ACF Alliance of Champions for Food Systems Transformation

PROGRESS SNAPSHOT:
SIERRA LEONE

Section 1: National Food System Snapshot

Category	Sierra Leone
Top three commodities produced (2022)	Fresh cassava: 1.9MT Rice: 1.4MT Oil palm fruit: 0.4MT
GDP and agriculture as % (2023)	$3.8 billion (of which agriculture is 64%)
Global Food Security Index (2022)	110th (of 113)
Prevalence of undernourishment (2021-2023)	28%
Land use for agriculture as % (2021)	55%
Total emissions (2023)	6.94MT
Emissions from agriculture (2023)	3.1MT
Total population and % employed in agriculture (2022)	8.61 million (43% employed in agriculture)



Green fields surrounding Freetown, Sierra Leone

Photo by Random Institute

Section 2: Membership Criteria Progress

National Pathways	Sierra Leone launched its flagship Feed Salone programme in 2023 and subsequently refined the programme to include the ACF's 10 Priority Action Areas.
NDCs & NBSAPs	Sierra Leone's NDC is currently being reviewed and assessed under updated in line with the country's Food Systems Strategy and Investment Plan. The NBSAP is also being reviewed by the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change.
Reporting	The ACF Secretariat is currently working with countries to develop a framework for demonstrating progress, to be in place by COP30.

Section 3: Priority Action Areas Highlights

10 Priority Action Areas	Flagship initiatives/ activities
1. Increase the affordability and availability of nutritious, diversified and sustainably produced foods	Provided nutritious meals to over 500,000 students during the 2023-2024 academic year, integrating local, nutritious ingredients like orange-fleshed sweet potatoes and yellow-fleshed cassava, which are high in Vitamin A, into school meals. This not only enhanced children's nutrition but also supported local agriculture by purchasing vegetables from smallholder farmers, primarily women.
2. Improve livelihoods	Enhanced access to affordable, nutrient-rich foods while creating hundreds of jobs through private sector collaboration. This included the opening of Sierra Leone's first large-scale hatchery to supply affordable, high-quality chicks for the poultry industry, boosting local employment; and a cashew processing facility that employs hundreds of women and youth, adding value to local agriculture.
3. Build and enhance the resilience of food systems	Rehabilitated 1,950 hectares of inland valley swamps for sustainable rice farming, improving irrigation and water management, reducing climate and water-related risks, boosting yields and protecting communities from food shortages. Delivered nationwide soil mapping and created a soil database and information system. Introduced drought-resistant crop varieties, to aid decision-making and strengthen sustainable farming amid changing environmental conditions.



Harvesting cassava, Sierra Leone

Photo by Annie Spratt

Section 4: Additional Highlights

1. Sierra Leone has secured over $1bn in funding for Feed Salone since its launch. Most recently, the African Development Bank committed $100mn to support the establishment of new agro-processing zones for rice production, including roads, energy and processing facilities to reduce post-harvest losses.

2. In 2024, the Feed Salone Program distributed inputs and machinery to over 90,000 farmers. It is also constructing crucial rural roads and bridges, and has launched more than $28mn of new agricultural financing options, with a focus on women and youth.

3. Nutrition initiatives have enhanced school feeding programs and introduced new vegetable varieties into rural communities; Sierra Leone also addressed food safety with the upcoming establishment of an Aflasafe Laboratory and the first national Food Consumption and Micronutrient Survey.

Section 5: Collaborations

1. The ACF secured funding from AGRA for technical assistance from AXUM to develop a pipeline of investible opportunities, building upon opportunities identified within the Feed Salone programme.

2. Collaborations with the World Bank, the Korea-Africa Food and Agriculture Cooperation Initiative and the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture have been instrumental in advancing the introduction of climate-resilient crop varieties and in enhancing access to high-quality seeds like cassava, maize, and soybean, which boost productivity.

Section 6: Priorities for Further Work

1. Scale up irrigation systems and rehabilitate additional **Inland Valley Swamps** areas to enable continuous, climate-resilient rice production across key agricultural zones.

2. Increase **livestock** production, with a special focus on **the poultry sector**, to enhance food security and diversify agricultural outputs.

3. Leverage technology to implement the **National Farmers' Registry** and deploy other digital platforms to improve data accuracy, optimize resource allocation, and support informed policymaking.

Section 7: Priority Areas for Investment

1. Development of special Rice Agro-Industrial and Agro-Processing Zones to boost rice production, reduce imports and create jobs for youth. This includes transport networks, storage and processing facilities, irrigation infrastructure, access to energy and market centers to reduce post-harvest losses.

2. Investment in research for high-quality, climate-resilient seeds and agricultural inputs to improve yields, support sustainable farming, and reduce dependency on imports.

3. Create the Agriculture Lending Fund and provide additional low-interest loans to agri-businesses.