



Concept Note on the National Workshop

09:00-14:00 hours, Bintumani Hotel, Freetown

Background

1. The Independent Office of Evaluation (IOE) of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) conducted a Country Strategy and Programme Evaluation (CSPE) in Sierra Leone in 2019. In line with IOE's Evaluation Policy, a national workshop is held at the end of every CSPE. In this regard, the Ministry of Finance in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry will be co-hosting the Sierra Leone Workshop with IFAD's Independent Office of Evaluation.

Objectives

2. The objectives of the national workshop are to: (i) discuss the main issues emerging from the Sierra Leone CSPE; (ii) provide inputs for the preparation of the evaluation's Agreement at Completion Point (ACP); and (iii) reflect on the opportunities and challenges to be addressed in the upcoming country strategy, taking into account the evolving country context as well as IFAD's priorities in Sierra Leone.
3. The ACP is a short document summarizing the main CSPE findings and recommendations, which the Government of Sierra Leone (represented by the Ministry of Finance) and IFAD (represented by the Associate Vice-President of the Programme Management Department) agree to adopt and implement within a specific timeframe. The role of IOE is to facilitate the preparation and finalization of the ACP which will be included in the Sierra Leone CSPE final report.
4. The workshop will provide a platform for discussing key issues that will inform the future of the IFAD programme in Sierra Leone with representatives from the Government, IFAD Management and staff, non-governmental and civil society organizations, coordinators of IFAD-funded projects and programmes, representatives from academia and research institutions, the private sector and foundations, donors and selected resource persons.

National Workshop

5. **Place and timing.** The Workshop will take place in Freetown on Wednesday 27 November 2019, from 09:00 to 14:00 hours. The venue will be the Bintumani Hotel. The workshop agenda is included as an annex below.
6. **Workshop preparation.** Invitations to participants will be sent by the Ministry of Finance jointly with IOE and in close collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. The Sierra Leone CSPE final report will be the main background documentation for the workshop. In addition, IOE will prepare a PowerPoint

presentation on three selected themes emerging from the CSPE, to guide the discussions at the event.

7. **Participants.** Workshop participants include Government representatives, development partners, civil society organisations, private sector partners, project staff as well as IFAD senior management and staff. The provisional list of institutions and persons to be invited to the workshop is attached.
8. **Workshop process.** The workshop's agenda will provide opportunities for a wide range of stakeholders to contribute their views and perspectives throughout the event. The session will be co-chaired by the Financial Secretary and the Chief Agricultural Officer, MAF. The inaugural session will be opened with introductory remarks by the Honorable Minister of Agriculture and Forestry to be followed by a statement by the Deputy Director of the Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD. This will be followed by statements by the Honorable Minister for Planning and Economic Development, the Honorable Chairman of Parliamentary Committee on Agriculture and Forestry and by the Honorable Presidential Advisor on Trade and Investment and Ambassador-at-large. The inaugural session will be closed with a statement by the Director, West and Central Africa, Programme Management Department of IFAD.
9. Thereafter the Workshop will be officially launched by the Minister of Finance. Mr Hansdeep Khaira, Evaluation Officer, will present the key findings, conclusions and recommendations from the CSPE. The session will conclude with a plenary session on questions and answers on the presentations.
10. Following this, the participants will be divided into three working groups. Each group will discuss one of the three workshop themes. Each group will have a facilitator and a rapporteur to present findings back to the plenary. Thereafter, the plenary will re-convene to hear the feedback from each of the three working groups. This will be followed by an open plenary discussion, to be facilitated by the workshop chairperson.
11. Following the plenary, the IFAD Sierra Leone Country Program Manager will share reflections on the future directions for the Sierra Leone country strategy, especially on strategic priorities and the participatory preparation process. The workshop's conclusions and way forward will be set forth in closing statements by the Deputy Director, IOE, and the Deputy Minister for Agriculture and Forestry covering the key points arising from the plenary discussion.
12. **Key themes for discussion at the workshop.** As part of the workshop, participants will discuss three key themes emerging from the CSPE.
 - A. **Strengthening linkages in agricultural value chains for pro-poor development.** The CSPE concluded that progress in increasing productivity in rice and cocoa has been achieved but a sharper focus on strengthening horizontal and vertical linkages in value chains for these commodities is required to ensure sustainable outcomes especially for the rural poor. One of the ways forward is to improve the governance in value chains. Questions for discussion: 1) How can better relationships and trust among the stakeholders in value chains, including buyers, sellers, service providers and regulatory institutions be developed? 2) What incentives could be provided to the private sector to motivate it to capture business opportunities and deepen investment in IFAD-supported projects? 3) How can the Government and development partners such as IFAD create an enabling environment for the public-private partnerships to thrive?

Facilitator: Ms Jeneba Alharazim, MAF; Rapporteur: Mr Amara Sankoh, MAF
 - B. **Expanding sustainable pro-poor finance for rural development.** The CSPE recommended that IFAD continue to engage in rural finance in Sierra

Leone but pay greater attention to the underserved farming community. However there is a trade-off between attaining institutional sustainability (of rural financial institutions - RFIs), especially in the initial years, and increasing outreach to all potential customers. Questions for discussion: 1) What approaches can IFAD-supported projects take to ensure that RFIs meet their goal of profitability and sustainability and be inclusive to all, including agricultural producers? 2) What role can the government play from policy and regulatory perspectives to foster inclusive and sustainable rural finance in Sierra Leone? 3) What role can IFAD play in making umbrella organizations such as the Apex Bank competent, profitable and professionally managed, capable of serving the RFI network well?

Facilitator: Mr. Alhaji umaru Jalloh, Director, Other Financial Institutions Supervision Department, Bank of Sierra Leone; Rapporteur: Mr Komba Momoh, Ministry of Finance

- C. **Enhancing strategic engagement through policy dialogue, partnerships and knowledge management.** The CSPE concludes that IFAD's policy engagement has been insufficient and lacking coherent approach that builds on the lending and grants portfolios as a whole. Knowledge Management has received insufficient attention and M&E has not been robust enough to drive learning from implementation. The CSPE therefore recommends that IFAD should commit sufficient efforts and resources for non-lending activities. Questions for discussion: 1) What evidence and information does the Government of Sierra Leone need in order to take more informed decisions and formulate better policies for agriculture and rural development? 2) How can IFAD use its knowledge sharing platforms to provide evidence from implementation of its projects to the Government? 3) Besides evidence from its projects, what partnerships should be developed by IFAD that can be used by it to inform the policy discourse on agriculture and rural development?

Facilitator: Mr Peter Sam-Kpakra, Development Secretary, Ministry of Planning and Economic Development; Rapporteur: Mr Saffa Konneh, Senior Assistant Secretary, Ministry of Planning and Economic Development

13. **Communication and media coverage.** IOE will prepare an Evaluation Profile and an Insight containing information on key issues emerging from the CSPE. A profile is a two-page brochure summarizing the main findings and recommendations from the CSPE. The insight will present key lessons from IFAD-supported rural finance projects in Sierra Leone that merit a wider debate among policy makers and development practitioners.
14. The WCA regional division of IFAD, the Government of Sierra Leone and IOE's Evaluation Communication (ECU) Unit will collaborate to determine and conduct specific communication activities to better disseminate information on the round-table workshop and key themes raised by the CSPE. The main communication tools envisaged will include: (i) a media advisory sheet; (ii) a press release; (iii) workshop and press kits; and (iv) fact sheets and infographics. The possibility of conducting media interviews with IOE staff and/or local representatives will be explored. Media coverage will be monitored and media clippings gathered. In addition, workshop information will be posted on IFAD's logon message as well as on the IOE website and on social media (Twitter and Facebook). Selected IFAD/IOE publications will be displayed at the workshop as well.

DRAFT AGENDA

SIERRA LEONE COUNTRY STRATEGY AND PROGRAMME EVALUATION (CSPE)

NATIONAL WORKSHOP

Date: 27 November 2019

Venue: Bintumani Hotel

Objectives: Discuss the main issues emerging from the Sierra Leone CSPE; provide inputs for the preparation of the evaluation's Agreement at Completion Point (ACP); and reflect on the opportunities and challenges to be addressed in the upcoming country strategy.

8.00 – 9.00	<i>Welcome coffee and Registration of participants</i>
9.00 - 9.10	Welcome remarks by the Co-Chair Persons (Financial Secretary & Chief Agricultural Officer)
9.10 – 9.25	Opening statement by the Honorable Minister of Agriculture and Forestry
9.25 – 9.35	Introductory remarks by Fabrizio Felloni, Deputy Director Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD
9.35 – 9.45	Statement by the Honorable Minister for Planning and Economic Development
9.45 – 9.55	Statement by the Honorable Chairman of Parliamentary Committee on Agriculture and Forestry
9.55 – 10.05	Statement by the Honorable Presidential Advisor on Trade and Investment and Ambassador-at-large
10.05 – 10.15	Statement by Lisandro Martin, Director, West and Central Africa Division, Programme Management Department IFAD
10.15 - 10.30	Official Workshop Launching Remarks by the Honorable Minister of Finance
10.30 – 10.40	Group photo
10.40 – 11.00	<i>Coffee Break with light snacks / Press briefing</i>
11.00 – 11.20	Presentation by Hansdeep Khaira, Lead Evaluation Officer, on the CSPE main findings, conclusions and recommendations
11.20 – 11.45	Plenary discussion (question and answer session)
11.45 – 12:45	Thematic working groups
12:45 – 13.30	Feedback into plenary
13.30 – 13.40	Reflections by Jakob Tuborgh, IFAD Country Program Manager for Sierra Leone, on the future directions for the Sierra Leone country strategy
13.40 – 13.50	Closing statement by Fabrizio Felloni, Deputy Director Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD
13.50 – 14.00	Closing statement by the Honorable Deputy Minister for Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security or designate
14:00 – 15.00	<i>Lunch</i>

Master of Ceremony: Dr Mohamed Ajuba Sheriff, Deputy Director, PEMSD, MAF.