

Food Security Situation in Sierra Leone

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THE ROAD TRAVELLED

- Immediately after the civil conflict, Sierra Leone implemented a number of relief and rehabilitation programmes and she is now in her post-conflict development era.
- Central to this is the recognition that long term sustained economic growth and significant poverty reduction hinges on promoting the agriculture sector.

ROAD TRAVELLED CONT.

The broad policy objective of the agriculture sector immediately after the war(2002-2007) was based on food security for all.

The food security policy was driven home by H.E. The President Ahmad Tejan-Kabbah in 2002 when he made the following pledge:

“I pledge to work even harder, and with greater resolve to do everything in my power to ensure that within the next five years no Sierra Leonean should go to bed hungry.”

ROAD TRAVELLED

After the declaration of the pledge, the overall policy objective pursued was to reduce hunger and malnutrition and accelerate the attainment of the MDG's especially MDG1: Eradication of Extreme Poverty and Hunger by 2015.

The specific objectives were to:

- Increase agricultural production and food availability
- Raise incomes and employment and thereby reduce poverty
- Provide investment opportunities to the private sector
- Ensure balanced regional agricultural growth.

ROAD TRAVELLED CONT.

- Short, Medium and Long term strategies were put in place to achieve the policy objectives.
- In the short term, the focus was on providing immediate support for farmers in the form of inputs, expanding production and livestock restocking.
- Medium term goals included developing rural infrastructure, human and institutional capacity and providing food-based safety nets

ROAD TRAVELLED CONT.

The Long-Term Strategy is to Promote private sector development to take over the value chain (input supply, production, processing and marketing), .while providing food based safety nets for the vulnerable

With the implementation of the policies and strategies, Sierra Leone achieved major successes in combating extreme poverty and hunger and she is on course to achieving the MDG1b eradicating extreme hunger by 2015.

Road Travelled Cont.

- Since 2002 considerable progress has been made towards increased production and food security; our rice self-sufficiency rose from 57.45% in 2003, to 69% in 2005 and 71% in 2007.
- However, that still leaves 29% to be imported which is worrying in the context of price instability.

Road travelled Cont.

- The promotion of domestic rice production is therefore a key element in the new government's (2007-2012) strategy for improving food security, economic growth and increased rural incomes.

Road Travelled Cont.

- To achieve this, H.E. Dr. Ernest Bai Koroma has made agriculture the number one priority in the Agenda For Change, the nation's second generation PRSP.

It states that poverty is the main cause for food insecurity, and particularly affects people's ability to access food and has adverse implications for other aspects of food security.

Food Security situation: current policies and programmes

- A state of near food security has been achieved due to the policies and programmes government has implemented during the period under review.
- The vision of the new Government(2007-2012) for the agriculture sector in general and food security in particular is “ to make agriculture the engine for socio-economic growth and development through commercial agriculture and private sector promotion”

Food security Situation Cont.

- The Policy development objectives to achieve this vision and which are the guiding principles of the Ministry are:
- Enhance increased agricultural productivity (intensification)
- Promote diversified commercial agriculture through private sector promotion

Food Security Situation Cont.

- Improve agricultural research and extension delivery services using technology development, dissemination, adoption and feedback system.
- Promote efficient and effective resource management system
- Mainstream cross-cutting themes: gender and youth promotion in agriculture, Farmer health (including HIV/AIDS, Malaria, and IVS related diseases) and sustainable development and the environment

Food Security Situation cont.

To achieve these development objectives and to address the food security challenge, the following programmes and plans have been put in place.

- THE AGENDA FOR CHANGE (PRSPII): As stated, The Agenda For Change identifies food security as one of its fundamental pillars.

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THE CAADP PROCESS: The President Dr. Ernest Bai Koroma, has implemented the 2003 Maputo Declaration which requested that at least 10% of the national budget be allocated to the agriculture sector.

- The NATIONAL SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (NSADP). This provides direction for investment in the agriculture sector for twenty years.

Food Security Situation Cont.

To operationalize the NSADP, the Small Holder Commercialization Programme (SCP) has been developed for five years with the aim of promoting smallholder farmers to access inputs, equipment and other services along the value chain for better production and market access. This programme will support 2,750 farmer based organizations (FBOs) and 650 agricultural Business Centres (ABCs).

Food Security Situation Cont.

One rationale for the SCP was the Vulnerability assessment mapping (VAM) 2007. This revealed that 30% of the population are food insecure and 70% of the farming population live below the poverty line of US\$1.0 a day. It also revealed that out of the 3.5 million small farmers, 2.45 million are poor and 1.05 million food insecure.

The SCP, which is spanning from 2010-2014 will purposefully target 2.0 million small farmers.

The activities described have the potential to reduce poverty by 50% and eradicate extreme hunger by 2015 thereby achieving MDG1.

FOOD PRODUCTION TRENDS

2002-2010

- Rice production and national rice self-sufficiency trends from 2002-2010 is shown in table1 and figure 1 below. With this production trend, it is projected that by 2011 Sierra Leone will achieve 100% national rice self-sufficiency.
- Since 2002, there has been a visible increasing trend in food production especially in the major food crops (rice, cassava, sweet potato, maize and groundnut), Livestock and fisheries.

Food Production Trend Cont.

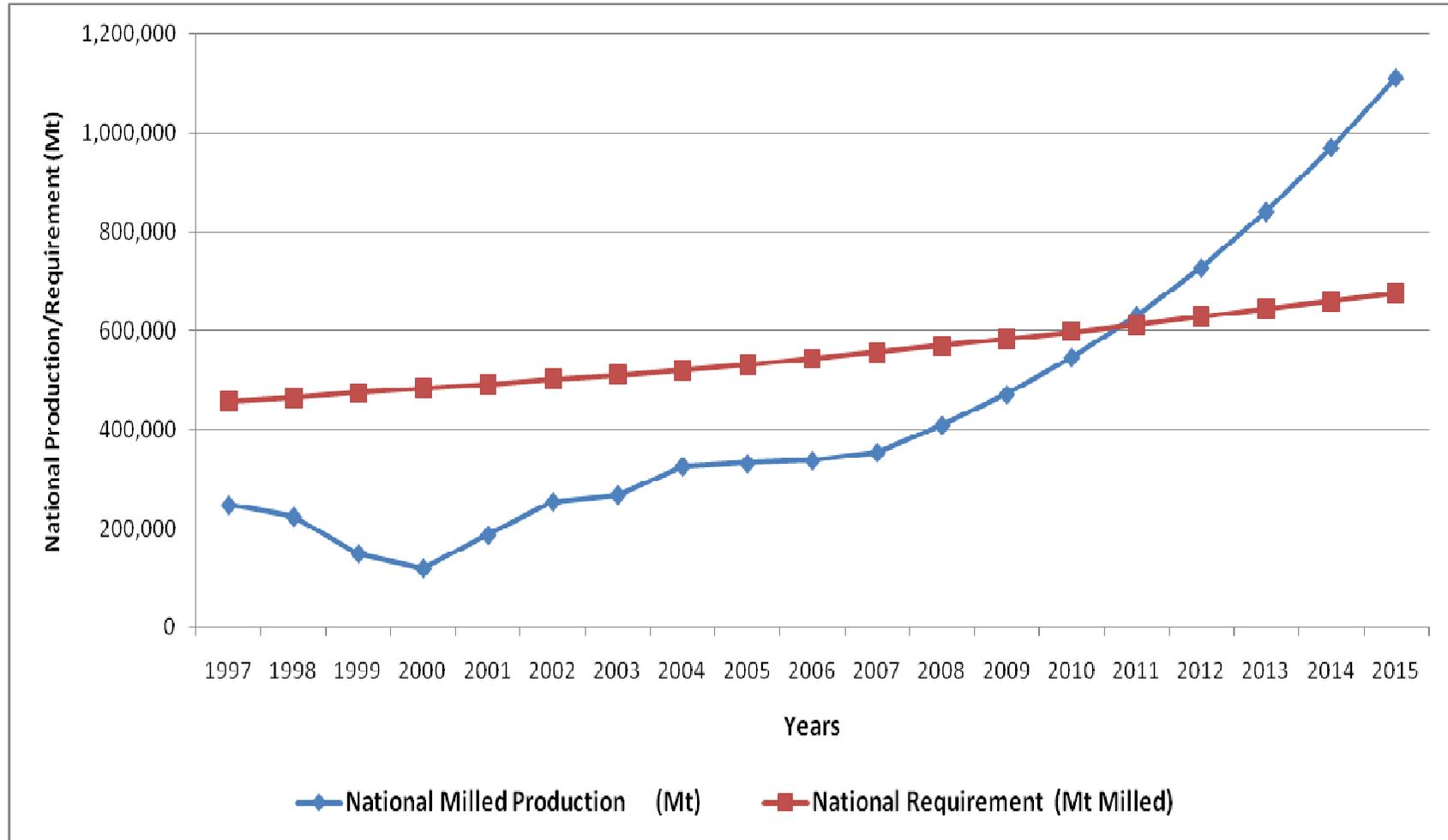
- However, this does not necessarily mean that all persons will have access to sufficient food or be healthy enough to properly utilize consumption (e.g. due to intestinal parasites, poor water access). Therefore, steps are being taken within the smallholder commercialization programme for both productive and social safety nets.
- The challenge of the years to come is to maintain the national food security (availability) and to ensure household food security (access and utilization dimension).

NATIONAL RICE PRODUCTION AND SELF-SUFFICIENCY 2002-2010

Year	Production (Mt)	Milled Equivalent (Mt)	Population	National Requirement (Mt Milled)	Self-Sufficiency (%)
2002	422,065	253,239	4,814,808	500,740	50.57
2003	445,633	267,380	4,906,290	510,254	52.40
2004	542,000	325,200	4,999,509	519,949	62.54
2005	552,000	331,200	5,094,500	529,828	62.51
2006	562,000	337,200	5,216,890	542,557	62.15
2007	588,004	352,802	5,343,200	555,693	63.49
2008	680,097	408,058	5,473,530	569,247	71.68
2009*	784,727	470,836	5,607,930	583,225	80.73
2010*	909,236	545,542	5,746,800	597,667	91.28

*projected figures

National Rice Production and Requirement in Metric Tons



Food Production Trend Cont.

- Production of the other major food crops(cassava, sweet potato, maize and groundnut) shows similar trends. Cassava production is far in excess of the national requirement for fresh tuber consumption and the ministry is now emphasising value addition (e.g. Processing into Garri)
- A large increase in livestock production is mainly due to the massive restocking programme undertaken by the ministry and its development partners after the war

MAJOR CHALLENGES

- Irrespective of the increase in food production and the near achievement of food security during the period under review, there are major challenges to overcome if Sierra Leone is to completely eradicate hunger by 2015. These include:
 - Low yields due to poor production technology and agronomic practices, lack of affordable inputs and marketing systems.
 - Low income of farmers and urban dwellers due to overall weak economy, large family sizes and limited sources of off-farm income generation.

MAJOR CHALLENGES CONT.

- Poor infrastructure (road networks), transportation and access to markets.
- Poor access to clean water, especially in the dry season.
- Limited knowledge of nutrition and cultural biases.
- Weak service delivery especially research and extension delivery system
- Lack of comprehensive agricultural database and an early warning information system for forecasting climatic conditions, pest and diseases.
- Over dependence on rain fed agriculture.

Link Between Food Security and Growth

Families that are food insecure are not able to invest in farming improvements, health or education. It is expected that the Smallholder Commercialisation Programme, while increasing production and providing safety nets to 2m farmers, will also increase the growth rate of the agricultural sector from 4% to 7.7% annually.

- **THANK YOU FOR LISTENING**