

**Programme Evaluation Series**

**Evaluation of FAO's contribution to the  
Smallholder Commercialisation  
Programme and to the Global Agriculture  
and Food Security Programme in Sierra  
Leone**

**Project code: UTF/SIL/038/SIL**

**Management Response**

Management response to the Evaluation of UTF/SIL/038/SIL					03/2021
Evaluation Recommendation	Management response <b>Accepted,</b> <b>Partially Accepted</b> or <b>Rejected</b>	Management plan			Further funding required (Y or N)
		Actions to be taken, and/or comments about partial acceptance or rejection	Responsible unit	Time frame	
<p><b>Recommendation 1.</b></p> <p><b>Intensification of production.</b></p> <p>i. For the future, a value chain analysis should be conducted at the beginning of the intervention to identify major constraints. On the basis of the analysis, FAO should introduce the relevant labour-saving technologies that will improve adoption of the technologies transferred through the FFS. This would be key for increasing rice productivity.</p> <p>ii. FAO should use its international reach to provide technical assistance to MAF to develop quality seed multiplication/certification systems in Sierra Leone. FAO should support the capacity building of the Sierra Leone Seed Certification Agency</p>	<p><b>Partially Accepted</b></p> <p>We agree with the recommendation, but its implementation will depend on the next generation of CPF which is informed by government's development agenda. Rice remains a high priority in Sierra Leone, the government has received a loan from the Islamic Development Bank to develop the rice sector, plus additional funding from the Africa Development Bank to develop the seed sector including certification. Both projects are implemented directly by the government. FAO has expressed interest to support the two projects, and still</p>	<p>i. Future FAO intervention in the rice sector will be preceded by value chain studies.</p> <p>ii. FAO has recently received a request from the government to support the establishment of national seed agency, discussions were initiated with NSP and Dakar and still progressing.</p>	<p>The Representation is responsible and will work closely with NSP or former AGP in Rome and the seed expert in Dakar.</p>	<p>31/12/2021</p>	<p>Yes</p>

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<p>(SLESCA) to make it more internally compliant.</p> <p>iii. It is clear that given the challenges of staff turnover and for sustainability reasons, private extension services need to be supported in order to complement MAF efforts. iv. Farmers should be sensitized using various media (radio, print, mobile telephones, etc.) on the benefits of cultivating in the in-valley swamps.</p>	<p>engaging with the Minister. The outcome of the discussion will determine FAO's role in these projects.</p>				
<p><b>Recommendation 2.</b></p> <p><b>Capacity development of agricultural business centres.</b></p> <p>i. For capacity development activities targeting ABCs, FAO and PMU should increase the focus on business and marketing to mentor the ABCs to become independent. There is a need for a change of mind-set;</p>	<p><b>Partially Accepted</b></p> <p>ABC module was piloted by FAO, however many players got involved without coordinating with FAO, they have built many ABCs with no clear exit strategy.</p>	<p>FAO future work with 52 selected ABC will built on the assessment of governance capacity and equipment to inform the design of new support.</p>	<p>The Representation and IFAD successor project team (AVDP)</p>	<p>31/12/2021</p>	<p>Yes</p>

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<p>ABCs should start thinking like businesses.</p> <p>ii. The more enterprising the leadership is, the more successful the ABC and FBO will be. At the same time there is a need to address the governance and representation challenges within the ABCs. FAO and PMU should place more emphasis on governance in capacity development activities benefiting ABCs. Among the solutions that could be adopted is the transformation of the ABCs into shareholding companies (like the financial services Conclusions and recommendations 45 association (FSA)) where people could buy shares up to a certain ceiling (with no one taking majority shareholding).</p>					

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<p>iii. For the ABCs to become sustainable, there is a need for further support required to strengthen the governance structure, marketing and business approach using farmer business schools (FBS). FAO should continue to leverage resources from development partners to continue this support. There is a need to carry out a resource mapping of equipment already distributed, before additional equipment is provided to the ABCs. FAO should simplify the training modules and demonstration packages that are delivered in order to motivate all participants, especially those with low literacy levels, to actively participate in capacity building trainings.</p> <p>iv. FAO and PMU need to work with other partners such as Japan International</p>					

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Corporation Agency JICA, the World Bank (WB), the European Union (EU) (who have developed smallholder commercialisation projects) and the private sector, to further strengthen ABCs to provide more services to their members – services that include farm inputs, technologies and financing.					
<p><b>Recommendation 3.</b></p> <p><b>Access to financial services.</b></p> <p>i. FAO and PMU should develop better linkages among the different components necessary to support the ABCs and FBOs – in particular, among the ABCs and the FSAs and community banks. In the meantime, the VSLAs should be promoted since the farmers already use it.</p> <p>ii. There is a need to assist microfinance institutions and</p>	<p><b>Partially Accepted</b></p> <p>This is partially accepted because it hinges on IFAD's successor project (AVDP).</p>	The Representation will discuss with IFAD/AVDP to carry these forward in their next planning.	The Representation with IFAD/AVDP	31/12/2021	Yes

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community banks to develop and design financial products and packages that are better suited to rural farmers and ABCs, and in particular to address labour constraints and access to technologies.					
<p><b>Recommendation 4.</b></p> <p><b>Capacity development of MAF and other partners.</b></p> <p>i. As an exit strategy, FAO should support the Government to develop private extension services that can complement MAF efforts, given staff turnover and capacity challenges.</p> <p>ii. Capacity building of MAF at both the central and the decentralised levels takes time and will require on-going support, given the existing capacities. This includes support to PEMSD staff to handle data monitoring and analysis of</p>	<b>Accepted</b>	Assess the extension capacity of MAF, take stock of FFS interventions and partners, share the results with MAF and advocate to design the standardized strategy.	The Representation	31/12/2021	Yes

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<p>activities implemented. It would also require capacity development activities targeting MAF and DAOs to enable them to provide extension support to ABC/FBOs".</p> <p>iii. FAO could explore the possibility of training and certifying other partners – partners who adopt elements of a franchising approach in order to ensure further standardization of the methodologies and tools. This would ensure uniformity as well as continuity in the implementation of the FFS approach.</p>					
<p><b>Recommendation 5. Coordination across components.</b></p> <p>In the future design of the value chain interventions, where there are inter-linkages, FAO should ensure better coordination</p>	<b>Accepted</b>	FAO will work closely with the newly established coordination unit in MAF to map partners and include them in periodic coordination.	The Representation	30/06/2021	Yes



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across components so that identified challenges can be quickly addressed to enable more coherence and effectiveness in the implementation of the FFS, FBOs, and ABCs.					
<p><b>Recommendation 6.</b></p> <p><b>M&amp;E, Knowledge management and learning systems.</b></p> <p>FAO and MAF need to put in place a knowledge management and learning system for tracking the lessons learnt from implementation of the various projects. ii. FAO should invest in a robust M&amp;E system and rely on the country office servers to store information collected, in order to ensure that data is available for various interventions.</p>	<b>Accepted</b>	Employ M&E officer, create share point for documentation of all projects.	The Representation	31/03/2021	Yes