge Brokerage

The role of this service is to provide a clearing house to link demand for knowledge and services with potential available suppliers from within the PAID membership or further afield (including amongst the UK science base).

It will serve as a first port of call for enquiries through the demand support facility described above, and equally offer services at the 'other end' of the innovation system to research and education institutions, agro-processors, or others looking for outlets, or partnerships, or access to know-how or technologies, including those that may be sourced internationally. Access to this service is expected to be one of the key benefits and attractions of joining the PAID.

The knowledge broker will need to offer a trustworthy 'brand' and be easily accessible, probably via a helpdesk type service [the constrained communications environment in Sierra Leone limits the possibilities for distributed 'many-to-many' exchanges and will require the knowledge broker to be active in helping these exchanges to take place). The service will need an energetic communications strategy and to be innovative in its use of technologies. There are now examples both from within RNRRS outputs and elsewhere for using the web and mobile phone to link 'demand' and 'supply' of

knowledge and services. In Zambia for example the Zambia National Farmers Union has recently begun to offer an SMS service to provide both price information and linkage to buyers. The use of airtime transfers to provide a basis for those with mobile phones to access and pay for services is a distinct possibility in the medium term; the technology is already used in Kenya and elsewhere.

In developing the knowledge broker service, discussions will be held with the mobile phone operators (potentially through the new GSM operators association) and with the ISPs (see also annex 10), potentially through the recently formed ICT Task Force, as well as with NATCOM (which is a member of the PAID). Opportunities to leverage partnership, investments or regulatory changes that will improve rural connectivity, reduce prices, enhance capacity, or support the provision of relevant rural content services will be actively explored through these channels.

There will also be a need to work closely with operators of the Demand Support Facility to develop appropriate communications strategies for contexts in which the use of mobiles and other ICTs is still very limited, using a range of relevant means and media including, for example, use of community radio.

The opportunity will be explored for a private sector operation, probably through a suitable public-private partnership arrangement. The business plan for this service will explore revenue models to maximise the opportunity in Sierra Leone, including the potential to charge fees, subscriptions or commissions.

7.2.3. Output Three: Innovation Finance Facility

Note: this draws on ideas put forward by Andrew Barnett for an Innovation Facility in Rwanda. The design of this service is beyond the competence of the existing CSPD team (but relevant expertise may potentially be sourced within Sierra Leone). The following sets out some strategic requirements but the detail will need to be developed later.

The role of this facility is to match ideas and opportunities arising from activities of the PAID with appropriate finance. It will:

- (i) underwrite the voucher or electronic credit scheme operated by the Demand Support Facility
- (ii) provide small Innovation Grants as awarded to PAID members on a competitive basis to develop concepts within the Innovation Platform thematic areas
- (iii) provide a conduit as/if required to other forms of financial services within Sierra Leone or beyond

Essentially the service the Innovation Finance facility will offer the PAID is knowledge about finance and how to acquire it on optimum terms; its purpose and rationale is to compensate for the information failures and related transaction costs that members of the PAID would otherwise face in sourcing finance for NR-based ventures.

It is not envisaged that the facility will take risk or operate a portfolio of investments in its own right, although this may be a logical step at a later date. The facility could potentially, however, generate a pipeline of financeable opportunities, arising from activities of the PAID, for others to take up. It is essentially in a brokerage role and its finance model could be designed accordingly.

This facility will need to be housed and operated by an existing institution with the relevant capacity. One candidate may be ManoCap. ManoCap operates an investment fund, capitalised by a

substantial European hedge fund, which will take equity positions in mid-sized businesses in Sierra Leone (100 – 1000 employees) of between USD 200K and \$1.2M, with a view to exiting in 5 – 7 years and achieving 20% IRR. It offers relatively cheap finance but is very selective. It is also being funded by the DFID Sierra Leone Country programme ‘Business Development Initiative’, to provide a technical assistance facility for SMEs, offering business planning; advice on business structure and legal issues; and accounting.

The potential and demand for the proposed Innovation Finance Facility needs to be explored in more detail during the implementation stage, including further discussions with ManoCap and other existing actors. The requirements and scope for a specialist consultancy will be explored.

7.3. Communications Strategy

In addition to measures aiming to enhance the flow of relevant information and knowledge the Sierra Leone RIU strategy will explicitly address the quality of communications, best practices in the use of relevant media, and the packaging of information to meet the needs of different target audiences.

There are different strands to the communications requirements:

- The PAID membership need to communicate both ‘internally’, with other members, and with the wider world.
- The Knowledge Management services outlined above will have communications requirements; as will activities within the three Innovation Platform areas.
- The Sierra Leone RIU Programme will wish to capture and share learning from the Sierra Leone ‘experience’.

SOME CONSIDERATIONS:

In the medium term, 3 to 5 years, given peace, stability and a continuation of the reasonably liberalised telecommunications environment, there will most probably be dramatic advances in connectivity and use of both mobile phones and the internet in rural areas of Sierra Leone. The Sierra Leone RIU Programme will operate at the leading edge of these advances and aim to pioneer the development and use of appropriate mobile phones, web and related content services to support the use of the knowledge market services as outlined in this Strategy. *However*, the currently constrained communications environment means that the Strategy must also make appropriate and ‘joined-up’ use of all other relevant media (See also Communications Environment - Annex 5 and below).

Strategically it is necessary to consider the balance between supporting communications activities as a valuable and necessary contribution to the activities of the PAID, and the realistic prospects for continuation of these services when RIU ‘departs’. As such Sierra Leone RIU support for communications (as with the other KM services outlined above) needs to be recognised (and budgeted) as a service that is not ‘free’ and can only continue at a level that can be sustainably financed. As such RIU support for the communications activities suggested here should (i) be front-ended and then taper; and (ii) leverage maximum material or budgetary support from existing members of the PAID or other actors in Sierra Leone (for example through corporate sponsorship).

COMMUNICATIONS AND THE PAID

Meetings between partners has so far been coordinated by the RIU country management team, facilitated by communication through emails, hand delivered letters and follow up calls to mobile phones. Meetings will likely remain an important communication strategy once the Partnership is consolidated, to be complemented with:

Potential activities in the Short Term (0 – 4 months)

- Maintenance and sharing of a ‘member directory’ – this should be developed in a software programme that can be transferred to and updated online
- A strategy for keeping members in touch with one another – this could range from email updates, to mobile phone alerts, to a regular partnership newsletter, etc
- Materials generated by each partner organisation about their activities, and the services they have to offer, which can also be published to a simple partnership website or blog
- Finalisation of the text of the Partnership vision, mission, goals/expected outputs and activities for communication to a wider audience
- Publicity for and promotion of the partnership, including radio and newspaper announcements, which can also be utilised to announce meetings and other activities of the Partnership, and also for membership drives (ongoing...)
- Related to these last two points, decisions about ‘branding’ will need to be made.

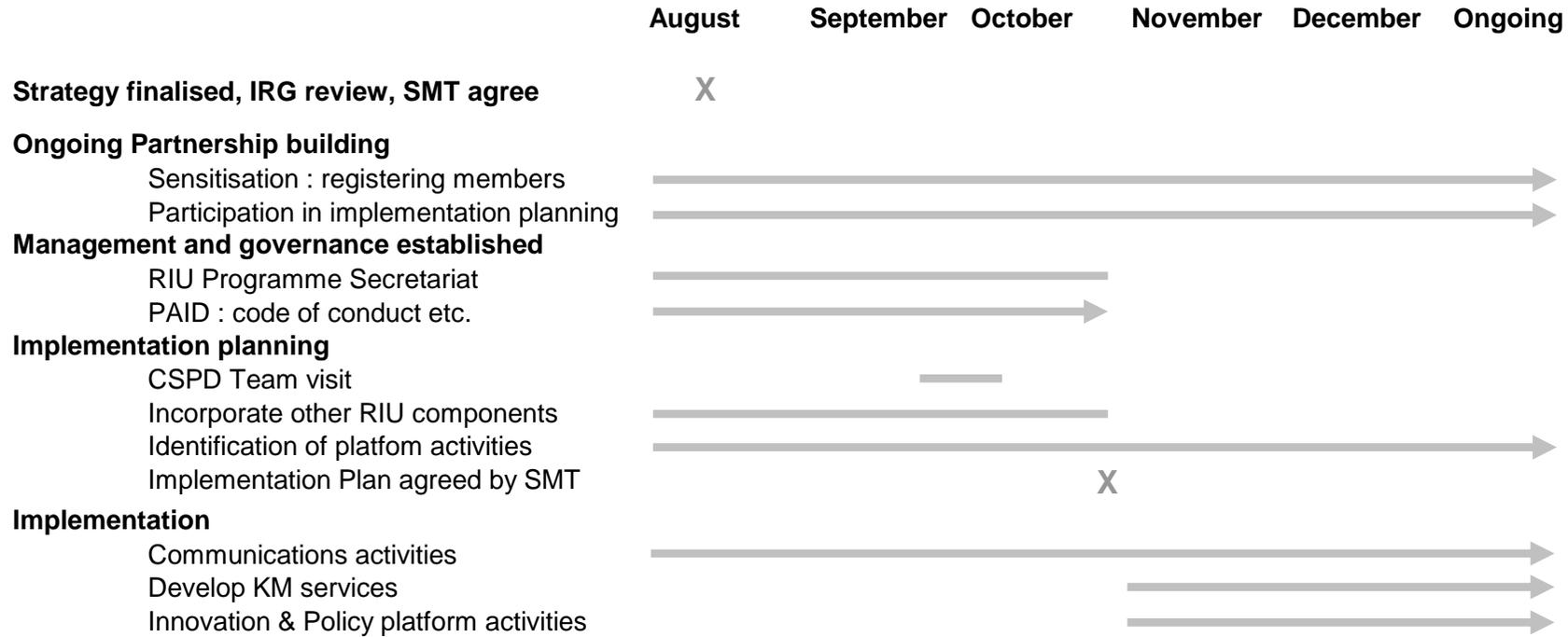
In the Medium Term: the delivery of the communications strategy, or the online elements at least, should sensibly be taken up as a service provided by the Knowledge Broker (wherever that service may reside), which will necessarily have ICTs capability.

INNOVATION PLATFORMS

In addition to the general networking requirements of PAID members, each of the three thematic areas above is associated with specific requirements:

- Market Access: coordinated communications linkages within and between value chains.
- Youth: specifically targeted media, content and interactive services to inform and encourage participation in Innovation Platform ‘youth into agriculture’ activities
- Use of Research: optimising links with existing or planned regional research knowledge networks such as DONATA and RAILS.

7.4. Activity Schedule (to be further developed and budgeted in next stage)



8. Cross-cutting issues

Poverty in Sierra Leone (from the 2004 PRSP)

In Sierra Leone poverty is widespread and deep. About 26 percent of the population is food poor, and cannot afford a basic diet; 70 percent live in poverty. There is wide disparity in poverty's geographical distribution: although about 66 percent of the 4.8 million population live in rural areas, three-quarters of the poor are rural. In the poorest districts (where war destroyed tree crops, or which rely on poor subsistence agriculture or artisanal mining) more than 8 out of 10 people live in poverty. Sierra Leone's poverty profile shows that the main poverty indicators are insufficient food, poor housing, poor health, and high infant and maternal mortality, high illiteracy, limited access to clean water, and lack of money. Sierra Leone's poor social indicators reflect the low level of human development, with especial poverty among rural women. Maternal mortality, infant mortality and fertility rates are among the worst in the world. Contraceptive prevalence remains low, as does female school attendance. Household poverty is high among subsistence farmers, as well as among households whose heads have little formal education, and large households. The high poverty rate among youth indicates the lack of economic opportunities for this potentially productive group.

A Note on Gender in Sierra Leone (longer version with references in Annex 6)

According the 2008 UN Human Development Report, Sierra Leone has the worst gender inequality, and the lowest female life expectancy, in the world. Systems of discrimination that predate the conflict prevail, including legal, economic and cultural restrictions that deny women access to resources, including healthcare, education, credit, appropriate technologies and land. Illiteracy among women is 74%, against the national average of 58%; other sources put the figure much higher, as much as 94%. Women in Sierra Leone are vulnerable to high levels of sexual violence and abuse.

A Note on Environmental issues

Deforestation due to traditional shifting cultivation practices with declining fallow periods is the main relevant problem, leaving large expanses of land deforested: less than 5% of original forest cover remains. The population is also overwhelmingly dependent on fuel wood as the main source of energy, and for construction. Uplands are the principal source, but there are increasing problems within mangroves along coastal areas, causing storm damage and destruction of natural breeding grounds for marine and estuarine fish and other organisms. In the northern region where 60% of the cattle and small ruminant population is concentrated, large areas are bare due to overgrazing. Range and pasture management is lacking; bush fires affect about 200,000 hectares of savannah woodlands annually.

It is not proposed to work exclusively with, or necessarily prioritise activities that work directly with the poorest households. However: Initiatives developed through innovation platforms and development of the KM services will, in general, enable rural households to break out of patrimonial and top-down service relationships; expand opportunities to engage in agri-market value chains on fair terms; create livelihoods opportunities for youths; improve performance of the research system to engage in pro-poor innovation activities.

The demand support facility and related communications mechanisms to be worked up during implementation will explicitly seek to ensure that the targeting of resources will be inclusive and enhance the capacity of poor households to access services through the Partnership.

The criteria for, and process of developing specific initiatives will include livelihoods analysis to identify and validate opportunities that are (i) socially inclusive i.e. broadly accessible amongst rural communities and not exclusive or liable to capture by elites and/or (ii) generate economic linkages into poorer households [through price, quality inputs, outputs etc].

While the strategy has a focus on youth, it will also pay explicit attention to gender issues⁸, which are serious and important in Sierra Leone. Interventions, particularly to do with making markets work, will need to ensure that gender inequalities are not reinforced and women are not displaced from potential economically viable activities.

The PAID will adopt a code of conduct for its operations which is expected to highlight and encompass the RIU values. The governance of the PAID discussed further below will further embed principles designed to ensure that the Partnership remains inclusive and representative. The same code of conduct is a mechanism that can be used to build in attention to gender and to commit the Partnership to pursue environmental sustainability in all its actions.

9. Institutional framework

9.1. The Sierra Leone RIU Partnership Approach

The approach in Sierra Leone is different in some respects to both the ‘coalition approach’ and the ‘partnership approach’ as described in the Terms of reference. Forming a ‘coalition’ may be taken to mean a relatively small and potentially fixed (or at least slow to change) number of organisations coming together to form a group/body, through a fairly formalised process, through which RIU would function in the country. A ‘partnership’ may be an agreement between RIU and one organisation, which, in the absence of a constituency that might form a coalition, the RIU programme could work with in order to get something started; the idea being that, thereafter, other organisations might join in the activities and through this process a coalition would in time, emerge.

In Sierra Leone the coalition approach is not a good route, not necessarily because of a lack of strong existing organisations (in fact quite the contrary), but because (i) there has been a historical tendency for elites to ‘capture’ resources and agendas in Sierra Leone and the RIU programme should offer a different opportunity and (ii) the institutional context in Sierra Leone is a fast moving tableau so any kind of fixed group is not sensible. A partnership approach working with a single

⁸ . In a strategy that has an explicit focus on youth, it is also worth remembering also that, according to the Women’s Commission (2002), the term ‘youth’ refers mostly to males in Sierra Leone; females are considered children until they are married when they become women, often between the ages of 12 and 15 in rural areas.

organisation such as an INGO or even several single organisations is equally inappropriate as the development agenda in Sierra Leone is necessarily moving away from the 'NGO economy' that characterised the post conflict environment, towards a more open competitive and pluralistic service economy.

The Sierra Leone RIU Partnership (the PAID – discussed above and see also profile in Annex 9), is essentially a network, from which multiple partnerships may form between and among the various individual member organisations. This series of mini-partnerships (which may in some cases become innovation "platforms" and in others will simply be operational collaboration within the overall innovation system) will be the Research Into Use presence in Sierra Leone, with no proposed subsequent evolution into a more fixed 'coalition'.

The governance arrangements for the partnership are still in process (a workshop is taking place as this is written in the w/c 28 July 2008). The expectation is that the membership registration arrangements will be straightforward and inclusive. The PAID will have an interest in expanding its membership both for financial reasons (it is likely to involve a membership fee) and in order to increase the range and scope of potentially productive partnerships.

9.2. Linkages into Policy and Sierra Leone Development Practice

Policy Platform: Several of the PAID members are already involved in or influencers of agriculture and NR policy formulation. The Partnership will provide a new 'space' within which these actors and other members can focus on dimensions of policy that require both more evidence and more advocacy in the Sierra Leone context. As a 'partnership of service providers' the PAID has the opportunity to generate and bring to the table valuable insights into the public-private interface and how government, the (currently overactive) NGO community, and other key national umbrella bodies such as the NAFSL can effectively 'stand back' and support/enable the fledgling but essential community of rural entrepreneurs.

The strength of this proposed policy platform is that the Partnership members have a real stake in the outcomes of policy in this area; thus the platform will effectively be operating as a 'self-interested' lobby to influence and advocate for changes that will improve the position and performance of service and business-oriented agencies and SMEs within the new agribusiness-oriented agriculture strategy. The Policy platform has a ready-made vehicle to bring these perspectives into the newly created Committee structure within the reformed MAFFS (details below). Modes of operation of this platform will be fleshed out during the implementation phase.

9.2.1. DFID Country Programme

DFID is the largest bilateral donor in Sierra Leone and is a highly regarded development partner. There appear to be opportunities (not yet discussed with DFID SL) for cooperation and lesson learning between the Country Programme and Sierra Leone RIU programme.

One of these relates to DFID's support for the decentralisation process. The Sierra Leone RIU programme will explore potential to work with one or two District Councils on a pilot basis to support access to and use of the KM services available through the Partnership. Also, as outlined above, DFID is supporting BDS initiatives in Sierra Leone including ManoCap, which could potentially

be a candidate to house or advise on the establishment of the proposed SL RIU Innovation Finance Facility.

The extent to which the ‘research into use/innovation agenda’ of Sierra Leone RIU and the development agenda of the DFID country programme may be aligned offers the potential for interesting generic lessons.

10. Management and governance

10.1. Sierra Leone RIU Programme Secretariat

The Sierra Leone-RIU programme will be managed by a secretariat with office facilities to be provided by MAFFS in a suitable location in Freetown. It will be headed by a Country Coordinator who will report to the RIU Country Task Manager. He will be supported by a Process Facilitator and a Monitoring, Impact and Learning (MIL) Coordinator. This office will be the main organ through which the RIU programme will link to MAFFS, and will be the formal representative in Sierra Leone of the RIU programme.

10.2. RIU and the Ministry

The Sierra Leone RIU Programme will operate under the framework of an MOU with the MAFFS (see Annex 12. This MOU commits both parties jointly to undertake activities that will enhance the Sierra Leone Innovation system and lead to an improved environment for uptake and use of research in that system.

The MOU states that “The Ministry of Agriculture Forestry and Food Security, through its partner coordination mechanisms, will provide policy guidance to the RIU programme in Sierra Leone and to the Partnership, helping to situate their activities within ongoing policy initiatives in the country and the region, and mainstream the RIU Programme into the national development framework for agriculture and natural resources, including in the activities of the NEPAD Comprehensive Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP) which Sierra Leone may buy into.

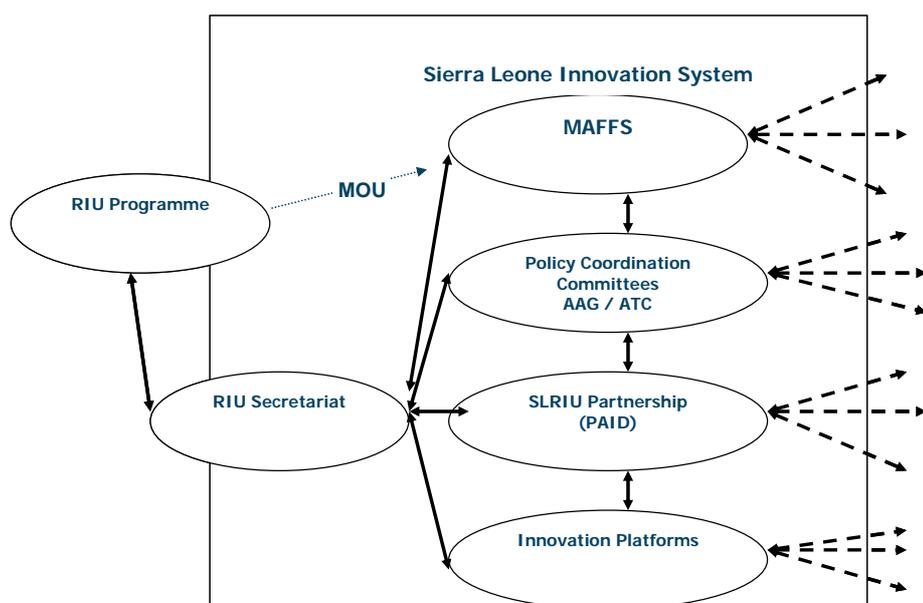
The MAFFS will also contribute in whatever ways it can to the growth and strengthening of the Sierra Leone-RIU Partnership. It will offer a seat on the Agricultural Advisory Group (AAG) to the RIU Programme in Sierra Leone through its Secretariat, and will interact with the RIU-Sierra Leone Partnership within the Agricultural Technical Committee (ATC), on which the Partnership will be represented.

The RIU programme in Sierra Leone will address the overall aims of the overall RIU programme and be consistent with Sierra Leone’s national agricultural policy and strategic frameworks as well as wider regional and international development initiatives. It will endeavour to ensure that in all this it remains fully aligned and engaged with other initiatives, programmes, policies and funding mechanisms in Sierra Leone. The RIU programme will therefore work in close collaboration, and seek to build synergies with other existing initiatives and programmes.”

10.3. The PAID

The Sierra Leone-RIU Partnership (PAID) will establish governance structures consistent with the RIU-MAFFS MOU and acceptable to the member organisations. These structures and their operation

will be set out in a Code of Conduct to be adopted by the membership. It is expected that the general membership will elect a representative body to act in its name between general meetings of the partnership. This body will represent the Partnership in its interaction with the RIU programme and with MAFFS, including representing the partnership on the Agricultural Technical Committee (ATC). Through participation in the ATC it will inform the larger national innovation system and MAFFS about its activities and the same mechanism will provide the basis for interactions between the PAID policy platform and the wider Sierra Leone agricultural policy context.



10.4. RIU and The PAID

Under the provisions of the Sierra Leone RIU MOU with MAFFS, the PAID essentially represents the operational mechanism by which RIU, with guidance from MAFFS, will contribute to the development of the Sierra Leone innovation system and related development objectives.

The interaction between RIU and the PAID will be via the RIU Secretariat, which will also provide interim secretariat and communications functions; further interaction will take via the participation on the MAFFS committees.

The MAFFS MOU commits both parties to Participate in joint monitoring, impact assessment and learning activities of the RIU programme in Sierra Leone and, as such, both parties share responsibility for monitoring performance of the PAID and whether it continues to operate and perform in ways that satisfy the intention of the MOU provisions.

There is not currently a separate MOU or other formal agreement between RIU and the PAID, nor between the PAID and MAFFS. Once the governance arrangements of the PAID have been established it would be possible to establish such agreements if desired, however the value added of such additional agreements should be thought through first.

The governance arrangements arrived at by the PAID (and obviously the degree of compliance with them) are important and, in the absence of any formalised agreement, will represent the basis by

which RIU can be satisfied at the outset that the PAID is ‘fit for purpose’. The extent of any drift from the governance principles set out in this code would also represent the basis by which RIU (or MAFFS) could legitimately end support for the PAID should this become necessary.

RIU will need to contract with a competent organisation for financial administration of the Programme as and when this devolves from the RIU Secretariat; this role could be embedded within the Innovation Finance Facility once up and running.

11. Integration of the Sierra Leone RIU Programme with other RIU Elements

Output One	Significant use of RNRRS and other natural resources research outputs for the (direct/indirect) benefit of poor men and women in diverse contexts	
1.1	Improved access to research results	Challenge fund mechanism : not available in Sierra Leone
1.2	Enhanced demand for research outputs	This is the primary funding mechanism for Sierra Leone RIU, covers Country Coordinator and National Process Facilitator (supported by International process facilitator) roles and operational expenses.
1.3	Enterprises using research results	Potential to be explored
Output Two	Research-into-use evidence generated with evaluation partners	
2.1	Monitoring and evaluation support and synthesis	Covers National Monitoring and Learning Coordinator (NMLC) and support by a remote “Country MIL Advisor (CMA)”,
2.2	Impact Evaluation	Flexibility to commission studies to look at potentially valuable lesson-learning opportunities. Potential to be explored in Sierra Leone.
Output Three	Policy processes enabled by research-into-use principles, lessons and discourse	
3.1	Influencing the agenda	Scope for funding of PAID policy platform interactions
3.2	Communications with global practitioners	Scope for funding of the communications elements of the Sierra Leone RIU programme

12. Sustainability

Sustainability of the Sierra Leone RIU programme should be measured against the extent to which it delivers long term changes in the way that the Innovation System performs to deliver pro-poor change. The means to achieve these long term impacts in the strategy are:

- Emphasis on institutional developments within the Innovation System that will deliver changes in the way organisations work together through a virtuous circle that works to create an effective pull on research-based knowledge.
- The partnership mechanism adopted by which the PAID essentially creates a ‘self interested’ and self motivated set of actors pursuing a common vision, and with a common stake in its performance - a vehicle these actors are using to coordinate actions and exploit synergies.
- The Knowledge Market services mechanism by which resources will be channelled so as to create markets for gap filling services rather than to directly pay for activities of member organisations.
- The action research approach towards development of these services as mutually reinforcing elements embedded within existing Sierra Leone structures and programmes (including those supported by the DFID country office) and each with a sustainability plan emphasising private sector implementation.
- The governance mechanisms by which the interests of RIU, MAFFS and the PAID are aligned and anchored within existing GoSL strategies, programmes.
- The commitment of the PAID to operate in a entrepreneurial/business-like way - “no free lunches”.
- The thematic Innovation Platform priorities which are of clear and well recognised developmental importance with strong buy in and local champions .

13. Risks/Assumptions

- The current positive basis and strong potential value added for RIU rests on its role to support a knowledge-based pro-poor growth path in an improving economic environment where there is (despite many constraints) growing space, opportunity and resources for innovation. However the stability of the current positive political and economic environment can not be guaranteed. Any deterioration would very quickly weaken the case for the current strategy.
- Social relations and ways of operating politically and commercially in Sierra Leone have a long history of failing ‘ordinary people’ – these things are embedded and won’t change quickly.
- The partnership will need ongoing mentoring; likewise the Country team will need ongoing mentoring to support the partnership.
- The KM Services are novel in the Sierra Leone context and there will be a need for ongoing technical support as they are developed.
- The communications environment in Sierra Leone is particularly difficult; expectations of the reach of the KM services and communications activities needs to be realistic
- The strategy is relatively complex.

14. Budget

To Follow

15. MIL

The “MIL” function in Sierra Leone (as elsewhere) is to track the implementation of the country strategy, monitor whether indeed it is “maximizing the poverty-reducing impact” of whatever research is being put into use, and deriving lessons that may contribute to “increased understanding” of how these processes work. This will be done through the appointment to the Sierra Leone country team of a “National Monitoring and Learning Coordinator (NMLC)” whose work, supported by a remote “Country MIL Advisor (CMA)”, will involve four elements:

- Tracking and documenting as necessary all of the programme initiatives (including those of the PAID)
- Planning and carrying out specific reviews of particular interventions that offer rich learning opportunities
- Tracking and reporting on RIU programme performance indicators (to contribute to the overall programme Performance and Learning Framework (PLF))
- Offering specific “technical assistance” to the in-country team, the PAID partnership members and the whole “innovation system” in Sierra Leone in the area of data-collection and processing

In addition to the above functions, operating under the general direction of Component 2.1, there may be additional specific studies commissioned through Component 2.2 and directed more particularly to impact assessment.

If so, the NMLC, in collaboration with CMA, will be the liaison person between those commissioning the work and the in-country team led by the Country Coordinator, so that the different activities of the programme can be seen as contributing to the same programme purpose, and to avoid misunderstandings and confusion.

Annex 1: Key Elements of the Innovation Systems Approach

- Involving the suppliers and users of knowledge in some form of partnership on a common platform
- Genuine and continuous involvement of suppliers of knowledge, intermediaries, policy makers, “enablers”, all "end-users" (producer, consumer or processor) to assist in the determination of the innovation bottlenecks.
- Putting as much emphasis on promoting technologies as promoting approaches and processes that have been proven to be effective in getting research into use
- Investing in strengthening capacities where they are needed in the "innovation system" (not just R&D organisations but also in intermediary functions that enable communications between knowledge suppliers and users)
- Developing financially sustainable delivery systems/ viable business models (this often involves manufacturers, service providers, credit suppliers, and providers of technical assistance to users)
- Investing in an iterative process that enables the organisations within the system to learn from experience and improve their performance
- Introducing new technologies and/or new ways of doing things in a financially, socially and environmentally sustained basis
- Evolving new institutional arrangements by which the various organisations in the system operate

Annex 2: Information and Knowledge Service Markets

The information and knowledge services market can be thought of as operating between innovation system actors; in other words the interactions between these actors and the services that enable flows of information and knowledge between them. These interactions and flows are often weak in low income emerging economies, and the rural poor particularly disadvantaged: Thus, in the context of promoting pro-poor innovations, the Knowledge Markets approach involves:

- Institutional development and capacity strengthening at the community and small enterprise level to strengthen demand for, and use of, knowledge services.
- Working with intermediaries and ICT firms to build ‘horizontal’ networks between rural service providers, their clients, and other actors – thus facilitating a much wider and inclusive ‘many-to-many’ exchange of information.
- Developing sustainable business models to pay for the provision of information, content and brokerage services within innovation systems.

Such actions strengthen rural markets as more and better information becomes available about the availability, nature, price and quality of essential services that can make markets work for small farmers. The result is a better coordinated system that complements existing local knowledge through interactions with advisory and training services, credit providers, and input and output market intermediaries, thus bringing together value-chains, and strengthening demand ‘pull’ on research agencies.

Methodology for applying the IKSM approach are being developed. They involve:

- Understanding and mapping the existing structure of the knowledge economy: how knowledge flows between different elements of the innovation system and what factors influence these flows in relation to rural/nr livelihoods
- Understanding the major drivers of change: economic, social, policies and programmes that influence these flows and the people/enterprises involved, with particular attention to the intermediary services sector
- Identifying (potential) services and providers that will enable these key people/enterprises to be better connected, informed, knowledgeable, and make optimum use of research based knowledge
- Assessing conditions for the provision of these services and helping to bring them about making best use of public-private partnerships and alliances between ICT service providers and other actors based on sustainable business models that incentivize information flows.
- Assessing institutional development and partnership mechanisms that are needed to provide a coordinated environment to use and develop these services, and strengthen relevant capacity.

Annex 3: UNDP 2008 General Situation Analysis

Abstracted from UNDP 2008-10 Country Programme Action Plan

Sierra Leone is naturally well-endowed and resourced, yet is among the poorest countries in the world. Prior to and during the war, the country was beset with widespread poverty with low GDP growth, falling to an average of minus 7.1% between 1990 and 1999. Since the cessation of armed conflict in 2002, the country has made significant progress in the recovery and peace building processes including the holding of elections, restoration of governance structures, and reconciliation through the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Post-conflict economic growth has also been robust. GDP growth averaged 22.9% in 2001-2002 and has now settled at around 6%-7% (2006/2007), fuelled by broad recovery in agriculture, mining, construction and the services sectors. Inflation is moderate at 6.7% (November 2006) and is forecast to average 6.6% in 2007 and 2008. Broad-based economic reforms have also led to lower fiscal and external current account deficits, lower domestic borrowing, stable exchange rate and price stability.

Despite the progress achieved, the root causes of the conflict, which include weak governance, corruption, denial of basic human rights, gender inequality, gender discrimination, and political and economic exclusion, are yet to be fully addressed. Poverty remains pervasive and inconsistent with the economic growth, basically because the post-war recovery started from a negative growth (-8.1%) and has so far had marginal impact on reducing poverty. About 70.0% of the population of 5.737 million live below the national poverty line. Poverty is more prevalent in the rural areas and amongst the youth. Youth unemployment/underemployed remains high at 70%. Food security constitutes a major challenge and increase in agricultural production is constrained by lack of access to markets and poor rural infrastructure. The poor national infrastructure and the small size of the private sector are significant impediments to the achievement of higher and more equitable growth required to effectively address poverty and unemployment. The country is heavily dependent on Official Development Assistance (ODA) with about 50% of public investment programmes financed by external resources.

The UNDP Global Human Development Report (HDR) 2007 indicates a continuing decline in the country's human development indices since 1993; with the country ranked at the bottom of 177 countries. The human development and social indicators, including adult literacy (34.8%), primary school enrolment (44.6%), life expectancy (41.8 yrs), maternal mortality (2100/100,000) and child mortality rates (165//1000) are among the worst in the world. Access to improved sanitation and water sources are 39% and 57% respectively, and 50% of the population is undernourished. HIV/AIDS epidemic poses an additional challenge to the poverty and human development situation; the country's demographic factors, the high incidence of poverty, and prevailing post-conflict situation present risks for rapid and devastating spread of the virus. Erosion, deforestation, floods and environmental degradation remain sources of concern for sustainable development. There is inadequacy of enabling sector policy, plans and strategies and weak capacities for crisis/disaster risk reduction and coordinated emergency response.

Notwithstanding the above, the preliminary outcomes of the ongoing MDG Needs and Capacity assessment exercises indicate that the country is likely to achieve some of the MDG-targets with sustained current efforts and resources amounting to USD 20 billion. The government has

introduced Development Assistance Database (DAD) to effectively leverage the foreign assistance provided to Sierra Leone.

Access to and the administration of justice, particularly justice for the poor and the vulnerable, is still significantly weak and poorly resourced. Gender inequality and violence against women is significant at all levels of society. The country has a dual system of justice with 80% of the population falling under the jurisdiction of customary law, which adversely affects the rights and status of women, particularly on ownership of productive resources, inheritance and marriage. Women's representation in decision-making bodies at national and local levels is low at about 14.5 percent. Capacity constraints and deficiencies remain a major challenge for Sierra Leone in post-conflict reconstruction and national development. Shortage of personnel, gaps in expertise and skills and poor motivation are pervasive in state institutions, civil society and the business sector.¹ More efforts need to be focused on building national capacity, including of civil society, women and youth organisations to dialogue on national development. The capacities of national governance institutions like the parliament, and the newly created Human Rights Commission need to be strengthened to enable them to undertake their responsibilities, particularly, oversight of the public administration, and the protection and promotion of human rights.

The critical challenges for Sierra Leone remain to enhance recovery; sustain democratic governance, peace, justice and security; protection of human rights of vulnerable groups, employment creation (particularly for youth) increase capacities for managing development and to tackle human and income poverty; broaden political participation especially of the inclusion of marginalized groups like women and youths; accelerate the pace of social advancement; and enhance the effectiveness of the ODA. These key priorities are articulated in the conclusions of the Consultative Group meeting in December 2006. The Government of Sierra Leone Priority Plan agreed with the Peace Building Commission in March 2006, the Peace Consolidation Strategy and other economic development planning documents.

Annex 4: Notes On Agriculture And Related Policy/Planning

Frameworks

(from report by David Sale and Hassan Allah, with additions)

Sierra Leone covers 72,300 km² of which 5.4 million ha are potentially cultivable. The upland agro-ecology represents approximately 80 percent; and the rest are lowlands with potential for high crop yields under sound management practices. Agriculture is the dominant sector in the economy, accounting for almost half of GDP in 1993/94, and it still contributes only 47 percent. In spite of that, it employs about 70 percent of the estimated population of five million people.

Overarching Vision: The new agricultural development vision is to make agriculture the engine of socio-economic growth and development in Sierra Leone. It uses a two pronged approach – to promote food security and poverty alleviation through private development and growth.

- diversified domestic production of food (crops, livestock, fisheries) and income from forestry resources, with a view to achieving national and household food security and increasing rural incomes in the medium- to long-term;
- To increase agricultural productivity, output, rural incomes and employment, while ensuring adequate protection of the environment;
- To maximize foreign exchange earnings from the agricultural sector and sustainably diversify the economy away from mineral exports.

Key Constraints:

- Poor general health and literacy rates
- Weak public and private institutions and related poor delivery of agricultural services; e.g., those for technology development and diffusion, input markets, extension services
- Low capacity of public institutions to formulate, analyze policies, and to undertake the needed regulatory functions for the agricultural and rural space;
- Poor infra-structure, including lack of feeder roads, marketing facilities, fishing facilities as well as other rural structures such as schools and health care facilities;
- Low existing levels of production technologies for crops, livestock, re-forestation and aquaculture
- Low development of agro-industries and capacity for value addition in the sector; associated low rates of private investment both domestic and foreign and inadequate rural finance
- Limited possibilities for expansion of annual crop area [About 74 percent of the total land area of Sierra Leone is considered to be suitable for the cultivation of crops on a sustainable basis. However, less than 10 percent is cultivated: various reasons environmental, social and economic: including high labour requirements to bring virgin swamps under cultivation
- the possibilities for area expansion.

Opportunities including:

- Favourable natural resource endowment: suitable agro-ecologic conditions exist
- Currently favourable macroeconomic environment and political commitment to agriculture
- Agricultural growth rates for economic development and poverty alleviation are not excessive
- Comparative advantages: domestic production of rice for import substitution and exportation to other ECOWAS member (also World Food Programme); exports of tree crops coffee, cocoa, oil palm subject to improved technologies; groundnut, cassava, and pepper have high profits in both financial and economic terms; highest potential for exploiting comparative advantage in the future will be on the minor food crops.
- A limited stock of improved technologies exists

Lead Ministry

The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security (MAFFS) is leading development of a National Agricultural Development Plan for Sierra Leone (NADPSL). MAFFS is structured into 6 divisions (crops, livestock, forestry, Land and water Development division, PEMSD (Statistics), crop protection), one umbrella research institution (Sierra Leone Agricultural Research Institute SLARI-comprising of eight research centres) and 1 National Extension Coordination Unit.

The MAFFS has recently instituted a new multi-stakeholder planning and coordination framework including an Agricultural Advisory Group (AAG) and an Agricultural Technical Committee (ATC), with the objective to:

- Assist in shaping up a Sector Vision (SV) and a National Agricultural Development Plan for Sierra Leone (NADLSL);
- Ensure that every stakeholder supporting the sector does so in accordance with the shared sector vision, policies and the proposed NADPSL;
- Facilitate the mobilization of resources in support of the vision and plan;
- Assist in reporting on progress on accomplishment of the vision and plan based on a set of indicators for the plan;
- Promote info-sharing, transparency and accountability;
- Provide a Forum for experience sharing, complementarities based on institutional comparative advantage as well as provide opportunities for capacity building;
- Provide policy advice, re-focus policy makers and assist decision-making;

Some Current and Planned Agriculture Investment Programmes

- Multi-national Nerica dissemination project funded by ADB/GOSL (2004 – 2008)
- Diversified food production project funded by IDB/GOSL (2007 – 2011)
- Capacity building for oil palm production, processing and marketing funded by GOSL/Malaysia/IDB (2005 – 2009)

- Agricultural sector rehabilitation project funded by GOSL/ADB (2006 – 2010)
- Rehabilitation and Community Based Poverty Reduction Project funded by GOSL/IFAD (2006 – 2010)
- Rural Finance and Community Improvement Programme funded by GOSL/IFAD (2007 – 2011)
- Development of Sustainable Seed Programme in Sierra Leone funded by FAO/Germany (2005 – 2008)
- Food for recovery and Development and Country Programme funded by WFP (2007 – 2009)
- Operation Feed the Nation funded by GOSL/FAO/UNDP (ongoing)
- Rural and Private Sector Development Project funded by WB (2008 – 2012)
- Avian influenza Programme funded by FAO (2007 – 2008)
- Support to strengthen veterinary services (TCP) funded by FAO (2007 – 2008)
- Tree Crop and Rice Development (STABEX) funded by EU (2007 – 2009)
- Kambia Agricultural Promotion Programme funded by JICA (2006 – 2008)

Currently Available Technologies According to a 2004 FAO Sector Review

- Improved varieties of rice, sweet potatoes and cassava;
- Technologies for profitable pig and poultry farming in urban and periurban areas, particularly by women and youth groups
- Increased production of sheep and goats through increased production of crops and the associated residues by farmers and adequate veterinary services
- Adoption of technologies for artisanal fishing from other countries in the sub region
- Improved forestry and agroforestry management systems
- Crop and soil management practices such as optimum time of planting, weeding and pest management
- Irrigation methods that have a good potential for raising production in Inland Valley Swamps, especially of vegetables, undertaken by women in urban/periurban areas;
- Improvements in traditional fish drying oven (Banda) in terms of consumption of fuel wood and convenience to the operator (usually women).

Annex 5: Communications Environment In Sierra Leone

(Freida M'Cormack)

Current modes of communication

The most important mode of communication in Sierra Leone remains face-to-face, but other forms of communication are also widely/increasingly used.

Specific examples of communication modes in Sierra Leone include:

Face-to-face: both formal and informal interactions

- These include workshops, meetings, seminars, training workshops, field days, exhibitions, fairs, farmer exchange visits/demonstration plots. People rely on such meetings for sharing knowledge and communicating information. These meetings are announced by personal visits, on radio, newspapers and through letter invites, nowadays followed up by phone calls.

Written: letters, newspapers, reports, posters, billboards

- National newspapers also carry announcements from NGOs, government, and information about policy processes and government plans. A number of daily newspapers can also be found online, including Awoko, Standard Times and Awareness Times. Publicity/sensitisation campaigns are also carried out, in the form of billboards, radio announcements, songs, printed t-shirts, and so on.
- In Sierra Leone, letters are the equivalent of email newsletters, provide alerts, adverts, information about on-going activities, invitations to meetings, except they're delivered by hand to residences and offices
- Most of the research done by the organisations/institutions (as well as other relevant research) are held in their libraries and resource centres and are often freely available to potential users. Research is also published in books, journals and reports and online

Verbal: A number of mobile phone companies operate in Sierra Leone, including Celtel, Tigo, Comium, Africell, etc. Some [extension] coordination and relaying of information is now being done using mobile phones. Mobile phone services have a wider reach than internet services (for instance, the largest provider Celtel claims to have coverage in about 85% of the country) a few have begun to provide mobile internet services.

Electronic: Television (Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service), radio (multiple community radio stations), video clubs, internet (multiple ISPs)

- **Radio:** Important messages are increasingly being transmitted through the radio, which is useful because of the proliferation of community radio stations in the country, supported by the Talking Drum studio. There are examples of programmes that have used the radio to disseminate agriculture market information, e.g. Planning, Evaluation, Monitoring and Statistics Division (PEMSD) of MAFFS project with MISTOWA
- **Internet:** Multiple internet service providers operate in Sierra Leone, including the mobile phone companies. Increasingly, information about Sierra Leone is available online, whether produced in blogs, the Sierra Leone Encyclopaedia, online newspapers and so on, and the internet is becoming used for maintaining external communications (via email) as well as by students, NGOs, etc. for research
- **Television and video clubs:** There are potential opportunities to use popular video clubs, along with public announcements on national TV to disseminate information; the Science and Technology council has taken advantage of this.

Communication in agriculture (information and research)

Volumes of relevant agricultural research and information on Sierra Leone is generated and held by different actors, including:

- Data collection centres of the government ministries e.g. PEMSD and the National Documentation Centre
- Existing National Research Institutes, which are being incorporated into SLARI, but also others like Statistics Sierra Leone, as well as Regional Research Institutes such as the Africa Rice Centre (WARDA) and the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA)
- International consultants, academics and researchers, on behalf of donors, UN and other organisations
- International and national NGOs and UN agencies who do research to monitor, evaluate and improve on their own work, as well as for reporting to their donors
- The Universities, including Fourah Bay College (University of Sierra Leone) and Njala University.

However, in Sierra Leone, few formal linkages exist between researchers and other actors in the agricultural innovation system. Communication of relevant agricultural research and information to grassroots farmers is usually via NGO (which provide the bulk) and government extension, particularly in the form of Farmer Field Schools (FFS)⁹, which are considered to be an effective way of transmitting information to farmers and responding to farmers' needs, as well as obtaining information from farmers.

Main constraints

Of the various media

- *Face-to-face* Although the workshop approach of dissemination seems the preferred mode, one reason for this is that people are incentivised to come, so it's resource-intensive and doesn't reflect demand
- *Written* Newspaper circulation is limited to Freetown and the literate population; similarly television coverage and use not widespread
- *Verbal* Although mobile phone use is increasingly popular for various reasons (including cost, terrain, environment) coverage in some areas quite poor and penetration low; cheaper functions e.g. texting are constrained by literacy/language barriers.
- *Electronic* The internet hasn't made much inroads outside of the capital, except in the regional offices of international NGOs. Even within Freetown for instance, most government ministries are not connected and most people are constrained from using the service by cost, quality, electricity problems etc. Efforts to promote commercial internet use up-country have been short-lived (e.g. Africell).

Costs

Some of the above has already identified cost as a main constraint. Some specifics of this include:

- Mobile phone charges are very high; this is exacerbated by exorbitant cost of clearing equipment coming in and the National Telecommunications Commission (NATCOM) being more preoccupied with generating income (through high annual registration fees) than agenda-setting; ISPs report having little relationship with the NATCOM beyond paying their fees. Mobile phone companies also accuse each other of interfering with each others' businesses (poaching staff, working on others' assigned frequency, etc)

⁹ Farmers' Field Schools are schools without walls, where the fields and the village environment provide the learning places in which adult education methods are applied. FFS are now being used in many developing countries to empower farmers' groups to acquire, adapt and act upon knowledge on many other aspects of farming and rural life relevant to their particular needs (MAFFS, 2004).

- mobile internet services (from the GSM service providers), is available and used by people/organisations that can afford it but it is also very expensive (subscription rates of between US\$50-70/month)
- Research is under-resourced, as is the capacity for disseminating research and promoting uptake.

Infrastructure

- Road networks are poor, which constrains access to rural areas; other communications infrastructure (e.g. landline phones) is almost non-existent – this means for instance, that farmers don't have adequate information about prices at market, or access to inputs such as fertiliser
- Poor infrastructure affects mobile phone coverage and quality of services, which are also affected by extremely poor electricity supply.
- Ability to provide adequate infrastructure is constrained by natural phenomena, namely the weather (i.e. the six-month rainy season – phone lines, internet services are interrupted, road networks are cut off, etc.)

Capacity

- Lack of technical capacity and knowledge (whether researchers, mobile phone technicians, extension workers) is a large constraint
- On a more fundamental level literacy affects many aspects of communication. Sierra Leone's adult literacy rate is 35% (UNICEF), which puts letters, newspapers and other written forms of communication out of reach for the majority of the population
- Some emerging communication media, including resource centres and community radio get quite heavy external support (e.g. from Talking Drum Studios) so there are questions of sustainability.

Agricultural research

- There is a lack of information-sharing and coordination among NGOs and between NGOs and government. As stated above, I/NGOs will often undertake research to plan and improve their programmes, as well as for donor reporting and planning, but not necessarily for sharing with beneficiaries – although some do have resource centres/in-house libraries; otherwise reports sit on international internet sites
- Information generated by government isn't widely disseminated either, despite the resource centres and some efforts to utilise various media, including television, radio and newspapers (whose constraints are identified above)
- Government extension severely constrained; NGO extension only covers project areas. Also, information is supposed to trickle down through farmer field schools/demonstration plots/farmer exchange visits, but there is no real evidence of secondary transfer to farmers that did not attend the training
- Research institutions are critiqued for not involving stakeholders from the inception of research plans, including farmers themselves and the private sector.

Opportunities

Despite the many constraints, a number of promising developments confirm that there are significant opportunities for improving the communications environment in Sierra Leone:

- With the liberalisation of telecommunications, quite a few GSM and ISP companies operate in the country. The largest mobile phone service provider claims that its services cover 85% of the country. As it also provides a mobile internet service, potentially, access to the internet is now potentially available in 85% of the country
- The potential of internet is being recognised. Some information disseminators, such as daily newspapers are already online and update their websites daily; there are also a number of sites

that communicate general information about news and happenings in Sierra Leone (use may be largely geared towards the Diaspora and others externally, however)

- A pressure group, Internet Society (ISOC), promotes internet use, is lobbying against over-regulation and for universal access. There have been some independent initiatives by ISPs to set up internet cafes/telecentres in rural areas, though short-lived
- Various national and regional initiatives all aimed at improving information flows between researchers and rural populations/farmers, including: National Food Security Monitoring System, comprising MAFFS, WFP, FAO and SSL, linking agricultural producers, policymakers through information sharing and an early warning system; also: Dissemination of New Agricultural Technologies in Africa (DONATA) and the Regional Agricultural Information & Learning System (RAILS), which are linked with the National Agricultural Research Centre (one of the eight SLARI centres) and MAFFS respectively (but like other FARA initiatives, not clear on the mechanisms)
- Reorganisation of the research institutions, under SLARI, but also the National Science and Technology Council has established Regional Committees and District S&T Committees that will work with farmers' groups on the ground to identify areas of research and use the same mechanisms for disseminating findings (although these approach is still quite top-down and potentially exclusionary), it's important that they recognise there's a problem.

Annex 6: Notes on Gender and Youth Issues

(Freida M'Cormack)

Youth employment/livelihoods:

According to the 2003 Sierra Leone National Youth Policy, it was estimated that by 2005 the youth population would be 55%. Young adults in Sierra Leone (aged between 15 and 25) are said to be among the poorest of the poor, and have the highest unemployment rate (with an estimated national average of xx (NYP says 25%). According to the ILO, youth unemployment is typically two to three times as high as adult unemployment and in countries with stagnant economies the proportion can be far higher (ILO, 2002).

Before the war, investment in education and economic opportunities was lacking, youth gangs were cultivated for use in political intimidation, political and social life was controlled by the traditional chieftdom system, and many young men abandoned traditional farming livelihoods, many in favour of diamond mining. These factors contributed to the disaffection of young people in Sierra Leone. While youth were grossly manipulated and many forced to fight in the various warring factions, the conflict has also been interpreted as a manifestation of the great level of dissatisfaction and hopelessness felt by many young people at the time.

In the post-conflict environment, therefore, there is widespread recognition that the 'youth problem' is one that must be taken seriously. At policy level this included a youth ministry being set up (which has now combined with the education ministry). Many donor and I/NGO initiatives are geared towards youth engagement, from training programmes to job creation opportunities. For instance, the World Bank's 2006-2009 Sierra Leone Country Assistance Strategy comprises 'an integrated rural and private sector development initiative will target agriculture and youth unemployment' (World Bank Sierra Leone Country Brief)

Yet, there is still the widespread perception that youth in Sierra Leone are largely idle. This is particularly the case in the cities (to which they are flocking on a daily basis), where many youth are engaged in the informal economy, both legal and criminal.

While agriculture is considered one of the few productive activities to have the absorptive capacity but youth are largely considered to not be interested in farming (source), However, youth are interested in making money and if it can be demonstrated that beyond the drudgery of farm labour, there are viable economic opportunities in agriculture, through agribusiness ventures, market intermediaries, trading, processing and so forth, this could ensure greater youth involvement. The strategy will therefore support initiatives with the potential to expand agriculture/NR based livelihood opportunities for youths. In the first instance this will entail identifying youth 'champions' from within the partnership.

Gender

In as much as this strategy recognises the need to focus on youth, it also recognises that there are other groups in Sierra Leonean society also deserving of particular attention. During the war, women were specifically targeted and suffered as victims of abduction, rape, violence and murder. Today, women remain vulnerable to the high levels of abuse they suffered during the war. Wife beating is common and other forms of violence, including rape and sexual abuse are being increasingly reported.

According the 2008 UN Human Development Report, Sierra Leone has the worst gender inequality, and the lowest female life expectancy, in the world (UNHDR, 2008). Systems of discrimination that predate the conflict prevail, including legal, economic and cultural restrictions that deny women access to resources, including healthcare, education, credit, appropriate technologies and land.

Illiteracy among women is 74%, against the national average of 58% (Sierra Leone Women Manifesto, 2006: 58). Other sources put the figure much higher, as much as 94% (Afrol News)).

The majority of subsistence farmers are women (or at least they perform much of the subsistence farming), yet entrepreneurial and farm training are hardly ever targeted at women (Sources: Afrol News, 2003; Kroma, 2002). Inheritance laws still discriminate against women in favour of younger male siblings and widows can be forced out of their matrimonial homes and their lands. Practices vary from region to region, however – in the north, among the Temne and Limba, women have greater rights to inherit property than among the Mende in the south – incidentally this situation is reversed in terms of women's ability to become paramount chiefs (Afrol News) although female involvement in all levels of politics remain low.

Structural inequalities also exist in agricultural production, including post-harvest, the different elements of which are governed by socially and culturally defined gender divisions. For instance, in Sierra Leone, women have traditionally been responsible for post-harvest rice processing. Kroma (2002) argues that because post-harvest processing is generally seen as an extension of domestic activities, it has not received sufficient extension attention. In any case, as [male] extension agents' direct interaction with female household members is considered unacceptable, female production activities are not often directly addressed and appropriate technologies sought. This has been changing recently, with NGO programmes addressing different aspects of agricultural production, including a focus on women's productive activities. This focus may become more relevant if Sierra Leone follows the trend of other African countries where the migration of men from rural areas exceeds that of women.

However, experience from other African countries has also shown that improving technologies traditionally used by women can cause them (and the processes associated with their labour) to be appropriated by men (Kroma, 2002). The strategy therefore recognises that different interventions, particularly to do with making markets work, will need to ensure that gender inequalities are not reinforced and women are not displaced from potential economically viable activities. In a strategy that has an explicit focus on youth, it is also worth remembering also that, according to the Women's Commission (2002), the term 'youth' refers mostly to males in Sierra Leone; females are considered children until they are married when they become women, often between the ages of 12 and 15 in rural areas.

Annex 7: Notes on Environment Issues

(David Suale and Hassan Jalloh)

Sierra Leone is presently faced with the problem of environmental degradation, arising mainly from demographic, economic and social pressures. Poor economic performance, rapid population increases, migration, and poverty have led to increasing demands on the physical environment with consequences of rapid deforestation, land degradation and uncontrolled exploitation of natural resources.

Deforestation accounts to a large extent for the environmental degradation in the country. The traditional farming practice of shifting cultivation, with declining fallow periods, have over the years left vast expanses of land deforested in much of the country. It is estimated that 600,000 hectares of forested lands (or 8% of total arable uplands) have been cleared for farming. The problem is further exacerbated by the overwhelming dependence of the population on fuel wood as the main source of energy for cooking and in cottage industry. About 4 million cubic meters of wood biomass is extracted annually to meet domestic energy needs. While upland continue to be the principal source of fuel wood and construction materials, mangroves along the coastal areas are being increasingly exploited for fuel wood, boat construction, and rice cultivation. This has led to increased exposure to storms and destruction of natural breeding grounds for marine and estuarine fish and other organisms.

In the northern region of Sierra Leone where 60% of the cattle and small ruminant population is concentrated, over 8,300 sq km of land has been left bare due to overgrazing. There are no attempts at any form of range and pasture management; bush fires continue to affect about 200,000 hectares of savannah woodlands annually. Thus, overgrazing and annual bush fires have caused an apparent ecological change from savannah woodland to grassland in the cattle rearing areas.

The mining activities, particularly in the eastern and southern regions, have also left vast areas deforested and degraded. It is estimated that between 80,000 to 120,000 hectares have been mined in different parts of the country with minimal efforts at reclamation. The uncontrolled exploitation of mineral resources, coupled with the absence of mitigating policies and conservation programmes over the years, has resulted in devastating environmental consequences.

The inadequacy of housing infrastructure and social services even before the war has resulted in squatter settlements and inadequate water disposal, particularly in Freetown and its environs but also in provincial headquarter towns. Urban living conditions have deteriorated considerably: increasing shanty towns, slums and squatter settlements with deplorable sanitation facilities, thereby encouraging high prevalence of disease, morbidity and mortality.

Major challenges

- Capacity building for effective coordination and community participation in environmental management; including correct balance between exploitation and conservation of bio-resources
- Enforce environmental conservation laws and provide alternatives to firewood consumption
- Increase regional cooperation in biodiversity conservation and improve coordination amongst players.
- Provide economic empowerment and job creation for slum dwellers
- Gender sensitive reformation of the land tenure system and increase community participation in water and sanitation programmes
- Harmonization and implementation of international protocols and domestic legislations supportive of environmental sustainability

Priorities for development assistance

- Direct intervention to stop destruction of forest, through working with communities and the enforcement of laws;
- Building capacities and awareness at local national levels, including local government councils and other participatory stakeholders, to implement environmentally sustainable practices; developing eco-tourism;
- Encourage the use of energy-efficient technologies (e.g. solar panels, biogas, biomass conversions);
- Financial support to improve data collection and statistical analysis;
- Staff training in institutions dealing with water and sanitation, the environment, and housing at the community level;
- Institutional reforms of SLWACO and Water Supply Division of Guma Valley Water Company for a better delineation of their functions;
- Investment in low-cost housing schemes and technologies
- Construction and rehabilitation of water and sanitation facilities, particularly in rural and semi-urban areas

Annex 8: Notes on the Decentralisation Process

(Francis Johnston)

The decentralization process began in Sierra Leone with the passing of the Local Government Act in 2004. In very rapid succession, and with the enthusiastic support of donors, in particular UNDP, the legislation was put in place, elections were held for councillors and the 19 local councils were established. The first four-year term of office of the councils has just ended, and local government elections were held on July 5, 2008. A more informed electorate (and better-informed candidates) made this election a step forward in the process, and major personnel changes have resulted. For this reason, it may be hoped that the local councils will perform better in the coming four years, although major obstacles remain in the way of their successfully assuming their full responsibilities.

The main obstacles are as follows:

1 Delays and reluctance to devolve power.

Although all line ministries prepared plans for the transfer of functions to local councils (including specific responsibilities and target dates), the published schedule is far from being met and there remains considerable reluctance on the part of some of the line ministries to relinquish many of the functions that ought to be devolved. There may be many reasons for this (including, perhaps, an understandable questioning of the competence of the councils to undertake their prescribed role) but the major one, undoubtedly, is that, along with responsibilities, ministries are required to relinquish control of the budgets attached to them. Even where ministries (such as Health, Agriculture and Education, the major ones whose powers are to be devolved) have begun the process, there remains some confusion over the mechanisms necessary to implement the handover, and continuing lack of understanding of the purpose of decentralization.

As, perhaps, an example, the Ministry of Agriculture's outline plans to hand over its extension service to the control of the councils (thus bringing extension officers under direct local scrutiny, for the first time) includes handing over the extension staff to council management, and yet retaining the District Director of Agriculture within the Ministry. The consequence of this, should it happen, is that, while extension officers will be accountable to the local council, their line manager will not.

2 Ongoing problems of resource-flow to councils and prioritization

Even where the devolution of responsibilities and resources appears to be taking place, there remain serious problems of cashflow from central to local government. In part, this is a function of the cashflow difficulties of central government itself, but there are additional factors contributing to the problem. First is the extent to which external influences (specifically the donor community) exert control over the Government's budget priorities (the percentage of donor funding of the national budget being much higher than in most other countries). Then, and with particular reference to "devolved" functions, there is the problem of central ministries making commitments to donors that, technically, they are not entitled to make. If the line ministry has devolved responsibilities to councils, it cannot continue to determine their priorities. There is, in fact, a direct conflict between the two competing concepts of "decentralization" and "sector-wide approaches" that the donors, individually and collectively, have failed to understand. Meanwhile, the practical consequence is that resource-flows to councils, even where councils are competent and have a coherent development plan, are so unreliable as to make it very difficult (and practically unwise) to assume that plans will be turned into reality.

3 Continuing confusion over the respective roles of the democratic and the "traditional" governance structures – the councils and the chiefs

The Local Government Act created a new system of governance that divided the country into 19 areas, each with a democratically-elected body to govern it, within the limits of those functions devolved to it by central government. It made only passing reference to a pre-

existing system of governance established by the colonial administration, in which 149 Paramount Chiefs rule over the areas over which they have inherited jurisdiction. Not only has the chieftom legislation not been repealed, but the conflicting legislation has yet to be reconciled. Two separate processes are addressing this: a general review of the chieftom legislation within an overall governance reform programme, and a more specific task force within the Ministry of Local Government's Decentralization Secretariat looking at elements of legislation (not only that pertaining to the chieftaincy, but also within laws governing line ministry responsibilities) that conflicts with the provisions of the Local Government Act. In the meantime, however, the practical consequences include great confusion and occasional conflict between the various bodies' assigned responsibilities, especially in the rural areas. A very specific issue concerns the chiefs' understanding of their inherited responsibility to look after the "welfare" of their people, and the fact that councils are mandated to oversee the "development" of their district. Definitions of the English words "welfare" and "development" are not of great benefit when the medium of communication is not English.

Annex 9: The Partnership for Agricultural Innovation and Development (PAID)

The Sierra Leone-RIU partnership involves a broad base of actors (existing institutions and programmes) within the agricultural innovation system in Sierra Leone. This includes policymakers; farmers' groups and community based organisations; representatives of the formal education sector and research networks; agriculture, natural resources and technical service providers (government, NGO and private); financial institutions; the private sector (including producers, buyers, processors, transporters, knowledge brokers, information and communication media); the communications sector; etc.

To date, organisations that have been involved partnership discussions so far include International & National Non-Governmental Organisations (27), Private-Public sectors (32), Civil Society (1), Community Based Organisations (4), Donor agencies (8), the House of Parliament (1), Research (3), and the University (3).

Many of these organisations have been represented by individuals in senior management positions. For instance, the Ministry of Agriculture Forestry and Food Security has been represented by the National Extension Coordinator, Deputy Directors, the District Director, the Gender Coordinator, the Youth Coordinator, and sectoral specialists and divisional heads. The representatives of the research institutions have included Directors, and the Chief Executive and Senior Research Officers. The Director of the National Association of Farmers in Sierra Leone (the largest civil society advocacy group for farmers in the country) has also been a vocal participant. Prominent international NGOs including Concern, Africare, Finnish Refugee Council and World Vision have participated in RIU meetings as have national NGOs which represent a range of grassroots interests, including local farmers, women's groups, youth activities and so on. The full lists of participants are included in the annexed workshop reports.

So far, 18 organisations have registered to collaborate/partner with RIU. These include representatives of International and National Non-Governmental Organisations (10) – Africare, ADDO, EFSL, FIOH, PaRD, HELP, DCC, MAPCO, SLOIC, BIBWEG; representatives from the private sector (3) – ECRD, FINIC, and KFAC; from the civil society (1) represented by NAFSL; and from the Community Based Organisations (4) represented by LEWODA, MORWODA, Pasacofaas, and BADWA. The registration is on-going.

In the wider innovation network, there are 79 documented potential partners and many more beside, which could be involved. During the team's innovation mapping activity, team members spoke to representatives of many organisations not currently involved in the partnership who could see the value of becoming part of such a network.

As an open partnership, it is expected that the spectrum of organisations will grow to encompass a wide range of multiple actors in the above categories and beyond. Organisations will be expected to subscribe to the following common vision and mission, which were decided upon at the Partnership building workshop in May 2008:

Vision

A formidable partnership of service providers, operating with mutual trust and understanding, innovatively using research information and knowledge, efficiently and effectively using resources

to address their common interests, in order that markets are more competitive, communities are able to adapt and livelihoods are improved

Mission

To enhance the capacity and performance of organisations who are working together to generate innovations that boost the contribution of agriculture and natural resources to economic growth and improve livelihoods in Sierra Leone

The adoption of the vision and mission, along with particularities decided about the goals, objectives and activities were largely a result of two workshops held in May and July 2008 (see workshop reports in further annexes). In July particularly, a great deal of progress was made and a surprising degree of consensus emerged as groups presented ideas for partnership governance arrangements (see below). Final decisions about these arrangements will be decided in a subsequent workshop scheduled for early August.

The arrangement is expected to be viewed as a “partnership of service-providers”, open to all who subscribe to its vision and mission or some such arrangement as determined in the August workshop. In any case, it will be a loose form of affiliation, rather than a legally-binding arrangement. This will be a much more comfortable relationship for private sector members and international NGOs in particular, who were understandably reluctant to enter into more legally formalised relationships. It is also expected to work in a way that promotes the facility of forming different alliances and forms of association at different times to address particular issues that arise.

In the July 2008 Workshop a group exercise resulted in the following understanding of the likely required governance arrangements: Various discrepancies remain, but the following common elements emerged from the groups:

- membership will be open to those who subscribe to the partnership’s vision
- membership should be open to service providers of various kinds (covering both agriculture and “agribusiness”), but there should be some care taken to ensure that “members” exist in reality and have not been invented for the purposes of joining the partnership (different ideas were suggested for ensuring this)
- a committee (or “executive”) elected by the membership will represent the partnership to others and speak for the partnership between general meetings
- the partnership should establish its own secretariat
- some form of general code of conduct should be drafted and agreed
- in order to ensure sustainability, an agreed registration fee and annual subscription should be agreed
- general meetings should be held perhaps quarterly
- different means of generating income for the partnership should be explored
- the partnership might be called PAID (two of the 5 groups reached this acronym, although the “D” was not the same: “Partnership for Agricultural Innovation and Dissemination” or “Partnership for Agricultural Innovation and Development”)
- Organisations in the partnership should be represented by senior representatives of organisations, with decision-making powers.

Annex 10: GSM Operators and ISPs in Sierra Leone

GSM Operators – Summary

Operator	Coverage (self-reported)	Rates per minute (1 unit = xxx Le)	Mobile internet?	Social projects	Constraints
Africell	85%	-- 35 unit flat rate for international calls		Cash and other items to vulnerable groups Sponsors national football games	Technical problems through interference by other networks Exorbitant costs at air and sea ports, raising production costs
Celtel	85% (largest share of market)	--	Yes	Painting public arenas	Maintaining stations costly (fuel and security)
Comium	Geographical coverage 'not very wide'	3 units/minute for rural subscribers vs. 9 units/min for urban subscribers	Yes	Provide hub internet services to various institutions/Njala University	Costly to expand to new locations Interference by other networks
Tigo	[70%]	'Most affordable tariff' Le 2/min	Yes	Social responsibility programme with Global Forum	Interference by other networks

Internet Service Providers – Summary

Operator	Type of service(s)	Particulars/ Social projects	Constraints
Access Point	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wireless broadband - Internet café - Telecentre - Fixed line phone - VSAT - Professional support - Speeds: 128kbps-1 mbps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Covers the provinces (including Bo and Kailahun) - Works with Sierra Vision, a UK-based NGO providing free IT training to Sierra Leoneans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recruiting qualified engineers - Electrical power - Small clientele - High costs levied by NATCOM
Afcom (Sierra Leone)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fixed wireless broadband - VoIP - Up to 60 Mbps download speed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Covers Freetown, Bo, Kenema, Makeni, Lunsar and Kono (coming soon) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Electrical power - Limited market
FGC Wireless	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mobile/fixed broadband ISP - Wifi/WiMax 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Free facilities to educational institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mobilising capital for investment and expansion

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2.4 kilobytes band 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fees levied by NATCOM
IPTTEL PCS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Broadband internet - WiMax fixed wireless; SCPC - Satellite - Web hosting - Private Voice and Data Network Services 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Electrical power - Limited market
Limeline Sierra Leone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Broadband internet - Pre Wi-Max - Speeds: 256Kbps-6 Mbps - VoIP - Domain registration 		
Multinet (Sierra Leone)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wireless Internet - Related IT services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Special projects for educational institutions - Discounts for govt institutions and NGOs (provided one year free service to I LEARN, an NGO engaged in training young people) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Electrical power - Fees levied by NATCOM - Political interference - Economy (limited market)
Thompsonian	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Internet service - Internet café 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Affordable computer training to youths - Internet café at the Sierra Leone Library Board - The Thompsonian Foundation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Charges levied by NATCOM - Lack of tower sharing with other ISPs - Electrical power

Source: Summary of findings on GSM providers and Internet Service Providers, from the 'Rapid Appraisal Report on Potential Information Market Actors in Sierra Leone' by David Suale, March 2008

Annex 11: Meeting Notes from Updated Innovation Systems

Mapping

Saturday 17th May 2008

MAFF: National Extension Coordinator:

(Tel: +232 22 240770; cell: +232 76 747 894; email: masskinijen@yahoo.com)

Present: Mr B A Massaquoi (Nat Extension Coordinator); FM, FJ, DS, SJ.

Overview of Role/Structure:

Apex Public Extension Services. Slated to be elevated to Division status on par with Research. Restructuring itself. Nominally 40 frontline extension workers per district within 5 'blocks' working with farmer based organisations (FBOs). System below District Coordinator level falls with Council governance. Aiming to head for Uganda NAADS style decentralised/ privatised system.

Key challenges in the development context

- Dependency mode of farmers/FBOs used to receiving free services/inputs, undermines market orientation
- Weak effective demand for public extension services
- Lack of accountability of extension workers to their 'clients'
- Marketing controls imposed (e.g. what allowed to sell where) distort farmer choices/incentives (e.g. new rice mill undersupplied): i.e. farmers' interests 'vs.' national interests.
- Still a tendency to prescribe structure/governance of proposed new market entities such as ABUs
- Farmer apex organisations looking to capture resources
- Weak coordination of 'knowledge system', i.e. recommendations/ technical packages (intention to form coordinating committee)
- Insufficient adaptive research focusing on value chain/food system (rather than crop/livestock production) (Question: who is doing this – World Vision?)
- Lack off effective communications infrastructure (he doesn't have access to email in his office: but others in the building do).

Opportunities for RIU engagement/partnerships

- Trend/orientation towards more decentralised, market oriented advisory services and expressed priority re: opportunities to improve marketing system
- Expressed interest in role of partnerships/platforms around specific new opportunities/markets (mentioned FARA model) and also for policy formulation (e.g. through new AAG, ATC)
- Specific examples of 'Agricultural Business Units' (ABUs) formed by FFS graduates (originally a UNDP/FAO/GTZ scheme now potentially being scaled up with EU support [check]) (Example = KPEYA: organic cocoa into markets) - interest in spreading ABU model and expand scope to ginger and others) (Note: need to speak to Tom Cairns)
- Restructuring creates opportunity for new relationship with research; strong demand for this from Mr Massaquoi. Opportunities through 'Diversified Food Production Project (Islamic Development Bank) – intention to strengthen 'pull' on research; no free inputs; revolving seed/credit scheme
- Interest in improving coordination/knowledge system for extension
- Keen interest in potential of RIU/Sierra Leone RIU Partnership

MAFF: Head, Youth Coordination

(Cell: +232 76 814527; pakfmk01@yahoo.com)

Present: Mr Peter A Kamara (Head-Youth Coordination); FM, FJ, DS, SJ.

Overview of Role/Structure

Job creation and food security through providing opportunities for youth in agriculture. A relatively new department, which came out of the National Youth Policy, which prioritised agriculture.

The department provides funds based on project proposals to youth groups; this operates as a revolving fund but the groups keep all the profit. Funds come from a basket fund, a peacebuilding fund, and other donors.

The department sensitises communities and provides capacity building for project proposal preparation. Subject specialists upgrade proposals before submission to donors and funds are paid directly into the accounts of successful groups. The ministry provides technical assistance and monitors the groups' activities.

Key challenges in the development context

- As a result of war, heavy out-migration from rural areas, which continues today, resulting in high urban unemployment rates and rural under-productivity – the department's imperative is to make return to rural areas an attractive option, both socially and economically [note: this is a common rhetoric, with these movements largely attributed to the war and little comparative analysis or consideration of it as a common theme in many developing countries]
- The approach appears quite prescriptive, although touted as bottom-up: do prior sensitisation and capacity-building activities determine the type of groups that put forward proposals and the types of proposals submitted?
- Focus of proposals received is limited either to production (for the most part), processing and local marketing – some have ideas about larger scale activities, e.g. a pineapple plantation but do not have appropriate contact points
- Unclear about the incentive structures for soliciting assistance from ministry extension workers within the programme
- 'Everything goes through the boss' – the idea that the main contact person needs to be the person at the top, who may not be the person most aware of what's going on 'on the ground'.

Opportunities for RIU engagement/partnerships

- Developing a joint proposal with UNDP to support youth enterprise development, based on ABUs
- Interest in research, and already has links e.g. with SLARI, which is doing research on a new breed of cassava for the department
- 'Youth and agriculture' is the department's mandate, which is likely to be central to RIU's approach in Sierra Leone
- The department is starting to get more proposals for enterprise development for agricultural products, and some of the more dynamic proposals (e.g. the pineapple plantation proposal above) could be interested in engaging with RIU.

Monday 19 May 2008

Whalid Bahsoon: 19 May 2008

(Tel: +232-22-241945; Cell: +232 76/77 615180; Email: bahsoonfoodssltd@googlemail.com)

Present: Whalid Bahsoon (Agro-processor, coffee and baby food); FM, FJ, DS, SJ.

Overview of Role/Structure:

Medium sized agro-business, processing raw goods into locally-sourced coffee and baby food. Currently not operating as over-stocked. Equipment was brought in from China, using a Chinese buyer at a trade fair about 10 years ago, which only takes about 2-3% commission

Key challenges in the development context

- Sierra Leone has a lot of produce, including coffee, cocoa, groundnuts, etc but nothing done to add value, either for local consumption or export
- Banks don't 'do' start-up loans – very difficult for the private sector to get capital for investment (35% of loans banks given out are not paid; basic lending rates are 25%)

- Difficult to find buyers to pay in advance and it's expensive to do an aggressive marketing strategy
- Costs associated with starting a business is quite high (although process can be quite smooth) but you have to use a lawyer to do your business documents and all in all it costs about US\$1,000

Opportunities for RIU engagement/partnerships

- A couple of months ago, there was a conference attended by banks, the private sector and government, where they exchanged views about loans and investment for business support; trying to change government/NASSIT investments only in treasury bonds (NASSIT 'sitting on' a LOT of money) – things are slowly being put in place, including changing bank attitudes
- A Call to Business: group of UK investors, who visited Sierra Leone recently (businessmen who want to make money but interested in African development)
- The Business Forum – acts as a pressure/advocacy group to attract foreign/private sector investment in Sierra Leone – headed by Nee Robin-Coker
- Lots of informal mechanisms for farmers to find out information e.g. about prices, whether from family in town or other means
- He thinks Sierratel could build on their centres [which are all over the country [check]]
- Assesses the business environment as 'generally good'

UNDP: 19 May 2008

(Tel: +232 22 231311; cell +232 76 606 202; Tanzila.sankoh@undp.org)

Present: Ms Tanzila Watta Sankoh (Agriculture Specialist), FM, FJ, DS, SJ.

Overview of Role/Structure:

UNDP has two main programme strands: Governance and Poverty. The "poverty" programme is the one that has concentrated on support for the Ministry of Agriculture's Farmer Field Schools (in collaboration with FAO). The "governance" programme, having supported the early work towards decentralization (including providing technical expertise to each of the three first ministries to devolve powers to councils: health, education and agriculture) initiated the Agricultural Business Units (ABUs). An ABU comprises 16 groups of 25 farmers (25 farmers forming each Farmer Field School), i.e. 400 farmers. Each group of 25 has a management committee and the ABU itself an executive committee. Each ABU holds a bank account ("95% of them?") and they are expected to increase acreage under cultivation in order to increase production, save seed rice for the following season, sell enough to make a profit for members, and pay a proportion to the local council by way of taxation, providing revenue for the services they can expect from their council. For the first 2 years, training of groups was done by UNDP-recruited field staff, but for the past 2 years this has been provided by MAFFS extension workers who in turn have trained "farmer facilitators". They have now moved on to entrepreneurship training. UNDP provides no physical inputs, only training (but MAFFS provides seeds as an advance, receiving "almost 90%" return).

Key challenges in the development context

- Farmers do not keep records or manage their resources properly – need for capacity-building
- Livestock not a realistic option: poultry, for example, requires high capital investment
- Following the set-up of the ABUs, it was discovered that many farmers are illiterate. (So UNDP has started literacy training in a pilot project for 1,000 illiterate farmers.)
- Following training, farmers need some sort of support such as start-up kits

Opportunities for RIU engagement/partnerships

- Recognition of need for farmers to engage in farming as a business
- Acknowledgement that there is inadequate collaboration (e.g. MAFFS has tried to bring donors together, but no meeting has been called for a long time)
- Some collaboration exists with MAFFS PEMSD – filling their surveys and then having access to their collated data

Tom Cairns: Partner, ManoCap: 20 May 2008

(Cell Sierra Leone: +232 76 766855, Cell UK +44 7866 317559; tom@manocap.com; www.manocap.com)

Present: TC ManoCap; FM, FJ, DS, SJ RIU

- Fund capitalised by Lansdowne Partners a European hedge fund of US \$8Billion.
- Will take equity in mid sized businesses (100 – 1000 people) between USD 200K and \$1.2M with exit in 5 – 7 years and looking for 20% IRR. This is relatively cheap finance but is very selective.
- Is taking a long term view.
- Exit may e.g. be by MBO or taken up by commercial bank
- 3 deals closing. Not in Ag although may be opportunities in processing, e.g. juice; commercial farm sector.
- Issue with microcredit is it keeps encouraging people to take on more debt and not save or invest in assets.
- Issue re: need for middle class of employed people; not everyone can be an entrepreneur.
- Was involved in design of ABU scheme but has gone wrong and become politicised (although mobilising tax base for agric remains sound)
- ManoCap is being financed by DFID: Business Development Initiative, to provide a technical assistance facility offering business planning, business structure/legal advice; accounting to make financeable.
- Believes there are good margins to be had in '101' businesses; nothing new around/needed
- Was encouraging re: RIU approach in Sierra Leone – knowledge driven but also need implementation.
- Supportive of Eddie Benya/AID approach.

Solomon Scott, Director Central Planning Unit, Ministry of Finance & Planning

(Tel: 242092 , Cell 033412860, 077567898; solomonscott@yahoo.co.uk)

- Next PRSP on the way – won't change much but more PVS driven
- Will inform 5 – 10 year National Development Strategic Plan
- Individual Sector plans all available
- There is a Sci&Tech Secretariat within Min of Ed
- In Comms area Sierratel is too passive; Celtel going own way.
- Energy is v big development challenge; hydro scheme at Bumbuna coming on line; Chinese assisting with smaller scale hydro regionally.

Ibrahim Turay

(Cell: +232-76-698542; Email ibrahim529@yahoo.co.uk)

Present: Ibrahim Turay (Senior M&E Officer, PEMSD); FM

Overview of Role/Structure

(Note: had wanted me to meet the Assistant Director but he was busy):

- PEMSD aims mainly to make a contribution to informed management, policy and planning decisions; at district level M&E doubles for planning and statistics – officers at field level are subject to a two-tier management system – are answerable to the district director but are technically managed by PEMSD (e.g. recruitment, transfers) in Freetown
- Mainly undertake standardised, regular, national level surveys, as well as collect market information for farmers, traders and the Agriculture Sector, which are built into the programme (the latter may no longer be happening because it was a funded initiative)
- Activities are more responsive than strategic, in that what's built into their programme activities is what is requested and paid for by donors, e.g. annual surveys on food security, which are done with WFP and FAO

Key challenges in the development context

- A lot of their work apart from regular surveys depend on whether the activity is funded – e.g. the gathering of information about weekly market prices has been constrained by funding. They used to run a programme under MISTOWA (<http://www.mistowa.org/en/index.php>), which provided updated market information to West African traders, which was on the net but funding for that ended

- No real means for disseminating research – are mainly a repository, although as their research is essentially commissioned it probably does get used somehow
- Inter-sectoral coordination is not very good

Opportunities for RIU engagement/partnerships

- Have experience working with partners and need to do so as a means of funding themselves, e.g. jointly working with Statistics Sierra Leone looking at farm costs/spending by farmers on inputs
- Have used the radio as a way of disseminating market information to traders and farmers, as well as through extension workers (two main ways of getting information downwards)
- Thinking about setting up a website, but not sure how realistic that is

BIBWEG HEALTH DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION: 20 May 2008

(Tel (both cell) +232 33 770 726; +232 77 385 616; Tukaduwinneba001@yahoo.com)

Present: Dr King Yaw Benjamin (Founder and Executive Director), Paul Bangura (Project Coordinator), Santigie [check] (Development Officer), Pastor Joseph Bangura (Counsellor), 4 other members of the organisation (including one recording the meeting on tape) FJ, DS, SJ.

Overview of Role/Structure:

BIBWEG runs backyard gardens in the east of Freetown (which is why we visited them) as well as doing “clean-up work” (with the support of Australian Clean Up the World), offers vocational training to youth and provides a service weighing people and checking their blood pressure

Key challenges in the development context

- They need funds
- They have some apparently serious young men who would like to do something useful

Opportunities for RIU engagement/partnerships

- Some focus for youth element

Eddie Benya USAID, Task Manager Agriculture 19 May 2008

Email: ebenya@usaid.gov

V informative meeting.

- He is involved in process to develop new Strategy for Ag Sector. This currently getting underway. Interest from various donors including DFID in getting behind this as a common agreed investment framework.
- Basically an Agribusiness Strategy
- His view is Crop production has been over-emphasised and more integrated attention needed to other sub-sectors including livestock, forestry, land and water/natural resource management: referred to previous strength of livestock trade
- Also cautioned strongly about environmental degradation/deforestation/ destruction of catchments – only 5% of primary forest left.
- Long haul encouraging farmers into more business oriented approach: haven't traditionally seen themselves as business people but need to in order to participate equitably/meaningfully in market-led growth
- Working through development of Producers Associations in 3 Districts [check where]. Whole value chain approach. E.g. in one example women's group of traders buys from producers association and takes to market in Freetown
- Contrasts ABU approach which he says is quasi cooperatives approach and liable to capture by Chiefs
- Emphasised that partnerships must be between interest groups by which mean those managing scheme must also have stake in it – i.e. entrepreneurial/ business – like; no room for politicisation.

- FFS have been encouraged to start commercial farms; in some examples [check] after trials the plots were sold and have capitalised commercial farms (to c 10-12 Million Leones). Note he says that land titling issue is a red herring and that land will be leased or sold if price is right
- Infrastructure is a big problem. AID has looked at various appropriate local transport solutions (originally with IDE) for getting crops to market/processor – e.g. cassava for grating [check] – came up with motorised tricycle as best bet (like Chinese tricycles, similar to power tillers)
- Confirmed is localised labour shortages in agriculture – labour used to be free/communal but now many have left for cities and must be purchased
- Communal labour under chiefs was already unpopular/resented pre-war and one of the root causes of disaffection of youth
- Re: export opportunities is problem of scale in that need 5-6 ha to produce enough to produce viable quantities [check]
- Biggest exporters in Sierra Leone are Abu Dyi [check] And Fawaz (Cocoa) [check]
- Is working with World Vision in Kono; CRS in Kailahun, Care in Koinadugu to develop market information systems. CRS is responsible for/running?? MIS via radio and print; have looked at text based but problem of literacy/language and eyesight.
- Worked with Access Point to try and establish internet services in 3 districts [check where] (but failed – need to follow up find out why)
- Big problem getting to unemployed youth via training or other formal programmes – many are ‘unsalvageable’ in this respect. SLOIC and similar no good because of entry requirements
- Best approach is pull/demonstration effect rather than push, e.g. some have moved up-country as mechanics fixing motorbikes; would go e.g. for tractor hire business
- Circa 3000+ sleeping rough in E Freetown..
- Will respond to incentives e.g. if see viable agro-based opportunities: potential for them to be ‘middle-men’ but need to operate further upstream rather than petty trading
- Relationship with Lebanese supermarkets [check]

Tuesday 20th May 2008

Prof. Edward R. Rhodes – Consultant Advisor, Sierra Leone Agricultural Research Institute (SLARI)

- FARA is a continent-wide forum for stakeholders in agriculture and development
- CORAF/WECARD falls within the sub-regional organisations
- CAADP is the AU-NEPAD institutional innovation aims to achieve annual growth in production.
- SLARI has been established by an act of Parliament as the sole government agricultural research and technology body for the benefit of the farming, fishing and forestry in Sierra Leone.
- SLARI has a draft strategy and plan. It is the first amongst NARS to have gone through this process. The strategy and plan feeds into the strategies of the regional and sub-regional organisations.
- SLARI is the umbrella organisation for eight (8) research centres including National Agricultural Research Centre (NARC), Rokupr Agricultural Research Centre (RARC), Freetown Fisheries Research Centre, Teko Livestock Research Centre, Woama Plant Genetic Resources Centre, Bambawo Forestry and Tree Crops Research Centre, Magbosi Land and Water Research Centre, and Kabala Horticultural crops Research Centre.
- Two centres are functional currently i.e. NARC and RARC.
- SLARI has a board which include the Chairman, Director General and Directors of Research Centres (class 1 members) and class 2 members are nominated by the institution and appointed by President (from government lines ministries, universities, farmer organisations, donor, parliamentary committee on agriculture etc re ACT)
- Minister focus is commercial agriculture not ignoring small-scale farmers – research will take cognizance of both scenarios.
- Research will take socio-economic aspect in its activities.
- Two initiatives including Regional Agricultural Information & Learning Systems (RAILS) and Dissemination of New Agricultural Technologies in Africa (DONATA) are supported by CORAF in Sierra Leone. RAILS is with MAFFS and DONATA with NARC.

Joe Amara-Bangali (Jnr), Chief Commercial Officer, Africell: 20 May 2008

(Tel: +232 22 226213, Cell: +232 77 928400; jbangali@afri-cell.sl, www.afri-cell.sl)

- Second biggest in Sierra Leone
- Came in after Celtel along with Comium
- Cheaper rates than Celtel but not the same coverage
- Aiming for 90-95% coverage by end of this year (compare with Celtel's current coverage of 85%)
- Doesn't see commercial market for GPRS: not enough bandwidth
- Does some collocation of masts with Comium, Tigo but Celtel generally doesn't
- Open and interested to SMS content services including push services with one or more content partners.
- Wants to follow up.

Nancy Sesay

(Cell: +232-76-999037; Email nmargao@yahoo.com)

Present: Nancy Sesay (Asst PICC, Talking Drum Studio); FJ; FM

Overview of Role/Structure

- Their mandate is to encourage dialogue as a means of preventing conflict. They work with people, using face-to-face meetings, radio, drama and video. They create an environment that allows different voices to sound off on different opinions/opposing issues, encouraging a focus on interests rather than positions
- They build and share information around certain themes, such as governance, corruption, elections and livelihoods issues – then work with people who have the expert knowledge (e.g. NEC, PPLC) and develop programmes with them to disseminate (usually dub programmes on cassettes and send them out radio stations). Examples:
 - They work with government to help them communicate to the general public about what the government is doing.
 - They've collaborated with ENCISS to bring the media and community councils into dialogue on a regular basis
 - The rapid results initiative: videos of councils' performance after their first 100 days, compared against statements made during campaigning. They package the videos to SLBS, video clubs etc (encourage video clubs to screen before football matches, for example)
- Partnerships with community radio stations are not based on resources but on other forms of collaboration, e.g. provide experts to set up equipment, and provide opportunities for journalists to receive training overseas. They do help communities to set up stations (although the initiative should come from the community) and provide support, and talking drum staff help out community radio staff
- Most of the community radio stations belong to the Independent Radio Network, a loose federation/network of radio stations (which doesn't include the state radio, even though Talking Drum does partner with state radio)
- Community radios raise income through selling airtime for public notices (death announcements, etc) and to NGOs who want sustained airtime for their projects
- Their programmes are online, and their reporter in the Hague submits his stories online

Opportunities for RIU engagement/partnerships

- Community radio could present a good opportunity

Key challenges in the development context

- Not sure how truly sustainable community radio is

Joyce Dalgliesh

(Cell: +232-22-76210203; Email joyce.dalgliesh@vsoint.org)

Present: Joyce Dalgliesh (Programme Manager, Secure Livelihoods, VSO); FM, FJ, DS, SJ.

Overview of Role/Structure:

Livelihoods component in VSO is beginning to focus on value chains and market chain; hoping to take advantage of prior research (e.g. in 2006 on market barriers and opportunities) they've done and the experience of Tanzania and Malawi and apply that to Sierra Leone. Are trying to engage with other INGOs who are operating in similar ways (INGO livelihoods forum just started), as well as trying to get local partners to understand value chains better (through a workshop held). There are 15-25 livelihoods volunteers at any given point in time; the framework is close to the DFID approach to livelihoods, with a focus on: strengthening partners' capacity and youth employment. The department provides technical development skills, usually in a capacity-building context but as there are significant gaps also in service delivery

Key challenges in the development context

- Lots of research has been done, but it's all sitting on shelves
- No one is sharing information: 'people don't speak to each other'
- People appear to be suspicious of working in groups: 'trust takes time', so it takes a while to introduce things and get things moving, because often attitudinal change is what's required
- Decentralisation isn't as effective as it could be as they are severely resource constrained
- How to promote business development and financial support services as well as advocacy services
- The communications infrastructure is extremely challenging, especially during the rainy season (this includes internet connections and road networks)

Opportunities for RIU engagement/partnerships

- There are plenty of opportunities for different partners (including international/national NGOs) to work together around common themes that they are currently working on independently
- Have formal partnerships with quite a few NNGOs, including: Future in Our Hands, Madam, SLYEO, as well as government councils
- Also have relationships with broader groups such as the Sierra Leone Indigenous Business Association, AFORD (an initiative for the African Diaspora), the Sierra Leone Association of Microfinance Institutions (SLAMFI) and Mittaf (sp? – a technical assistance facility [check])
- AFFORD – African Foundation for Development: <http://www.afford-uk.org/>, is promoting enterprise development in Sierra Leone. See http://www.afford-uk.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=42&Itemid=61 for information on the 'Supporting Entrepreneurs and Enterprise Development in Africa' project, which encourages Sierra Leoneans in the Diaspora to contribute their time and resources to businesses in Sierra Leone. It's supported by the VSO Diaspora Volunteering Initiative... I think DFID provides support to this

Mr. Hassan Ahmed Jalloh, IOM/TRQN Consultant attached to the National Association of Farmers in Sierra Leone, 20 May 2008.

Email: ha_jalloh@hotmail.com

Present: Hassan Jalloh, SJ & DS

- Been working as consultant to National Farmers Association of Sierra Leone
- NAFSL has been around 20 years
- During/after the war was charged with distribution seed/fertiliser and this role got entrenched and still sees itself in the inputs business
- Also the executive leadership became entrenched and is ageing
- Now coming into conflict with aims of government
- E.g. arguing over who disburses FAO/TCP project
- Issue of 'induced resources' such as UNDP/FAO which results in new/temporary structures (e.g. ABUs) that NAFSL sees as 'competitive'.
- Hassan has been helping to develop a new strategic plan to rethink role and approach and governance

Wednesday, 21st May 2008

Emmanuel A. R. Gaima – Director, Institutional Reform and Capacity Building Project

(Cell: +232 76 610508; Email: egaima@ircbp.sl; or emmangaima@yahoo.com: www.ircbp.sl)

Present: Emmanuel Gaima, DS & SJ

- The Institutional Reform and Capacity Building Project (IRCBP) is funded by World Bank and DFID to support the establishment of functioning local government system and improve inclusiveness, transparency and accountability of public resource management at the central and local councils levels of government.
- The new councils came into being in 2004
- The decentralization objectives: strengthening policy & implementation capacity programme; community development; administrative infrastructure of local councils; local government finance department (within the ministry of finance); development grants for local councils; and monitoring and evaluation.
- The PRSP – the old focused on human development, services and growth- new generation to evolve around the President’s manifesto and the Bumbuna retreat.
- The councils are restricted by law to get into investment activities. Only get funds from the consolidated government funds to undertake activities.
- Work with other institutions to outsource services in order to maintain sustainability in service provision.
- The review of the decentralization policy is currently being done.
- The secretariat operates a challenge grant on behalf of the councils. It is expected that in future this will be undertaken by the councils.
- National training policy for the councils is being developed.
- Opportunity for RIU – councils will begin to develop development plans which will be there needs, vision and the activities they want to undertake.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COUNCIL

(Tels, both mobile, +232 76 676 898; +232 30 920 099; NO E-MAIL ADDRESS!)

Present: Mr I.L.M. Sesay (Executive Secretary), FM, FJ.

Overview of Role/Structure

The National Science and Technology Council is established within the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. Mr Sesay is Executive Secretary and heads its operational arm, the Secretariat. It is “the key institution” (in Mr Sesay’s words) in respect of the promotion of science and technology in the country. A Southern Regional Committee has just been established in Bo, and this complements the Northern Regional Committee in Makeni and the Eastern Regional Committee in Kenema. Each of those regional bodies will appoint district Science and Technology committees. The Local Council will be represented on the district committees. In all cases, it would appear that membership of committees is by appointment, and in each case there is a “private sector representative”. The Council was established in 2001, and is currently setting up its new Secretariat office at 84 Dundas Street. It has 3 divisions: Information and Documentation, Technology Development and R&D (headed by Dr I.F. Palmer, Director of the Bureau of Research at the University of Sierra Leone). (Not clear to me how R&D differs from Technology Development [check]. A policy document apparently exists (while we understood from the Planning Section of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development that no policy had yet been prepared). It appears that the policy is the work of a consultant, and there is no clear statement that it has been formally adopted. Policy document with David Suale for copying (hard copy only available).

Key challenges in the development context

- Research is in the doldrums – Njala University’s “demonstration farm” is a wilderness!
- The private sector in Sierra Leone “is non-existent” (?!?) (Just a few entities such as the paint factory, cement factory and breweries.)
- Prerequisites for technology development are energy, roads, water, telecommunications. (When the hydro-electric plant comes on-stream in February 2009, this will provide a major boost.)

- Still using much imported material even for local industry – such as the dye for gara cloth, which could be produced locally
- Need to go into “big farming” (such as utilizing the stretch between Lunsar and Makeni as a single large farm, with another in the south – Government to set these up with 100 tractors each!) – need to “mechanize” agriculture

Opportunities for RIU engagement/partnerships

- Proposal developed (ready for submission to NEPAD) on technology development for processing of different foods - \$160,000. (Check with Mr F.B.C. Pabai, Desk Officer For NEPAD in Youyi Building 7th Floor)
- Links already established with FINIC and MAPCO for equipment production, hoping to do more for palm-kernel processing and palm-oil processing
- Potential to link tertiary educational institutions with private sector (such as internships)
- Professor Rhodes sits on Science & Technology Council, and S/T Council is represented on SLARI

Sanusi Deen

(Cell: +232-33-342238/76-210203 Email ssdeen@yahoo.com; ssdeen@eds-sl.com; website: <http://www.eds-sl.com/>)

Present: Sanusi Deen (Senior Partner, Enterprise Development Services Ltd; Head of the Private Sector Initiative (?)); FM, FJ, DS, SJ.

Overview of Role/Structure:

- Two contexts – that of the business he’s a partner of, EDS, and as the head of the Private Sector in Agriculture Forum.
- The forum has four technical/coordination committees, incorporating a range of actors:
 - Finance, headed by the Managing Director of Standard Chartered Bank, and includes the commercial banks, ManoCap, microfinance companies, etc
 - Technical services to farming, headed by EDS
 - Input supply delivery into the agricultural sector, headed by MAFFS
 - Marketing chain (associated with input supply), headed by Tom Roberts of World Vision [check whether heads allocated to the appropriate activity]
- Mainly promoting the development of strategic crops, including rice, cassava, oil palm, groundnuts. No livestock focus
- Sees the government as the facilitator – designs the strategies within which the system operates and assists the private sector to operationalise the strategy – e.g. government should set the framework for financing infrastructure, which will need to be capitalised by commercial banks – however, their ability to do so will be based on the prevailing environment

Key challenges in the development context

- Feels research has been ‘almost irresponsible’: it has a crucial role to play but hasn’t taken any initiative to disseminate their results; also the research is produced in a format that is virtually unusable
- Small ruminants restocking: found out that people don’t kill their animals to eat or sell, rather they present them as gifts or use them in ceremonies, so livestock restocking didn’t work for stimulating business – based on this experience are considering introducing it as a key livelihood activity of herdsmen who would rear animals for slaughter and sale in market
- Set-up appears quite top-down, e.g. coordination committees are headed by appointed experts, who then recruit members to their committees

Opportunities for RIU engagement/partnerships

- Looking at a whole range of factors [along the value chain], tapping into the experience of a variety of actors
- Are also looking at a whole range of options, e.g. in finance, from microfinance for farmers, to investing in mechanical agriculture to long-term investment in commercial agriculture

- Has links with various related sectors, e.g. used to chair the Sierra Leone Indigenous Business Association; his business partner Dr Spencer is the chairman of SLARI, also has links to the Sierra Leone Business Forum – good for potential linkages
- Programmes with similar foci, such as the UNIDO integrated agriculture project, which aims to: 1. Introduce agro-processing to rural communities to reduce post-harvest losses; 2) set up a food technology department at Njala (research-focus on food) – this wasn't funding though; also ECOWAS looking at fertiliser inputs in the region and are doing a baseline for all countries
- Trying to develop growth centres for agro-industrial development so that e.g. in Freetown there'd be an agro-development processing centre
- Ministers of Finance and Agriculture considering jointly putting forward a bill to parliament for the development of an agricultural finance institution – whatever the concerns as to such an approach, at least the two departments are talking!

Wednesday 28th May 2008

Dr. Kevin Gallagher, FAO Representative, 15, Sir Samuel Lewis Road Aberdeen Freetown, Tel: +232 76 541445; Email: Kevin.gallagher@fao.org

- Dr. Kevin Gallagher is the new FAO representative in Sierra Leone. Just a couple of weeks now in office. The position has been vacant the past years inhibiting full programme operations in Sierra Leone. Now that the position is occupied, there will be full FAO involvement in the agriculture and natural resources sector in Sierra Leone.
- Establishing district profiles along commodity lines.
- Provide support to the development of the national agricultural development plan
- Continue support to FFS/ABUs in collaboration with UNDP and MAFFS focusing on establishing linkages.
- Establishing agro-shop for input supply.
- Key focus will be on support that will gear towards rice exportation through a rice platform; organic cocoa production; diversification in food crops and cashew growers and fair trade.
- To come up with innovation symposium. RIU will be informed on the date.
- Currently supporting the following projects – Agricultural Advisory Group (\$400,000), Fisheries(\$300,000) and National Association of Farmers in Sierra Leone NAFSL(\$190,000)
- Value chain study along commodity lines e.g. rice, cocoa, cashew, mango, pineapple etc.

Friday 30th May 2008

Rashid Sesay, Country Director HEIFER International, 98B Lower pipeline (Quarry) Off Wilkinson Road Freetown; Tel: +232 76 671303; Email: Rashid.sesay@heifersierraleone.org Website: www.heifer.org. Present: Rashid Sesay & DS

- HEIFER International is Africa Area Programme responsible to work in sub-Saharan Africa, a non-profit organisation working to end world hunger by giving food and income-producing livestock to impoverished families around the world.
- Heifer's Africa Area Programme is comprised of 11 country offices and projects in four countries that work with communities to help build sustainable livelihood.
- Heifer's strategies include – capacity building, strategic partnership, growth and innovation and governance.
- In Sierra Leone, Heifer's focus is mainly livestock and is working with the government to come up with national livestock development policy. The programme will also be involved in other socio-economic programme that will enhance livelihood for poor resource farmers and the disadvantage communities.
- Officially launched the programme in Sierra Leone few months ago.
- Undertaking a country scan to look at the various windows of opportunity

- The country assessment will lead to an interim framework which will pave the way to the development of long term country strategy.
- Heifer will work through community groups and not individual.

Tuesday 3rd June 2008

Mr. Conton Sesay, Commissioner, National Commission for Social Action (NaCSA); NaCSA House Freetown;
Tel: +232 76 653285: Present: Conton Sesay, DS

- Mid term review on the innovation fund provided by the German government. Future focus will be business development support in partnership with youths
- New initiatives includes; social protection, reparation, national youth service, and social service delivery. This will be piloted using funds from the World Bank.

Wednesday 4th June 2008

Mr. Vandi Abu, Operations Manager, 16, River Side Drive, Off King Harman Road Freetown, Tel: +232 76 620310/033 620310, Email: vandiabu@yahoo.co.uk

- Finance Salone is one the largest Micro Finance institution in Sierra Leone. It was born out of the American Refugee Council (ARC), a non-profit, non governmental organisation. Finance Salone is a private company limited by shares operating with ten branches in and out of Freetown. It is part of the wider network of micro finance institutions refer to as Sierra Leone Micro Finance Institutions (SLMFI)
- Provide loan to people in business and about to start new business.
- Only provide loan to groups consisting of 5-10 people per group
- Minimum loan is Le 300,000 per person
- Interest rate of 2.5% per month
- Female involvement is 70%.
- Age target is 18 – 65 years excluding students
- There are 250,000 clientele who have applied for loan, but only 50,000 have so far benefited – 16,000 clientele for Finance Salone and 34,000 clientele from other microfinance institutions.
- Huge applications submitted awaiting funding
- Poor infrastructure is a constraint
- Mind set of clients WRT to loan repayment.

Annex 12: Memorandum of Understanding Between RIU and MAFFS

DRAFT MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU) DRAFT

BETWEEN

**THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FOOD SECURITY (MAFFS)
REPRESENTING THE GOVERNMENT OF SIERRA LEONE (GOSL)**

AND

THE RESEARCH INTO USE PROGRAMME (RIU)

Introduction

The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security (MAFFS) on behalf of the Government of Sierra Leone (GOSL) endorses the operations of the Research Into Use Programme (RIU)¹ to participate in the socio-economic development of Sierra Leone. In contributing to the new vision and strategy of agriculture, the RIU programme will be implemented in collaboration with a partnership of existing Sierra Leone-based organisations committed to a shared vision and mission (referred to hereafter as the Sierra Leone-RIU Partnership).

Purpose

The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding is to provide a framework that outlines the working relationship between the RIU programme and the Ministry of Agriculture Forestry and Food Security (MAFFS) of the Government of Sierra Leone. The details of the operational framework are set out in Annex 1.

Obligations of RIU and MAFFS

- 1) RIU and MAFFS shall cooperate in contributing to the following outputs:
 - 1.1) Enhanced capacity of farmers to demand and use natural resources research to improve their productivity and incomes
 - 1.2) Enhanced networking among private sector, NGO, and government actors to create a conducive environment for the use of natural resources research
 - 1.3) Examples of more effective demand-driven systems through which information flows from research to users
 - 1.4) Lessons on how to achieve enhanced demand and use of research outputs for the benefit of poor people
- 2) Under this MOU the MAFFS shall:
 - 2.1) Be the competent government authority assigned to interact with the RIU programme and its collaborating partnership, while providing the necessary administrative and legal coverage for the implementation of the RIU programme.
 - 2.2) Provide guidance by way of interpreting current GOSL policy in relation to the operations of the RIU programme in Sierra Leone.

¹ RIU is a UK DFID funded programme that is managed by a consortium of three organisations namely, Natural Resources International UK, Nkoola Institutional Development Associates (NIDA) Ltd Uganda and Michael Flint and Performance Assessment Resource Centre also in the UK. It operates in 6 focal countries in Africa (Tanzania, Rwanda, Malawi, Zambia, Nigeria and Sierra Leone, as well as in several countries in South Asia

- 2.3) Legitimize the Sierra Leone-RIU Partnership and support it in widening its membership and resource base
 - 2.4) Mainstream the RIU Programme into the national development framework for agriculture and natural resources including in the activities of the NEPAD Comprehensive Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP) which Sierra Leone may buy into.
 - 2.5) Participate in joint monitoring, impact assessment and learning (MIL) activities of the RIU programme in Sierra Leone
 - 2.6) Undertake any other responsibilities as may be mutually agreed from time to time by both parties
3. The RIU shall:
- 3.1) Provide the financial resources to facilitate the establishment of the Sierra Leone-RIU Partnership. This shall include providing, on an interim basis, a Secretariat for the Partnership, should this be requested
 - 3.2) Provide technical guidance to the Partnership
 - 3.3) Provide gap-filling resources for implementing activities of any innovation platforms that the Partnership may set up
 - 3.4) Support the emergence of an agricultural information market
 - 3.5) Participate in joint monitoring, impact assessment and learning activities of the RIU programme in Sierra Leone
 - 3.6) Undertake any other responsibilities as may be mutually agreed from time to time by both parties
4. The MOU shall remain in force until the end of the RIU (a period expected to be 3 years) and shall therefore be subject to review should the RIU continue after this period.
5. Parties may terminate this MOU by written notice of three (3) months if in the opinion of one partner it appears desirable; or by summary notice in the event of a material breach by the defaulting partner of its obligations under this Agreement.
6. The parties shall endeavour to settle any dispute arising from this Agreement amicably, but in the event that this is not possible the matter in dispute shall be referred to the arbitration of a single arbitrator to be agreed between the parties. The arbitrator's decision shall be final and binding on both parties. Any recourse to the law shall in all respects be governed by the laws of Sierra Leone.
7. The provisions of this Agreement may be amended or supplemented only by means of a supplementary agreement signed by each of the parties or their duly authorized representatives.
8. This Agreement will come into force as of the date of its signature by both parties, in witness whereof the parties have executed this Agreement on 31st July 2008. Done in Freetown in three originals (in the English Language).

Dr. Joseph Sam Sesay
Minister
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security
Sierra Leone

Dr. Andy Frost
Interim Programme Director
DFID Research Into Use
United Kingdom

Annex 1

THE OPERATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE RESEARCH INTO USE PROGRAMME IN SIERRA LEONE

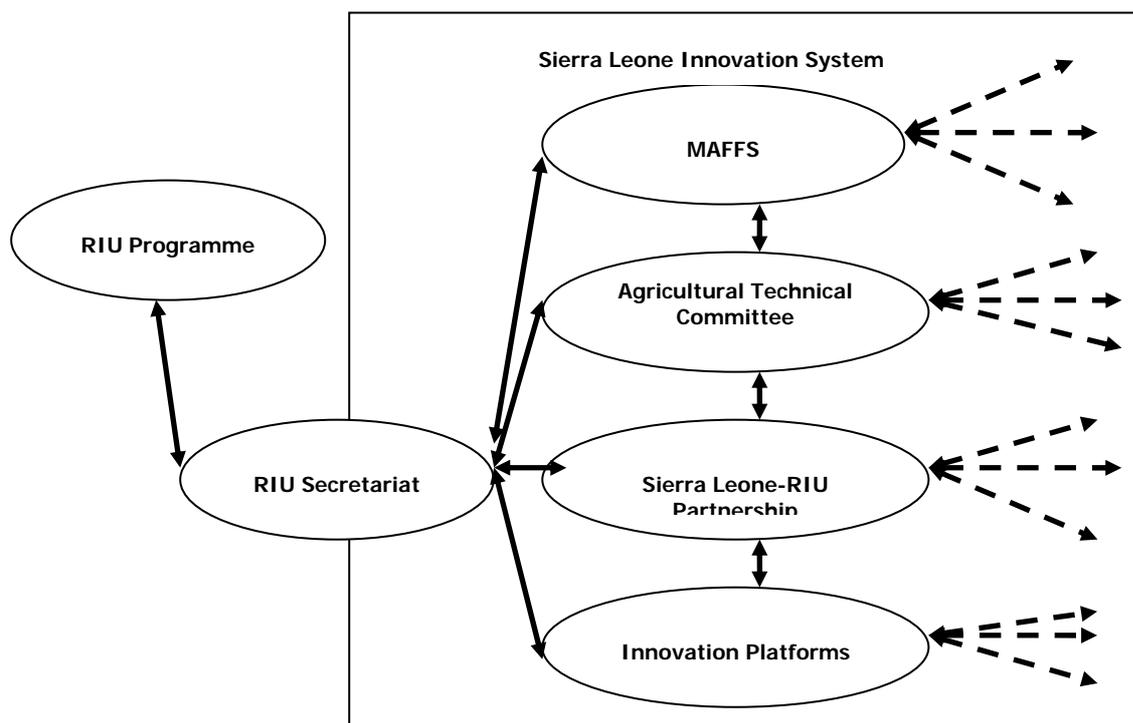
INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Annex is to elaborate an operational framework for the collaboration between the RIU programme and the Ministry of Agriculture Forestry and Food Security (MAFFS) of the Government of Sierra Leone established by a MOU between the parties. The framework outlines the management and governance structure and functions of the different elements of the Sierra Leone Research into Use Programme (Sierra Leone-RIU). The framework builds on discussions held with the MAFFS Director General, the recommendations of the Country Assessment and Country Strategy undertaken by the Research into Use Programme (documents can be availed by the Sierra Leone-RIU Country Coordinator) and RIU experience in other countries.

OPERATIONAL FRAMEWORK

The Figure below schematically presents the operational framework of the RIU Programme in Sierra Leone.

PROPOSED STRUCTURE OF RIU IN SIERRA LEONE



Conceptually, the key operational structures that the RIU is nurturing (the Sierra Leone-RIU Partnership and its Innovation Platforms) are embedded within the Sierra Leone national innovation system and are intended to contribute to the objectives of MAFFS.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food security

The Ministry of Agriculture Forestry and Food Security, through its partner coordination mechanisms, will provide policy guidance to the RIU programme in Sierra Leone and to the Partnership, helping to situate their activities within ongoing policy initiatives in the country and the region. The MAFFS will also contribute in whatever ways it can to the growth and strengthening of the Sierra Leone-RIU Partnership. It will offer a seat on the Agricultural Advisory Group (AAG) to the RIU Programme in Sierra Leone through its Secretariat, and will interact with the RIU-Sierra Leone Partnership within the Agricultural Technical Committee (ATC), on which the Partnership will be represented.

The Research into Use Programme

The RIU programme in Sierra Leone will address the overall aims of the overall RIU programme and be consistent with Sierra Leone's national agricultural policy and strategic frameworks as well as wider regional and international development initiatives. It will also seek to develop an information markets approach to improving access to knowledge for innovation in the agriculture and natural resources sector. It will endeavour to ensure that in all this it remains fully aligned and engaged with other initiatives, programmes, policies and funding mechanisms in Sierra Leone. The RIU programme will therefore work in close collaboration, and seek to build synergies with other existing initiatives and programmes.

The ultimate goal of the RIU programme as a whole is to contribute to sustained poverty reduction.

The purpose of the RIU programme as a whole is as follows:

- to maximize the poverty-reducing impact of research on natural resources, and by doing so
- to increase understanding of how the promotion and widespread use of research can contribute to poverty reduction and economic growth.

A major part of the strategy of the RIU programme in Sierra Leone will be to support a partnership of locally-based organisations committed to innovations in the agriculture and natural resources sector that contribute to economic growth and poverty reduction.

The Sierra Leone-RIU Partnership

The Sierra Leone-RIU Partnership will comprise organisations that subscribe to a common mission and vision. It is an open partnership and will not be exclusive. The spectrum of organisations is envisaged to embrace a wide range of actors in the innovation system: farmer organisations, private sector of all descriptions (producers, buyers, processors, transporters, knowledge brokers, information and communication media, etc.), NGOs, financial institutions, other sector ministries, parastatals, etc.

The mission of the Sierra Leone-RIU partnership is as follows:

To enhance capacity and performance of organisations that are working together to generate innovations that boost the contribution of agriculture and natural resources to economic growth and improved livelihoods in Sierra Leone.

The vision of the Sierra Leone-RIU partnership is as follows:

To be a formidable partnership of service-providers, operating with mutual trust and understanding, innovatively using research information and knowledge, efficiently and effectively using resources to address their common interests, in order that markets are more competitive, communities are able to adapt and livelihoods are improved.

The purpose of the Sierra Leone-RIU Partnership is as follows:

That partners adopt new ways of working, individually and with each other, to pursue activities that lead to use of new knowledge and technologies for pro-poor innovation in the agriculture and natural resources sectors.

MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

The Research Into Use Secretariat

The Sierra Leone-RIU programme will be managed by a secretariat with office facilities in a suitable location in Freetown. It will be headed by a Country Coordinator who will report to the RIU Country Task Manager. He will be supported by a Process Facilitator and a Monitoring, Impact and Learning (MIL) Coordinator. This office will be the main organ through which the RIU programme will link to MAFFS, and is the formal representative in Sierra Leone of the RIU programme. It will represent the RIU programme on the Agricultural Advisory Group (AAG).

The Sierra Leone-RIU Partnership

The Sierra Leone-RIU Partnership will establish governance structures consistent with this MOU and acceptable to the member organisations. These structures and their operation will be set out in a Code of Conduct to be adopted by the membership. It is expected that the general membership will elect a representative body to act in its name between general meetings of the partnership. This body will represent the Partnership in its interaction with the RIU programme and with MAFFS, including representing the partnership on the Agricultural Technical Committee (ATC). Through participation in the ATC it will inform the larger national innovation system and MAFFS about its activities.

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