



STRENGTHENING FOREST BASED COMMUNITIES AND THEIR LIVELIHOODS IN SIERRA LEONE

Sixty percent of Sierra Leone was once forested, but today less than 10 percent of the original forest-cover remains due to deforestation and degradation. The poor condition of these forests was mostly caused by human activities. Weak governance, which failed to involve local communities, and low forest-management capacities exacerbated the degraded conditions. Deforestation in turn has had negative effects on Sierra Leone's poor communities that depend on the forests for fuel, food and income. This project was implemented to protect and restore the remaining forests in four pilot sites through capacity building in and awareness raising of the community based forestry (CBF) concept with the intention to scale-up in the future.



WHAT DID THE PROJECT DO?

Guidance, training and technical support were provided to transform community forestry governance and management through implementing the community based forestry concept in four pilot sites. This was achieved by capacity building in forest governance and management. Community forest committees and associations were formed, and these groups, among others such as the Forestry Division, were trained in community based forestry approaches. The project developed forest boundaries, introduced tree nurseries, validated the community based forestry concept and guidelines for Sierra Leone and reviewed and provided input to the draft Forestry Bill. Finally, information, video clips and documentary evidence were collected to inform stakeholders and development partners for scale-up in the future.

IMPACT

The piloting of the community based forestry concept at four sites in Sierra Leone resulted in benefits for both the forests and the communities that depend on them. Capacity building workshops improved knowledge and practice of community based forestry approaches, strengthened community cooperation and unity, improved forest management and improved social integration. Livelihoods were improved through tree nursery management and the introduction of sustainable farming techniques, which also worked toward mitigating climate change and protecting the forests of Sierra Leone from further degradation. Implementation of the community based forestry concept also led to improved biodiversity.

KEY FACTS

Contribution

USD 187 000

Duration

February 2017 – June 2018

Resource Partner

FAO

Partners

Forestry Division (FD) of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security (MAFFS)

Beneficiaries

Local communities living in or adjacent to forest resources, Forestry Division and non-governmental organization staff, policy-makers, researchers and academics

ACTIVITIES

- An inception workshop prepared a comprehensive roadmap for project implementation.
- Four pilot villages were selected using standard selection criteria: Gbaima Songa, Gbo Chiefdom, Bo District and Baoma, Pambala and Domboma in the Dasse Chiefdom, Moyamba District in the southern region.
- Town and boundary sign-posts were demarcated and erected.
- Communities were trained in tree nursery management, and tree nurseries were established.
- The pilot sites formed community forest committees (CFCs) to manage community forest associations (CFAs).
- Staff of the Forestry Division, civil society organizations (CSOs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and educational institutions and stakeholders were trained in community based forestry approaches.
- A study tour to sites throughout the country was conducted for three participants from each pilot site in successful forest management.
- To inform policy makers, government ministries and development partners, success stories, lessons learned and challenges were documented from each site.
- The community based forestry concept and guidelines were validated and developed for Sierra Leone.
- The Forestry Bill was reviewed, and detailed comments were provided.



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



Project Code

TCP/SIL/3601

Project Title

Piloting the Sierra Leone community based forestry concept

Contact

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