

**Sierra Leone Multi-Donor Trust Fund**

**END OF project report**

**REPORTING PERIOD: 1 january – 31 December 2011**

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| Programme Title & Number |  | Country, Locality(s), Thematic Area(s)[[1]](#footnote-1) |
| Programme Title: : Rural Community Empowerment  Programme Number: UNJV Programme 18   * MDTF Office Atlas Number: | * Sierra Leone, country wide * Joint Vision Priority Area 2: Integrating Rural Areas into the National Economy |

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| Participating Organization(s) |  | Implementing Partners |
| FAO (co-lead) | * Ministry of Agriculture Forestry and Food Security (MAFFS) Smallholder Commercialization Programme * Ministry of Internal Affairs * Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children’s Affairs * Local Councils * Civil Society Organizations * Traditional and Religious Leaders * Council of Women Councilors * Sierra Leone Female Parliamentarians (SLFPAC) * NGOs |

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| Programme/Project Cost (US$) | |  | Programme Duration (months) | |
| MDTF Fund Contribution:  MDTF Fund Contribution:  FAO $554,400 |  |  | Overall Duration |  |
| Agency Contribution  *N/A* |  |  | Start Date[[2]](#footnote-2) :24 June 2010 |  |
|  |  |  | End Date or Revised End Date :31st December 2011 |  |
| Other Contribution (donor)  *N/A* |  |  | Operational Closure Date[[3]](#footnote-3) |  |
| TOTAL: $ 1,568,160.00 |  |  | Expected Financial Closure Date |  |

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| Programme Assessments/Mid-Term Evaluation |  | Submitted By |
| Assessment Completed - if applicable *please attach*  Yes No Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Mid-Evaluation Report *– if applicable please attach*  Yes No Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | * Name: Mwesigwa David * Title:Prog.Implementaion Support Officer * Participating Organization (co-Lead):FAO * Email address:David.Mwesigwa@fao.org. |

# Purpose

UN Joint Vision programme 18 was designed to ensure participation of rural men and women in community-based development programmes that affect their livelihoods, such as access to adult education, market opportunities, communication networks and financial services through community-level and district-level support centres and farmer schools. The programme will also assist communities to upgrade local markets and assist in the negotiations for better and more secure access to traditional land in rural and town areas. The programme will ensure that gender equity and women’s empowerment issues are mainstreamed in decision-making and service delivery. UNDP will focus on the strategy and financing of the services while the other UN agencies will focus on the delivery of the service.

Rural Empowerment-FAO

This component was to strengthen local leadership and to encourage them to take a more active role in community-based actions – the essence of empowerment. The planned leadership forums were linked to community actions in collaborations with UNDP, UNAIDS, UNHCR, UNFPA, UN WOMEN and UNIDO. These actions were thus linked to the national activities of the SCP. Specifically, during the period of the project, local leaders received support to undertake local community actions motivated through aspects of the leadership programme and related government actions. A measurable change in knowledge, attitude and practices was visible even during this short period of the DAO but also expressed through their related government and community supported activities with the following outcomes and objectives;

* Outcome 1: Paramount chief’s and local council leaders engaged in policy debates in a structured manner.
* Outcome 2: Implementation of community identified actions programme for rural development.
* Outcome 3: Improved sense of self-determination, dignity and positive future

Ultimately this portion of Program 18 is an example of the social development of a nation through the empowerment and training of its future and current rural leadership

1. **Resources**

All funding allocated to support this project was from the Delivering as One fund through the SL-MDTF totaling 554,000 USD. A major challenge was that the project did not have access to financial resources until middle of September because in delays in the transfer of funds from headquarters. Administration and logistics had to occur over a three week period. Given the short turn around, administrative support should have been reinforced with key administrative staff assigned for the allotted time period. Activities were within the stipulated budget accordingly.

1. ***Human Resources:***

There was one primary staff member who handled all aspects of implementation: the Programme 18 Forum Coordinator. Under the overall supervision of the FAO Representative and in close collaboration with the Programme 18 partner heads of agencies, the Programme 18 Coordinatorplanned, prepared and oversaw the implementation of Stage I and Stage III of the national forums including assisting with all logistics, contacting participants, liaising with all event contractors, maintained a daily work plan and informed Programme 18 heads of agencies of progress on weekly basis.The program 18 Coordinator assisted all agencies in communications and visibility for Stage II activities for field actions including liaise with newspaper, radio and SLBC TV.The Coordinatorarranged for report preparation and printing on Stage I and III Forums and Stage II community activities including photographic and other materials and completed the annual report of activities undertaken, the report was further rearranged by the FAO representation to reflect the pending activities for the project.

# Implementation and Monitoring Arrangements

The objective of the forums was to encourage rural development and integration through the empowerment of Sierra Leones rural local leaders and local champions. Empowerment of these rural local leaders and champions during the leadership forums would occur through exposure to global issues which can then be applied to their ongoing community based actions. There was an acknowledgement by the national government and UN agencies during project inception that there is limited access to global information, knowledge about global issues and more importantly success stories of local community-led action programmes elsewhere. Rural local leaders and champions were exposed to global best practices which they were then encouraged to integrate into their own innovative process within their respective communities. There was nomination of rural local leaders and local champions from four groups: (i) local traditional leaders such as progressive paramount chiefs and district councilors; (ii) women leaders connected to UNIFEM and UNFPA projects; (iii/iv) Youth: young men and women through the Agricultural Business Centers (SCP project). The structure of the forums also took into consideration the UN Joint Vision by having presentations from the various UN agencies in the program in the morning session and facilitation in the afternoon. UNDP, UNAIDS, UNHCR UNFPA, UN Women and UNIDO made presentations about global success stories on a variety of global issues that affect rural communities. It was ensured that the UN agencies would provide participants with tangible information about the issues which they could go back and integrate into their community led actions. For example UNIDO spoke on solar energy and informed the participants of opportunities on how they too could access this. In addition, UNIDO informed the young men and women about a new Solar Energy College Institute which intends to train installation and operations specialists to be based in rural areas.

Monitoring and Evaluation: The FAO Country office in conjunction with the project coordinator took overall responsibility for the monitoring and evaluation of the project. To begin with an ‘inception report’ outlining key actions, partners, timelines, disbursement of funds, site visits.

Throughout the project the coordinator (as per the TOR) shared monthly reports on the status of activities on going and work plan as per project document.

Monthly field supervision visits were carried out by the project coordinator and other representatives from FAO programme implementation unit, although sometimes more frequent particularly to those groups experiencing some challenges with implementation. Several supervision visits were conducted by staff of FAO representation. It is important to note that while conducting the supervision visits both the coordinator of the project and partners would also spend time advocating and engaging at district level with traditional authorities to facilitate smooth progress of implementation. Before the closure of the project a final evaluation of activities were carried out by the FAO representation to ensure the completion of all activities.

# Results/ Key achievements

“Leadership especially for those dwelling in rural areas do not have the required training and sensitization that will capacitate them to better understand their roles and responsibilities in their different communities and how they should work with these communities to build social cohesion which is very necessary for rural and national development especially in the agricultural sector.”

Abdul Kamara, Youth Leader Port Loko District Nov 2010

In a changing world, leadership is exceptionally important to keep rural communities thriving. However, with changes come opportunities for growth as well as all other areas of concern. Participants from the UN Joint Vision 2010 Leadership Forums agreed that the leadership forum had indeed enhanced their knowledge of global issues and best practices to address some of these issues. Pre and post forum assessment showed that participants were now more aware of the global issues highlighted by the various UN presenters that could impact leadership and communities. However, they emphasized that to maintain the health, sustainability, vibrancy and well-being of their communities there is a need to develop current and emerging leaders. The following also resulted from the forums;

* + Implementation of leadership forums separately for traditional leaders and district council leaders, women leaders, young men and young women in line with Outcome 1.
  + Community based activities through local action planning and implementation by each forum participant but related to their linkages to the SCP and other community projects, in line with Output 2.
  + An improved sense of self determination was achieved by participants in addition to a strong sense of pride for Sierra Leone and positive outlook for the future despite challenges, falling in line with Outcome 3. This Output was measured through a pre and post KAP test.

Youth groups were supported to undertake farming activities across the country Moyamba was used as one activity site,Bombali another, proceeds from these activities have been banked for the next planting season. Port Loko,Kenema and Bo were also activity sites for community sensitization on community involvement in farming. This will have a multiplier effect on the entire country.

The construction of twenty water wells were also supported by the project for Kenema district by a joint effort by UNCHR.CARITAS Kenema has been on the construction, although there has been some delays in the finalization of the construction much have been realized .

In addition to the results, the following recommendations were made;

*The Role of Women*

1. Participants agreed that women’s role in agriculture is well accepted nationally; the aftermath of the war and increasing out-migration from rural communities of youth has led to an increase in feminization in agriculture sector. However, majority of women do not have ownership over land and other means of production. Therefore, women are not recognized as autonomous farmers and their participation is limited to the production and not on ownership and decision. This lack of access undermines women’s entrepreneurship competence and leadership position.
2. National policy provisions are subtle in the inclusion of women in the production and market processes. However, access to necessary means of production such as land, credit, information, technology are either very limited or isolated even when efforts are made. There is therefore a dire need for reorientation of the understanding of inclusive agricultural development where women's leadership is recognized and ensured.

*Rural Human Resources*

1. A key issue raised by participants is the need to expose community leaders to empowerment initiatives. They urge UN agencies to invest in human infrastructure in the rural communities. People are a community’s most essential resource, without which development cannot happen. Community and organization leaders must be well prepared with broad-based knowledge and leadership skills and understanding to participate in local, provincial, national and international discussions. Rural communities need resources to develop the capacity of their people to meet current economic challenges, and capitalize on new opportunities.

*Emphasis on Youth Development*

1. It was quite evident that the young people (those who met the selection criteria) were more engaged and better suited to benefit and articulate the goals and objectives of the Joint Vision Training Forum. This observation suggests that there is a need for more engagement in leadership and empowerment opportunities for young people in Sierra Leone. Furthermore, there ought to be an adequate and effective oversight mechanism that would ensure that when young people are provided opportunities for empowerment that the program beneficiary is consistent with the target population.

*A Monitoring Culture*

1. A peer mentoring system and the introduction of a culture of monitoring, evaluation, self-assessment and accountability is needed. During the visioning exercise, much was said about monitoring of NGOs and other organizations but monitoring did not feature in the community project proposals that were developed

*Team Building and Promotion of National Identity*

1. There was overwhelming evidence from the evaluation participants had a strong sense of pride for Sierra Leone. On the pre-evaluation questionnaire 34 of 35 respondents attest that they are proud to be Sierra Leoneans . And in a related question “I would rather live abroad than in Sierra Leone”, 21 of the 35 respondents on the pre-evaluation questionnaire either disagreed or strongly disagreed, while on the post-evaluation 26 of 35 disagreed or strongly disagreed , showing a slight but important evidence of growth in participants appreciation for their nationality.

Notwithstanding the positive outputs, there was a concern during the visioning activity that suggests that there is need for more team building, national unity, consensus and capacity building effort to assist the young people in actualizing their vision for Sierra Leone. The need for this type of engagement was made obvious when some group members quarreled over the site (in what particular region of Sierra Leone) to be selected for their group project. It was evident that some group members were concerned about regionalizing their intervention strategies rather than the preferred interest for nation building and development of national identity. Moreover, members could have also reached a more viable solution if they had employed a better approach to decision-making, grounded in objectivity, inclusiveness and consensus building. On this background, some groups were selected randomly countrywide to form groups and engage in farming activities and community sensitization as way of promoting team work and national interest for socio-economic development.The were financed by the project to procure agricultural inputs for farming, food and transportation refunds for communication sensitization across the country.

# Future Work Plan

It emerged from the visioning exercise that there is currently very little understanding of the role of rural enterprise development in community development. Rural leaders and the local government authorities need to understand the economic benefits that could be derived by providing an enabling rather than an exploitative environment for the development and growth of rural enterprises in their communities. It is recommended that a rural leadership and enterprise forum be conducted as follow-on to the initial forums to increase the understanding of enterprise development as a model for job creation, business development and community revitalization in rural Sierra Leone. This initiative will encourage citizenry participation in shaping their futures through civic engagement and the practical application of sustainable rural development strategies. It will also explore the potential for economic and sustainable growth through agriculture. RULED will examine current status and trends in agriculture and rural life, explore constraints and opportunities, and develop specific action and recommendations. This would lead to a more sustainable, diverse, and economically viable future for Sierra Leone’s agricultural sector and rural communities.

Moreover, capacity building in the following is highly needed:

1. Need assessment of food insecurity
2. Training district councils data collection on local food insecurity
3. Training district councils on early warning systems on food security analysis targeting local chiefs and other relevant authorities .

# Abbreviations and Acronyms

ABCs Agro Business Centres

ACP UNDP’s Advisory Committee on Procurement

ARD Association for Rural Development for Sierra Leone

BCAASL Business Coalition Against AIDS in Sierra Leone

CSO Civil Society organisations

CWC Council of Women Councilors

DSA Daily Subsistence Allowance

FAO Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

GBV Gender-Based Violence

KAP Knowledge, Attitude and Practices (KAP)

LIWITH Living with Hope

MACSA Morturmonyuma HIV & AIDS Care and Support Association

MCSL Methodist Church Sierra Leone

MDTF Multi-Donor Trust Fund

MEST Ministry of Education, Science and Technology

MMR: Maternal Mortality Reduction

MSWGCA Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children’s Affairs

MWHI Ministry of Works, Housing and Infrastructure

NAS National AIDS Secretariat

NETHIPS Network of HIV Positives in Sierra Leone

NGO Non-Governmental Organization

PAGSOH Partnership Action for Grassroots Sensitization on HIV

PISU Project Implementation Support Unit

PLHIV People living with HIV

PRSP Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper

PSO Procurement Support Office

SCP Small Holder Commercialization Program

SL-MDTF Sierra Leone Multi-Donor Trust Fund

SLFPAC Sierra Female Parliamentary Caucus

SPVC Solar Panel Voltaic Cells

TA Technical Assistance

1. Priority Area for the Peacebuilding Fund; Sector for the UNDG ITF. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The start date is the date of the first transfer of the funds from the MDTF Office as Administrative Agent. Transfer date is available on the [MDTF Office GATEWAY](http://mdtf.undp.org/) (http://mdtf.undp.org). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. All activities for which a Participating Organization is responsible under an approved MDTF programme have been completed. Agencies to advise the MDTF Office. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)