



MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE
AND FOOD SECURITY

2025 – 2026

FEED SALONE

YEAR THREE REPORT



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MINISTER'S FOREWORD

As we join the world in commemorating World Food Day on October 16, we also mark the third year of Feed Salone, His Excellency President Julius Maada Bio's flagship programme to transform our food systems, strengthen food security and build resilience.

This year, the conflict in the Middle East unsettled global energy and fertiliser markets, and countries around the world, Sierra Leone included, faced higher prices for fuel and goods.

We had been preparing the ground before the weather turned as Feed Salone was built with such moments in mind. Resilience has been at its heart from the start: policies that favour local production, incentives that bring private investment into inputs, processing and mechanisation, and public investment in irrigation, storage, roads and bridges. The more we grow, process and store at home, the stronger our position when global markets turn.

Now we must finish what we have started. Year Three has therefore been about consolidating delivery while laying out the foundations for the next phase of transformation. A major priority is agricultural finance. Our agri-businesses cannot transform the sector without access to appropriate and affordable finance and mechanisms to manage risk. Hence, we are advancing a new agricultural finance policy and complementary institutional reforms.

The private sector remains central to His Excellency the President's vision. Government's role is to create the conditions for it to grow: putting the right policies in place, investing in public infrastructure, reducing the barriers to investment and building partnerships that allow farmers and businesses to produce, process, trade and invest more.

In the year ahead, we will take this approach further. In November, Sierra Leone hosts the West Africa Integration and Investment Summit. It will connect our agricultural priorities, and the businesses we call our Feed Salone Champions, with regional markets, investors and strategic partners.

The next phase of Feed Salone will be defined by finishing, scaling and institutionalising what works. We will continue to let data and evidence guide our decisions, to mobilise investment and to build stronger partnerships across the sector.

Three years on, what drives me has not changed: a food system that delivers dignity, opportunity and prosperity for every Sierra Leonean.



DR. HENRY MUSA KPAKA
MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security extends its sincere gratitude to all who have contributed to the progress of Feed Salone over the past three years.

First, we thank His Excellency, President Julius Maada Bio, for his visionary leadership that inspires national action and attracts global support beyond our borders.

We are grateful to the Office of the Chief Minister for its strategic oversight and coordination. We also thank our sister Ministries, Departments, and Agencies for enabling an integrated approach, aligning agriculture with trade, finance, climate action, and public health, through the Presidential Council. Special appreciation goes to our national research and regulatory institutions, including the Sierra Leone Agricultural Research Institute, the Sierra Leone Seed Certification Agency, and the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture, for placing science and innovation at the heart of our delivery.

We deeply value the technical and financial contributions of our international partners. We thank the European Union, the World Bank Group, Food and Agriculture Organization, International Fund for Agricultural Development, Islamic Development Bank, African Development Bank, OPEC Fund, World Food Programme, AGRA, Gates Foundation, British International Investment, the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office and Invest Salone, the United Nations Capital Development Fund, the United Nations Development Programme, and the Overseas Development Institute.

We also acknowledge the contributions of our bilateral partners, whose support for research, capacity building, and technology transfer continues to strengthen our national systems.

The private sector is indispensable to the success of Feed Salone. From agri-SMEs and large agribusinesses to service providers and financial institutions, your leadership drives the innovation, scale, and investment that this transformation demands. We also thank civil society, local communities, and above all, all Sierra Leone's farmers and the National Federation of Farmers. Your resilience, ingenuity, and hard work are the beating heart of Feed Salone. We work with you, and for you.

Finally, we recognise our global allies in food systems transformation, particularly the Alliance of Champions for Food Systems Transformation, and member countries.

Thank you for walking this journey with us: to transform together, and to Feed Salone.



MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY
GOVERNMENT OF SIERRA LEONE

ACRONYMS

ACF	Alliance of Champions for Food Systems Transformation
AfDB	African Development Bank
AgTech	Agricultural Technology
ATO	Agriculture Transformation Office
AVDP	Agricultural Value Chain Development Project
BADEA	Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa
CAMIP	Sierra Leone Connectivity and Agricultural Market Infrastructure Project
CSA	Climate Smart Agriculture
DFIs	Development Financial Institutions
DPs	Development Partners
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EWASME	Empowering West African Women Small & Medium Enterprises
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FSRP	Food System Resilience Project
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GoSL	Government of Sierra Leone
HGSFP	Home Grown School Feeding Program
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IsDB	Islamic Development Bank
IVS	Inland Valley Swamps
KAFACI	Korea-Africa Food and Agriculture Cooperation Initiative
LLDP	Livestock and Livelihood Development Project
MAFS	Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security
MAFRA	Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (South Korea)
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MOPED	Ministry of Planning and Economic Development
NAFFSL	National Federation of Farmer of Sierra Leone
NAT	National Agricultural Transformation Program
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NIN	National Identification Number
NU	Njala University
OFID	OPEC Fund for International Development
OFSP	Orange Flesh Sweet Potato

OPEC	Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries
PI-CREF	Presidential Initiative on Climate Change, Renewable Energy and Food Security
QFFD	Qatar Fund for Development
SCADeP	Smallholder Commercialization and Agribusiness Development Project
SLeSCA	Sierra Leone Seed Certification Agency
SLARI	Sierra Leone Agricultural Research Institute
SLARiS	Sierra Leone Agribusiness and Rice Value Chain Project
SL-RAIC	Sierra Leone Rice Agro Industry Cluster Project
SAPZ	Special Agro Processing Zone
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
SMP	Seed Multiplication Program
SATF	Salone Access to Finance
UNCDF	United Nations Capital Development Fund
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
WFP	World Food Program
WFPPF	World Food Prize Foundation
WPF	World Poultry Foundation



From national vision to regional ambition

The transformation of Sierra Leone's food systems under Feed Salone continues to be driven by the leadership of His Excellency President Julius Maada Bio. From the outset, the President has made food security a national economic and strategic priority, central to jobs, growth, resilience and Sierra Leone's ability to feed itself.

Three years on, his focus remains firmly on delivery. Through the Presidential Council for Delivering Feed Salone, regular engagement with implementing institutions and visits to farms and project sites, the President has maintained high-level oversight of the programme. He has continued to champion productive and profitable agriculture, greater private investment, reduced dependence on food imports, and stronger domestic value chains.

This ambition has also extended beyond Sierra Leone. During his time as Chairman of the Authority of ECOWAS Heads of State and Government from June 2025 to July 2026, President Bio championed food systems transformation as an important part of West Africa's regional agenda. His leadership has emphasised the opportunities created by greater regional integration, investment and trade, and the need for West African countries to work more closely together.

As Feed Salone enters its next phase, the President's ambition is to secure the gains, accelerate delivery and make the transformation lasting. The priority now is to finish critical investments already underway, scale successful interventions, mobilise greater financing and partnerships, and create the conditions for farmers and agribusinesses to invest and grow.



“Three years into Feed Salone, our responsibility is to turn progress into lasting transformation. We will secure the gains we have made, finish what we started, and invest in the systems that allow our farmers and businesses to thrive. We are building an agricultural economy that can feed our people, create jobs, attract investment and compete, in Sierra Leone and across our region.”

His Excellency

Dr. Julius Maada Bio

PRESIDENT · REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE



YEAR 3 HIGHLIGHTS



Ministry of
Agriculture &
Food Security

2025 - 2026

PRODUCTION & INFRASTRUCTURE



73%

RICE SELF-SUFFICIENCY

Paddy production reached 1.44 million MT across 661,016 hectares in 2025.



42%

LOWER EGG IMPORTS

Egg imports fell from 3,407 MT in 2024 to 1,975 MT in 2025.



82%

LOWER ONION IMPORTS

Onion imports fell to 2,195 MT in 2025. The import bill dropped 70% as commercial farming expanded.



5,500+

HECTARES CULTIVATED IN TORMABUM

Under cultivation by July 2026, alongside ongoing irrigation works covering 3,250 hectares.



40

NEW TRACTORS DEPLOYED

Deployed for the 2026 season, alongside the rollout of 400 power tillers to swamp farmer associations.



183 m

MANOWA BRIDGE COMMISSIONED

A 60-year ferry crossing replaced, with all-season access for over 160,000 people across four chiefdoms.



YEAR 3 HIGHLIGHTS



Ministry of
Agriculture &
Food Security

2025 - 2026

MARKETS, FINANCE & JOBS



43%

PLEDGES PROGRAMMED INTO PROJECTS

Of over US\$1 billion pledged, 43% is now programmed into projects, up from 27% at the end of Year Two.



1,000 MT

LOCAL FOOD FOR SCHOOL MEALS

Secured for 2026/27 school feeding by August 2026, through 26 suppliers linked to 22,000+ smallholders.



450 MT

LOCAL RICE FOR MILITARY FEEDING

An August 2026 agreement covers 9,000 50-kg bags of local rice from the strategic grain reserve.



US\$900,000

SALES FROM COMMUNITY RICE MILLS

Approximate sales from 845 MT supplied to WFP. Ten hubs milled 1,312.5 MT of rice by August 2026.



NLe 230M

AGRICULTURAL CREDIT FACILITY

More than 90% disbursed to 16 agribusinesses, with loans at 10% interest for up to 24 months.



22,708

JOBS REPORTED IN YEAR THREE

10,062 direct and 12,646 indirect jobs. Women held 48% and young people 71% of the total.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Three years after His Excellency President Julius Maada Bio launched Feed Salone, Sierra Leone is growing more of what it eats. This report covers the third year of implementation, from October 2025 to September 2026. Over this period, conflict in the Middle East unsettled global markets for fuel and fertiliser. Sierra Leone met the shock from a stronger position than at any earlier point in the strategy period, because more of its food is now grown, processed and stored at home.

The clearest change is in rice. Sierra Leone produced 62 per cent of the rice it consumed in 2022; by 2025 the share had reached 73 per cent, as farmers brought around 50,000 more hectares under rice cultivation and raised average yields. Over the same period, the rice import bill fell from USD 177 million to about USD 154 million. Poultry has moved faster still. Egg imports fell from about 56 million in 2024 to 31 million in 2025, while farms surveyed by the Poultry Farmers Association of Sierra Leone produce an estimated 173 million eggs a year. Onions are now grown at commercial scale, and imports fell by more than three quarters in 2025. Export crops are adding to these gains. Cocoa exports grew by more than half between 2019 and 2024, cashew exports reached a record in 2025, and much of the palm oil the country exports now leaves already processed.

These changes are reaching households. The share of severely food-insecure households has more than halved since 2023, and more families eat an adequate diet. Nearly one million pupils now receive school meals, with more locally grown rice, vegetables and vitamin-rich crops on the plate. Feed Salone interventions also supported more than 22,000 jobs in Year Three, nearly half of them held by women and most by young people.

The private sector has driven much of this progress. Local businesses built modern layer farms, feed mills and hatcheries. They planted onions on a scale the country had not seen and expanded palm oil refining. Alongside the Armed Forces and local farmers, they brought more than 5,500 hectares at Tormabum under rice cultivation.

Government's role has been to make that investment worthwhile. A 35 per cent duty on imported eggs gives local producers a fair place in their own market. Home-grown school feeding and the new National Grain Reserve give farmers buyers they can rely on; the reserve sold its first rotation of local rice to the Armed Forces this year.

Agricultural finance was the defining reform of the year. A NLe 230 million Agricultural Credit Facility, operated with the Bank of Sierra Leone, is lending to agribusinesses at 10 per cent interest. USD 5.8 million in matching grants reached 62 enterprises, more than four in ten of them owned by women. Behind these facilities, Government completed the Agricultural Finance Policy and validated the National Agricultural Insurance Policy. It also began designing an agricultural development bank. Together, these reforms are moving agricultural finance from separate schemes towards a national system that farmers and investors can plan around.

Resources have followed results. Agriculture's share of the national budget has risen from 2 per cent to more than 8 per cent. Of the more than USD 1 billion pledged for Feed Salone, 43 per cent is now programmed into projects, up from 27 per cent a year ago. New programmes include the USD 105 million Livestock and Livelihoods Development Project and the USD 75 million rice agro-processing zone in Kambia and Port Loko.

Infrastructure moved from plans to physical assets in Year Three. Forty new tractors reached priority production areas ahead of the 2026 planting season. At Tormabum and Gbondapi, irrigation works covering more than 3,000 hectares advanced, so that farmers can grow more than one crop a year and produce rice at commercial scale. The Tormabum and Gbondapi rice agro-industrial centres

entered their final stages. When complete in early 2027, each will mill about 8 MT of rice an hour, with around 10,000 MT of storage between them. The 183-metre Manowa Bridge replaced a manual cable ferry used for more than sixty years. More than 400 kilometres of feeder roads are being rehabilitated, over half of them already complete, linking farms to markets.

These investments also protect the food system from shocks abroad. For a third consecutive season, rice seeds were supplied entirely by Sierra Leonean seed producers, without imports. The National Seed Policy, approved this year, gives the domestic seed industry a clear framework. The National Seed Testing Laboratory at Mile 91 now checks the quality of seed before it reaches farmers. Processing capacity is following. Ten community rice hubs, run by farmer organisations, milled local rice and sold it to the World Food Programme, and the National Grain Reserve now keeps stocks of local rice for difficult times. The more seed, grain and milling capacity the country holds at home, the less a disruption in global markets can reach the Sierra Leonean table.

Decisions are increasingly guided by evidence. The National Crop Production Survey is now an annual exercise, giving the Ministry reliable figures on area, yields and production by district. A nationwide digital soil mapping system, built from more than 10,000 soil samples, provides crop suitability maps and input recommendations to farmers, investors and policymakers. The National Digital Farmer Registry entered data collection phase and will give each farmer a unique digital identity, linked to the national identity system, so that inputs, advice, credit and insurance reach the right person. Farmers can also call a free helpline (899), for advice, and a rural agriculture radio station carries that advice across the country.

Year Four will be about finishing, scaling and institutionalising what works. Rice comes first: completing the Tormabum irrigation works and industrial mills by early 2027, and launching a national rice offensive to close the remaining gap. Government will bring the finance and insurance policies into force and take the development bank forward, so that credit and risk cover reach more farmers. Cassava industrialisation will begin in 2027, and the livestock programme will extend the poultry gains to more households. In November, Sierra Leone hosts the West Africa Integration and Investment Summit. There, the country's Feed Salone Champions will meet regional markets and investors, and Sierra Leone will help shape a regional facility for rice and agribusiness.



IMPACT

THIRD YEAR OF FEED SALONE



IMPACT: STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Objective 1: Import Substitution of Key Food Items

Every bag of rice, tray of eggs and sack of onions grown in Sierra Leone is money that stays in the country and income that reaches a Sierra Leonean farmer. Feed Salone concentrates its import-substitution effort on these three value chains because they weigh most heavily on the food import bill and are the ones domestic producers can realistically take over within the strategy period. Year Three brought more rice from Sierra Leonean fields and mills, new commercial poultry farms into production, and a sharp fall in onion imports as private growers scaled up.

Rice

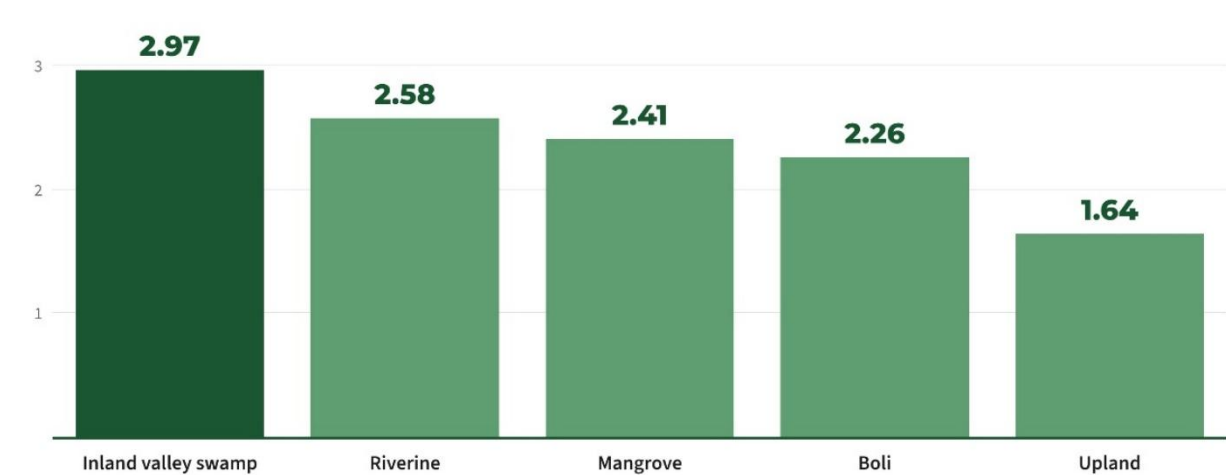
Sierra Leone produced 62 percent of the rice it consumed in 2022. By 2025, the share had risen to 73 percent. For a country in which rice is the principal staple of almost every household, this eleven-point gain is a clear measure of progress under Feed Salone.

The gain originates on the farm. The area under rice reached 661,016 hectares in 2025, about 50,000 hectares more than in 2023. Productivity also improved: average yields rose from 2.13 to 2.37 MT per hectare, the strongest gain in three years. Inland valley swamps contributed most. They account for less than half of the rice area but produced 58 percent of the national crop, at almost twice the yield of upland fields.

RICE YIELD BY ECOLOGY, 2025

Inland valley swamps yield 80% more than uplands

Average paddy yield, tonnes per hectare (MT/ha)



Source: 2025 National Crop Production Survey, Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, June 2026

Note: Ecology estimates for 2025 are based on the new ecology-specific sampling frame.

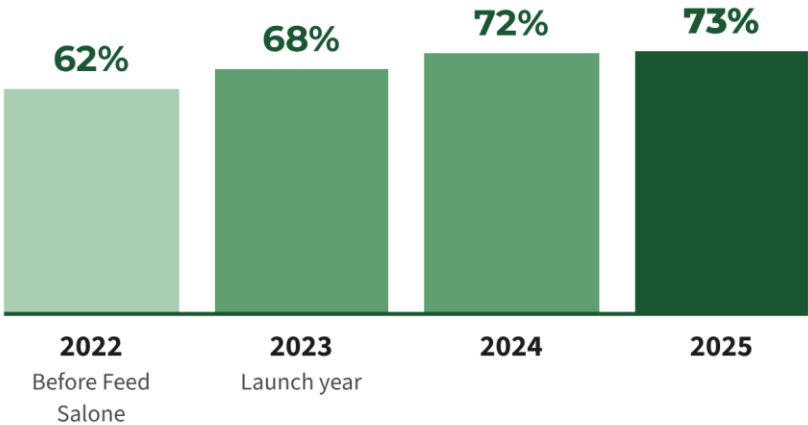
Rice: growing more of what we eat



SELF-SUFFICIENCY IN RICE

73%

of the rice Sierra Leone eats was grown at home in 2025. Before Feed Salone, it was 62%.



ON THE FARM

661,016 ha

under rice in 2025: 50,000 ha more than in 2023

2.13 → 2.37

tonnes per hectare, 2023 to 2025

RICE IMPORTS

370,200 MT

imported in 2025: 11.5% below the 2022 peak

USD 154 million

import bill, down from USD 177 million in 2022

FOR FARMERS

10% → 40%

of school feeding rice is local, 2024 to 2025

USD 900,000

earned by 10 community mills from WFP

WHERE THE RICE COMES FROM

Swamps: less than half the land, most of the crop

Share of rice land



Share of the national crop



A hectare of swamp yields **2.97 tonnes**; a hectare of upland, **1.64 tonnes**. Other: boli, riverine and mangrove.

STILL TO DO

27%

of the rice we eat is still imported

28%

of swamp farmers work rehabilitated land

4.9%

of rice farmers apply fertiliser

Next: rice clusters, Tormabum irrigation and a national rice offensive.

Tormabum: rebuilding the rice bowl

Bonthe District



Private investors, the military and farmers are bringing Sierra Leone's historic rice bowl back into production, with public irrigation behind them.



Rice fields at Tormabum

UNDER CULTIVATION

5,500+ ha

by July 2026, the largest area in four years



Irrigation works in progress



Agricultural drone over the crop

TORMABUM IN NUMBERS

1,000+ ha

farmed by Fambul Rice, using drones and precision agriculture

2,000+ ha

farmed by the Armed Forces (RSLAF)

3,250 ha

of irrigation works under construction

Next: an industrial rice mill, 8 MT an hour, due for completion by early 2027.

Poultry Products

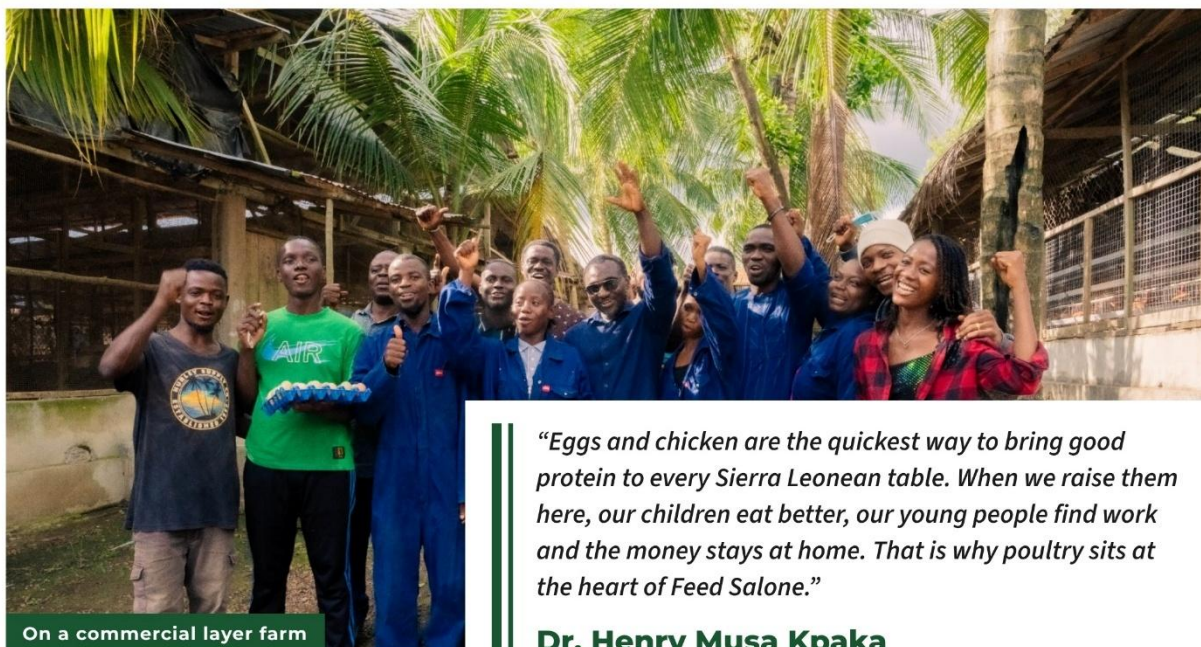
Poultry is the most important value chain for replacing imported protein with protein produced at home, and an egg is the simplest way to put good protein in front of a child. In Year Three, poultry became one of the standout results of Feed Salone.

The change shows first in the market. Sierra Leone imported about 56 million eggs in 2024 and about 31 million in 2025, a fall of more than 40 per cent in a single year.

New data from the Poultry Farmers Association of Sierra Leone (PFASL) show the scale of local production. Its 2026 survey recorded 222 farms across 12 districts, keeping 619,134 laying birds and producing an estimated 475,000 eggs a day. That is about 173 million eggs a year, more than five times the number imported in 2025. The figures are preliminary and do not cover every producer. The same farms reported housing for about 1.79 million birds, nearly three times their current flock, so output can grow quickly using infrastructure already in place.

Inputs are following the birds. Four private enterprises now supply feed and day-old chicks, with feed mills operating at Waterloo and Makeni and a hatchery supplying broiler chicks. Sierra Leone produced 91,666 MT of maize in 2025, giving feed mills a local source of grain and a market for farmers who grow it.

Government has backed those who invest. Since January 2026, imported eggs carry a 35 per cent tariff, giving domestic producers a fairer place in their own market. The USD 105.5 million Livestock and Livelihoods Development Project (LLDP) moved into implementation and will extend livestock and veterinary support to 62,250 households across 11 districts.



On a commercial layer farm

“Eggs and chicken are the quickest way to bring good protein to every Sierra Leonean table. When we raise them here, our children eat better, our young people find work and the money stays at home. That is why poultry sits at the heart of Feed Salone.”

Dr. Henry Musa Kpaka

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY

Poultry: more eggs laid at home

Layer farms across Sierra Leone



A new duty on imported eggs, new commercial layer farms and a growing feed industry are putting more Sierra Leonean eggs on Sierra Leonean tables.



Layer house on a commercial farm

IMPORT DUTY ON EGGS

35%

since January 2026, giving local producers a fair place in their own market



Fresh eggs from a local layer farm



Inspecting a commercial layer farm

POULTRY IN NUMBERS

31m

eggs imported in 2025, down from 56 million in 2024

173m

eggs a year produced on 222 surveyed farms in 12 districts

619,000

laying birds on those farms, with housing for 1.79 million

New farms: Newton Poultry's fully automated layer farm began production in February 2026, and the RIF farm at Tokeh expanded to 20,000 birds.

Feed and smallholders: four private suppliers of feed and chicks, 91,666 MT of maize grown in 2025, and 1,200 smallholder keepers supplied with improved birds and training.

Onions

Onions are the clearest case of private-sector-led import substitution under Feed Salone. In 2025, onion imports fell by 82 per cent and the import bill by 70 per cent, while domestic commercial production expanded and consumer prices eased. Consumers have gained. Onions sell for about NLe 34 per kg, about a third below the NLe 50 or more paid in early 2024 (MAFS 2025).

Customs data show onion imports of 13,013 MT in 2023 (USD 5.1 million), 12,145 MT in 2024 (USD 3.4 million) and only 2,195 MT in 2025. Import declarations fell from 225 in 2023 and 198 in 2024 to 77 in 2025.

Pee Cee Agriculture remains the country's leading commercial onion producer. In April 2026, the company had 140 hectares under cultivation at Loko Masama up from 85 hectares in the 2025 cycle, with average yields of about 55 MT per hectare and plans to reach 170 hectares within the year (MAFS 2026). More than 500 women work in its production and processing operations, and an IFC-financed expansion is aiming to take the farm to 500 hectares and more than 40,000 MT a year.



Loading the onion harvest



"Few believed Sierra Leone could grow onions at scale. Today our own farms are supplying the market, our imports have fallen by more than three quarters, and hundreds of women and young people are working in the fields."

Dr. Henry Musa Kpaka

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY

Onions: grown at home, at scale

Pee Cee & Sons farm, Loko Masama



Mechanised harvest



Fields, reservoir and packhouse



Sorting line



Fresh from the field



Bagged for market

THE FARM IN NUMBERS

140 ha

under cultivation in April 2026,
up from 85 in 2025

55 MT

average yield per hectare

500+

women working in production
and processing

Objective 2: Boosting Export Earnings from Agriculture

Feed Salone aims to earn more from Sierra Leone's cash crops, chiefly cocoa, cashew, coffee and oil palm, by raising their productivity, quality and value. Higher export earnings bring in foreign exchange and raise farm incomes, especially for women and young people.

Cocoa

Cocoa is Sierra Leone's most important agricultural export, and for five years its record was one of growth. Exports rose from 13,343 MT in 2019 to 20,272 MT in 2024, an increase of more than half, with the sharpest rise in 2023 (MoTI).

The 2025 customs declarations record 10,984 MT of cocoa beans, about half the 2024 volume. Yet those exports earned about USD 79 million (NLe 1.81 billion). The Netherlands took 89 per cent of the volume.

The 2025 National Crop Production Survey estimates production at 19,642 MT, with average yields up by about 7 per cent (MAFS 2026). Recorded exports therefore account for only about 56 per cent of the estimated crop, and domestic processing absorbs a small share. The remainder was most likely exported through channels the customs data did not capture, traded informally across borders, or held as stock for sale in 2026. The recorded fall in exports is therefore more likely to reflect gaps in the data than a decline in the sector.

In the first two years of Feed Salone, MAFS made significant efforts in advancing Sierra Leone's cocoa sector. Through the Agricultural Value Chain Development Project (AVDP), 6,000 hectares of new agroforestry cocoa farms were established and maintained across the Eastern and Southern regions. In the second year, the project commenced works for the establishment of 100 community nurseries for the additional 3,000ha out-planting of cocoa.

FEED SALONE • YEAR THREE

Cocoa: from farm to finished product



Bringing in the cocoa harvest



SLARI improved clones



Cocoa powder from local beans

COCOA IN NUMBERS

19,642 MT

produced in 2025, with average yields up about 7 per cent

+52%

growth in exports from 2019 to 2024, reaching 20,272 MT

USD 79m

recorded export earnings in 2025

New planting: 6,000 ha of agroforestry cocoa established under AVDP, with 100 community nurseries raising seedlings for 3,000 ha more.

Sources: Ministry of Trade and Industry, 2019 to 2024; customs export declarations, 2025; 2025 National Crop Production Survey; Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (AVDP), 2026. Photographs: SLARI; Capitol Foods.

Cashew

Cashew is a small but steadily growing source of export income, and local processing has begun. Exports reached 616 MT in 2025, the highest level on record and 60 per cent above 2019, earning about USD 0.7 million.

Organised smallholders supply much of that trade. The Trust Cashew Project sourced and exported 430 MT of raw nuts, about 70 per cent of recorded exports. Two farmer cooperatives, Good Heart and One Word, with a combined membership of 1,437 farmers, were strengthened through governance and Fairtrade training. One Word is now legally registered, and Good Heart's Fairtrade certification is under review. Two new drying floors at Madina in Kambia District are improving the quality of nuts after harvest, and 54 people received business skills training.

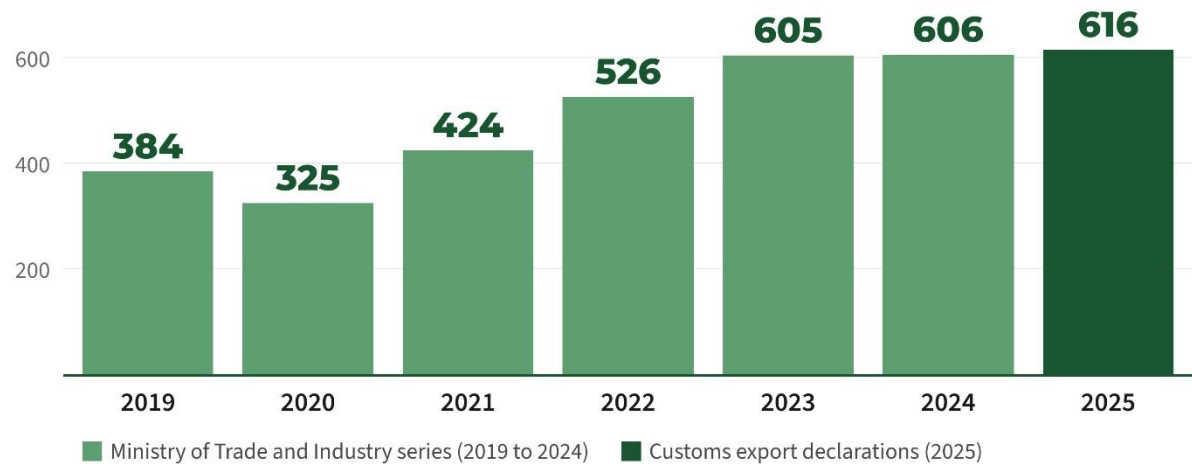
More of the value is being kept at home. The Waterloo Women Cashew Processing Factory at Newton and the Nianda Cashew Factory at Rogbere Junction bought and processed 100 MT of raw nuts and sold 60 MT on the local market. Most of the crop is still exported raw, mainly to Vietnam (79 per cent) and India (14 per cent), so expanding local processing offers the clearest route to higher earnings from each tonne.

The production base is also growing. About 72 hectares (177 acres) of new cashew farms were established with 7,090 seedlings in the main cashew-growing districts. This progress was supported by the EU-funded Developing an Inclusive and Sustainable Cashew Agroforestry Value Chain project

CASHEW EXPORTS, 2019 TO 2025

Cashew exports reached a record 616 MT in 2025

Raw cashew nut exports, metric tonnes (MT)



Coffee

Coffee earned about USD 4.82 million in export income in 2025, from 952 MT shipped. For the smallholders who grow it, the difficulty is that this income is unpredictable. Exports have swung sharply from year to year: 1,951 MT in 2019, 637 MT in 2021, 2,009 MT in 2022, 1,219 MT in 2023, a peak of 2,908 MT in 2024, and 952 MT recorded by customs in 2025 (Figure 21.3). A farmer deciding whether to replant trees that take years to bear cannot plan around a market this unstable.

Year Three's main step was to tie Sierra Leone into a regional effort to steady and upgrade the trade. In May 2026, the country joined the Regional Coffee Value Chain Declaration in Marrakech and signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the African Coffee Hub, covering post-harvest handling, quality control, traceability, aggregation and investment preparation. The partnership gives particular attention to *Stenophylla*, a rare coffee native to Sierra Leone, which offers a route to premium markets that volume alone cannot provide. The results of this partnership, in prices paid to farmers and in the share of coffee sold as traceable or specialty grade, will be reported from Year Four.

FEED SALONE • YEAR THREE

Coffee: from a native bean to premium markets



Coffee cherries ripening



Coffee roasted and packed at home

COFFEE IN NUMBERS

2,908 MT

exported in 2024, the highest level since 2019

USD 4.8m+

earned from coffee shipped in 2025

Stenophylla

a rare coffee species native to Sierra Leone

New partnership: in May 2026, Sierra Leone joined the Regional Coffee Value Chain Declaration in Marrakech and signed an MoU with the African Coffee Hub on quality, traceability and investment.

Sources: Ministry of Trade and Industry, 2019 to 2024; exporter shipping records, 2025 (partial); Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, 2026.

Oil Palm

Oil palm is the export crop in which Sierra Leone already adds value at home. In 2025, customs recorded 9,891 MT of palm oil products exported, far more by volume than cashew and coffee combined. Much of it left as processed or semi-processed product: India took 4,725 MT, almost half the total, mainly as palm stearin and crude palm kernel oil.

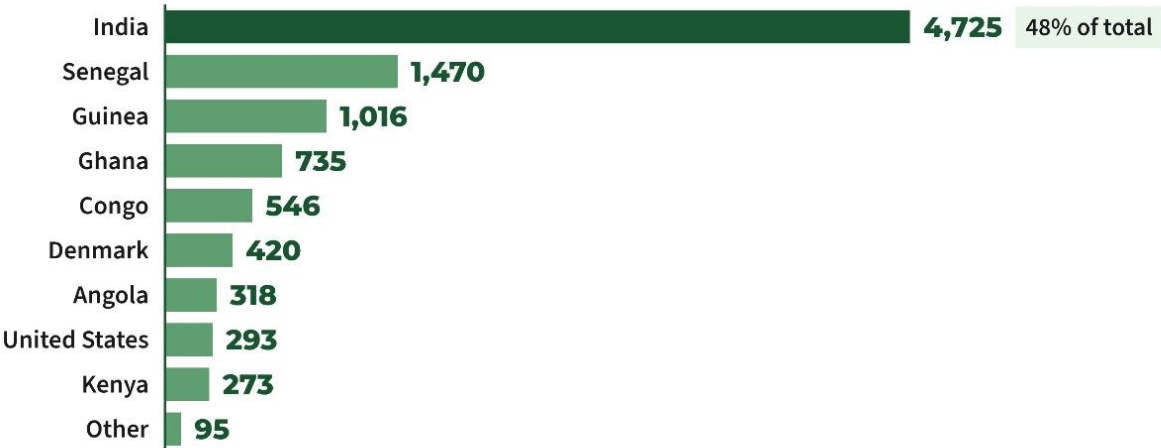
The trade is also regional. Senegal (1,470 MT), Guinea (1,016 MT), Ghana (735 MT) and Congo (546 MT) were the next largest markets, and Jolaks Manufacturing, financed by Proparco, supplies processed oil across West Africa (Proparco 2024). Some of this regional trade, including overland sales to Guinea and shipments to Liberia and Mali, is only partly captured in customs data, so actual exports are likely to be higher¹.

¹ Liberia and Mali, named as Jolaks markets in the Proparco reporting, do not appear in the customs extract, which suggests that part of the regional trade moves informally and is not captured.

PALM OIL EXPORTS BY DESTINATION, 2025

India took 48% of palm oil exports

Palm oil and palm kernel oil, metric tonnes (MT). Total: 9,891 MT



Other: Canada, China, Australia and the United Kingdom. Exports to Guinea are almost entirely palm kernel oil.

The task now is to connect more smallholders to this market. In February 2026, MAFS launched a EUR 11.2 million EU-funded project in Pujehun, implemented by FAO, to support climate-smart production, aggregation and access to domestic and regional markets. Ten oil palm processing facilities supported through AVDP are about 90 per cent complete.

Objective 3: Job Creation and Income Generation for Women and Youth

Feed Salone aims to make agriculture a reliable source of jobs and income for women and young people. In Year Three, Feed Salone interventions reported 22,708 jobs, 10,062 of them direct and 12,646 indirect. Women held 48 per cent of these jobs and young people 71 per cent.

Where the jobs are

Most of the new work is in value chains where private investment is growing. More than 500 women work in onion production and processing at Loko Masama. The modern vegetable gardens cover 100 hectares and support about 3,000 people, 2,400 of them women. Newly built commercial poultry farms employ Njala University graduates and people from the surrounding communities. In processing, the Waterloo Women Cashew Processing Factory and the Nianda Factory together bought and processed 100 MT of local cashew nuts. At the ten community rice hubs, half of the 70 trained mill operators are women.

Turning groups into income

Year Three moved farmer organisations and women’s groups from organisation to income. The farmer organisations running the ten community rice hubs, connected to 245 farmer groups and 4,235 farmers, sold 845 MT of rice to the World Food Programme and earned about USD 900,000. Fifteen women’s groups adopted the village savings and loan model; 14 completed their first savings cycle, sharing out NLe 304,866 with loan repayment above 95 per cent. In Falaba, ten women-led livestock cooperatives were established and trained in business and financial management.

Finance reaching women and young people

More than 1,320 women and 3,750 young people in Bonthe and Kambia received about USD 500,000 in agricultural finance through Islamic finance products offered with Apex Bank. Women own 42 per cent of the 62 agribusinesses awarded USD 5.8 million in FSRP matching grants. The EWASME programme provided USD 450,000 to 100 women-led enterprises and selected a second cohort of more than 200 women-led small businesses in Bonthe and Tonkolili. Through the ENABLE Youth programme, 61 young entrepreneurs, 27 of them women, received start-up grants, mentoring and support to access finance.

FEED SALONE • YEAR THREE

Jobs and income for women and youth



Onion harvest



Newton cashew factory



Processed local foods



Selling groundnuts

WOMEN AND YOUTH IN NUMBERS

22,708

jobs reported in Year Three:
48% held by women, 71% by
youth

500+

women working on the
onion farm at Loko Masama

USD 0.5m

in finance for 1,320 women
and 3,750 young people

1,074

young people trained in
agribusiness at Njala
University

Women own **42 per cent** of the businesses awarded FSRP matching grants, half of the **70 operators** trained to run community rice mills are women, and 14 women's savings groups shared out **NLe 304,866** in their first cycle.

Sources: Feed Salone programme reporting (FSRP, EWASME, RRVCP, SL-RAIC, SLARIS, WFP), 2026; Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, 2026.

Skills for the next generation

The ENABLE Youth Agribusiness Incubation Centre at Njala University trained more than 1,074 young people in entrepreneurship and modern production, and is due to be officially launched in November. A further 120 women and young people gained business skills, and 120 local fabricators were trained to repair and maintain rice-processing machinery. The new Green Jobs for Youth programme will extend this work to Bo, Bombali, Kambia and Kono from Year Four.

Objective 4: Alleviating Hunger & Malnutrition

Feed Salone aims to reduce hunger and malnutrition by making nutritious, locally produced food more available and affordable, including fish, pulses, cassava and orange-fleshed sweet potatoes. MAFS works with MBSSE, with the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Secretariat at the Office of the Vice President and other partners to build nutrition into agricultural policies and programmes.

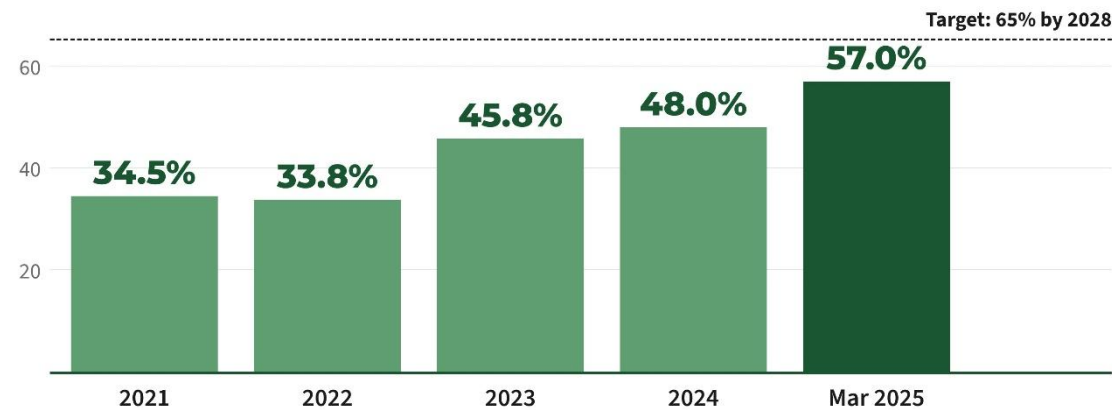
Severe food insecurity has more than halved since Feed Salone began. The share of households classed as severely food insecure fell from 28 per cent in September 2023 to 17 per cent in September 2024 and 13 per cent in July 2025, leaving three percentage points to the Feed Salone target of 10 per cent.

Diets are improving as well. The share of households with an acceptable Food Consumption Score rose from 34.5 per cent in 2021 to 48.4 per cent in 2024 and 57 per cent in the first quarter of 2025. That is eight points short of the Feed Salone target of 65 per cent: more than four in ten households still do not eat an adequate diet.

HOUSEHOLDS WITH ACCEPTABLE FOOD CONSUMPTION, 2021 TO 2025

Acceptable food consumption rose from 34.5% to 57%

Share of households with an acceptable Food Consumption Score (%)



Source: World Food Programme (2025). The 2025 figure is for March.

School feeding

FEED SALONE · YEAR THREE

More home-grown food in school meals



Women farmers with fresh produce



A school meal

SCHOOL FEEDING IN NUMBERS

983,993

pupils in 4,016 schools received meals in 2025–26

1,000 MT

of the 2,500 MT of local rice planned, already procured

USD 2m

in WFP supply contracts with farmer organisations

Meals are also becoming more nutritious: **orange-fleshed sweet potato** and **yellow-fleshed cassava**, both rich in vitamin A, are now more and more on school menus.

Sources: Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education; World Food Programme; Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, 2026. Photographs: WFP.

School feeding is the most direct link between Feed Salone and child nutrition. In the 2025–2026 academic year, 983,993 pupils in 4,016 schools received meals. That is about 52 per cent of schools with an increase of 54,850 pupils reached in 2025–2026. A growing share of that food is grown in Sierra Leone. For the 2026–2027 school year, the Government and the WFP set out to procure 2,500 MT of local rice from smallholder farmers in seven districts, and about 1,000 MT had been procured by August 2026. The rice will supply meals for more than 270,000 pupils in 1,204 schools. WFP has also signed commercial supply contracts worth about USD 2 million, which give farmer organisations a predictable market to plan against. Meals are also becoming more nutritious. Orange-fleshed sweet potato and yellow-fleshed cassava, both sources of vitamin A, are now on school menus.

Improving the Nutritional Value of Local Foods

MAFS and the Sierra Leone Agricultural Research Institute (SLARI) are working to raise the nutritional value of the foods that farmers grow and households eat.

Soybean. The Ministry's Women in Agriculture and Nutrition Unit trained 120 members of farmer organisations (100 of them women) and Mother Support Groups, to process soybean into nutritious foods for home use and for sale. SLARI developed four soybean-based products (soymilk, tofu, soy-ogiri, and soybean flour) and enhanced the protein quality of five commonly consumed local foods. It trained 25 Master Trainers, who cascaded training to 220 BES, FEWs, CHWs, and MSGs across 11 districts, as well as 10 agripreneurs in soybean value addition and utilization. The Consumer Acceptability and Willingness-to-Pay Study was carried out in 10 districts, reaching 1,000 respondents to assess market demand for soybean-based products.

Cassava. SLARI produced 9,918 cassava plantlets of 14 vitamin-rich varieties using semi-autotrophic hydroponics, a rapid multiplication method. They will be used for breeder seed, the first step in getting improved varieties to farmers. Commercial seed entrepreneurs were also trained across soybean, cassava and maize to widen the supply of quality planting material.

Objective 5: Building a resilient food system

Feed Salone builds resilience on two fronts: against climate shocks such as drought and flood, and against shocks in global markets for food, fuel and fertiliser. Year Three tested both. When conflict in the Middle East pushed up world prices for fuel and fertiliser, Sierra Leone met the shock with more of its food grown, processed and stored at home than at any earlier point in the strategy period.

A food system less exposed to global markets

The country now grows 73 per cent of the rice it eats, up from 62 per cent in 2022, and imports of eggs and onions have fallen sharply as domestic production has expanded. Seed supply is also secured at home. For a third consecutive season, Government's rice seed programmes were supplied entirely by Sierra Leonean seed producers, without imports. The National Seed Policy, approved this year, gives the domestic seed system a lasting framework. The National Seed Testing Laboratory at Mile 91 now checks quality before seed reaches farmers. Private producers are expanding supply, including eight community-based cassava seed producers and a new irrigated rice and maize seed site at Kangahun. The National Grain Reserve holds stocks of local rice, rotated through sales to the Armed

Forces. The newly approved Food Security Crisis Preparedness Plan gives Government a single system for early warning and coordinated response.

Water control for steadier harvests

Control of water is the most direct protection against erratic rainfall, and it raises yields. The area of rehabilitated inland valley swamp more than tripled, from 1,950 hectares in 2023 to 6,615 hectares in 2025. The results show in the harvest. In Falaba, 625 farmers on 50 hectares of newly developed swamp harvested 3.7 MT of rice per hectare, a quarter above the national swamp average. Larger schemes will extend these gains. At Tormabum, irrigation works covering 3,250 hectares are designed for more than one rice crop a year. A further 600 hectares of swamp irrigation and 3,000 hectares of boli irrigation are in preparation across six districts.

Soils, trees and landscapes

Most fertiliser is imported, so using it efficiently is itself a source of resilience. A national soil information system, built from more than 10,000 samples, now allows fertiliser and crop recommendations to be matched to local soils. The rehabilitated soil laboratory at Njala supports the same work. Tree cover on farms is also expanding: 3,020 hectares of agroforestry cocoa were planted, protecting soils while adding income. USD 18.34 million in additional financing was approved for integrated landscape management in six priority districts.

Managing risk

Resilience also depends on protecting farmers when shocks hit. The National Agricultural Insurance Policy, validated in September 2026, prepares the move from a weather-index pilot to a national insurance system linked to agricultural credit. Sierra Leone's updated climate commitment, NDC 3.0, now places food systems at the centre of the national climate agenda.



LAYING THE FOUNDATION

FOR DELIVERING FEED SALONE



ENABLERS

As Feed Salone enters its fourth year, the focus is increasingly on strengthening the critical enablers needed to secure the gains already made and sustain delivery at scale. These enablers provide policies, infrastructure, institutions, financing, data systems, and partnerships that connect production to markets and investment.

Political Will

The government maintained national budget allocation to the agriculture sector from 2% to over 8%, with a target of reaching 10% in the coming year, in line with the Malabo Declaration. When factoring in all public investments contributing to food systems: energy, transport, infrastructure, and climate, the total allocation is significantly higher. MAFS is working to map and track these broader financial flows, including by joining the 3FS (Tracking Financial Flows to Food Systems) framework, a global initiative led by IFAD and the World Bank.

FEED SALONE · YEAR THREE

Putting public money behind agriculture

Political will: agriculture's share of the national budget



The President on a rice farm

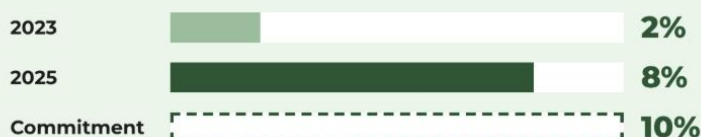


Rice threshing



Site inspection

AGRICULTURE'S SHARE OF THE NATIONAL BUDGET



FINANCE MOBILISED

USD 1bn+

in pledges for Feed Salone, with **43%** already programmed into projects

Other highlights include:

- Leveraged the President's political capital to advocate for additional resources which resulted in unlocking more than USD 1 billion in financial pledges for Feed Salone, of which more than 43% was already translated into transformative programmes and projects under delivery.
- Finalized Sierra Leone's Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC 3.0) in collaboration with the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change and the Environment Protection Agency (EPA). This updated NDC will fully integrate food systems into the national climate agenda.
- Continued implementation of the Kampala CAADP Declaration on Building Resilient and Sustainable Agrifood Systems in Africa, adopted in January 2025 along with the CAADP Strategy and Action Plan (2026–2035).

- Continued as a leading co-chair and a founding member of the Alliance of Champions for Food Systems Transformation, together with Rwanda, Brazil, Norway and Cambodia, and welcomed new members: Colombia and Italy.
- Remained active member the Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty, reinforcing Sierra Leone's role in adopting globally-aligned, evidence-based policies and programmes drawn from the Alliance's Policy Basket, and strengthens collaboration and resource mobilisation to end hunger and poverty both nationally and globally.

Institutional Set-Up and Delivery

The Presidential Council

Chaired by the President, the Council is crucial to the effective execution of Feed Salone at the highest levels and is a manifestation of a whole-of-government approach when addressing food systems challenges. The Council brings together key ministers, including agriculture, the main implementer, finance, transport, energy, environment and climate change, and health, to provide strategic leadership, resolve inter-ministerial bottlenecks, and accelerate delivery of the Feed Salone strategy.

Feed Salone Technical Secretariat

The Feed Salone Secretariat supports the Presidential Council by providing strategic coordination, technical advisory services, and delivery oversight across all sectors involved in food systems transformation. Led by the Minister of Agriculture and Food Security, it bridges government ministries, departments and agencies, partners, private sector and other key stakeholders.

Presidential Initiative on Climate Change, Renewable Energy and Food Security (PI-CREF)

PI-CREF was established by The President to leverage additional resources and partnerships for addressing climate change, improving access to renewable energy, and enhancing food security.

Agriculture Transformation Office (ATO)

In September 2024, MAFS, in collaboration with the African Agricultural Transformation Initiative (AATI), established the Agriculture Transformation Office (ATO) with funding from the Gates Foundation and IFAD. The ATO, now hosted by AGRA, is tasked with strengthening the Ministry's delivery systems, embedding innovation into implementation, and driving focused, accountable progress across Feed Salone's priority areas. It operates as an auxiliary arm to MAFS, supporting policy implementation, data-driven planning, monitoring, and performance management.

Government intends to institutionalize its functions in a permanent Agriculture Transformation Agency (ATA), so that the delivery capacity built under Feed Salone stays within government.

National Federation of Farmers of Sierra Leone (NaFFSL)

NaFFSL is the national umbrella body representing organized farmer groups across all districts. It provides an effective coordination link between the Ministry and farming communities, ensuring that policies and programs under Feed Salone reach farmers on the ground.

Research and Regulatory Agencies (SLARI, SLeSCA, NaFRA)

These institutions provide the scientific and regulatory backbone for Feed Salone's success. The Sierra Leone Agricultural Research Institute (SLARI) leads agricultural research and innovation; the Sierra Leone Seed Certification Agency (SLeSCA) ensures seed quality and certification; and the National

Fertilizer Regulatory Agency (NaFRA) upholds standards for agricultural inputs. Together they underpin the credibility and sustainability of Sierra Leone's agricultural transformation.

Resource Mobilisation

Three years into implementation, Feed Salone continues to turn pledges into programmes. Of the more than USD 1 billion investment pledges mobilised through coordinated government effort and high-level advocacy, 43% of which is now programmed into projects. This is up from 27% at the end of Year Two. Year Three added new bilateral financing, secured additional IFAD financing to scale up programmes, and began building a regional facility to crowd private capital into agribusiness.

New programmes under delivery

- **Livestock and Livelihoods Development Project (LLDP):** USD 105 million, co-financed by IFAD, the Islamic Development Bank and the OPEC Fund. The project rolled out in Year Three and is MAFS biggest investment into the sector targeting 62,250 rural households, equivalent to approximately 373,500 people, and combines livestock productivity, enterprise development, veterinary and institutional strengthening.
- **The Sierra Leone Rice Special Agro-Industrial Processing Zone (SLERAZ) Project, Kambia and Port Loko:** USD 75 million from the African Development Bank and the OPEC Fund. The project is supporting the development of integrated rice production and agro-processing hubs in Kambia and Port Loko, strengthening processing capacity, value addition and market development in two of Sierra Leone's major rice-producing districts.
- **Pandemic Fund – Strengthening Animal Health and One Health Systems:** Sierra Leone secured approximately USD 20.06 million from the World Bank-hosted Pandemic Fund, with about USD 7.10 million allocated to MAFS-related activities implemented with FAO, the World Bank, WHO and UNICEF. The investment is strengthening animal-disease surveillance, laboratory and diagnostic capacity, quarantine facilities, cold-chain systems, antimicrobial-resistance monitoring and the animal-health workforce under a One Health approach, reinforcing the systems needed to protect livestock production,

New Financing Secured in Year Three

- **Sustainable Agricultural Value-chains Intensification for Growth (SAVIG),** USD 40 million: a grant from the World Bank's International Development Association to raise productivity and market access in the rice, maize, onion and cocoa value chains.
- **Republic of Korea (USD 11.4 million):** Korea committed grant financing to two new programmes in Year Three.
 - **K-Rice Belt (USD 5.6 million):** the project will build a modern rice seed production complex at Rokupr in Kambia District, with irrigation, seed-processing facilities, machinery and technical training. It will raise the supply of quality seed and lift domestic rice production.
 - **Green Jobs for Youth in Resilient Agrifood Systems (about USD 5.8 million):** a five-year project funded by the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) and implemented with FAO and the Ministry. It targets young women and men in Bo, Bombali, Kambia and Kono. It will provide technical, business and digital skills training, mentor and finance youth-led agribusinesses, and strengthen extension services and vocational training institutions. The Record of Discussions has been signed.

- **IFAD scale-up, approx. USD 15 million:** additional financing of USD 7.4 million for the Agricultural Value Chain Development Project (AVDP) and USD 7.4 million for the Rural Finance and Community Improvement Programme (RFCIP). Both expand programmes already delivering results in rice, palm oil, cocoa and rural finance.
- **Cassava Industrialisation Programme,** approximately USD 40 million: financing, mostly from the Islamic Development Bank, is approved. Implementation is planned to start in 2027, and the programme will target cassava processing, value addition and market development.
- **Sierra Leone Rice Agro-Industry Cluster Project, second phase (SL-RAIC II):** two financing requests are under way to scale up the rice cluster model.
- **A USD 20 million proposal was submitted to the Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP)** under its 9th Call for Proposals and is awaiting a decision. A further USD 43 million is being sought from the African Development Bank's Transition Support Facility (TSF).
- **National Agricultural Development Bank:** USD 50 million has been earmarked under the OPEC Fund country programme to support the bank's capitalisation.

Policy Interventions

During Year Three, Feed Salone placed greater emphasis on translating policy commitments into practical results. Building on reforms introduced in previous years, the government advanced new measures and strengthened implementation across institutional procurement, poultry development, seed systems, agricultural finance and food-security preparedness.

Home-Grown Institutional Feeding Policy

The Home-Grown Institutional Feeding Policy directs public food purchasing towards Sierra Leonean farmers. In Year Three, its use in school feeding expanded with WFP, and Government began extending the model beyond schools. The first sale of local rice from the National Grain Reserve to the armed forces, in August 2026, is an early example. Government is working to extend it further, to correctional facilities, hospitals and other public institutions, giving farmers more predictable demand and directing more public food spending to domestic production. Procurement results are reported under Pillar 3.

National Grain Reserve Policy

Approval of the National Grain Reserve Policy in Year Three gave Government a framework for buying, storing, rotating and releasing locally produced grain, for market stabilisation and emergency preparedness. The reserve's first operational results, including the August 2026 sale to the armed forces, are reported under Pillar 3.

Poultry Policy and Production Support

Government advanced implementation of the Poultry and Poultry Products Sectoral Policy through targeted fiscal and production-support measures. A major achievement was the introduction of a 35 per cent import duty on eggs under the Finance Act 2026, strengthening protection for domestic producers and encouraging investment in local poultry production.

Government also advanced the poultry feed subsidy programme, with procurement activities undertaken to help address the high cost of feed, one of the main constraints facing poultry farmers. These measures complement increasing private-sector investment in commercial poultry farms,

hatcheries and domestic feed manufacturing, strengthening the conditions for expanding local egg and chicken production. MAFS also continued consultations with WFP and other partners on incorporating locally produced eggs into school feeding under the proposed One Egg Per Child initiative. This would provide an additional market for domestic poultry producers while improving children's access to protein-rich foods.

National Seed Policy

The approval of the National Seed Policy in 2026 represents an important reform in Sierra Leone's efforts to strengthen domestic seed production, agricultural research and productivity. Building on the National Seed Systems Roadmap, the policy establishes a clearer framework for seed development, multiplication, certification, quality assurance and private-sector participation.

Importantly, the policy permits the regulated use of agricultural biotechnology in research and commercial applications, subject to appropriate biosafety and regulatory requirements. This creates new opportunities for developing improved crop varieties with higher productivity and greater resistance to pests, diseases and climate-related stresses.

Implementation is being supported through SLARI, SLeSCA and domestic seed producers, with emphasis on strengthening the supply of breeder, foundation and certified seeds. These reforms build on the country's progress in reducing dependence on imported seed and expanding domestic multiplication capacity.

Cattle Settlement Policy and Livestock Development

Implementation of the Cattle Settlement Policy advanced through preparations for more organised and productive livestock systems. The policy addresses longstanding farmer–herder conflicts by promoting designated cattle settlement areas, improved grazing management, access to water, veterinary services and stronger local arrangements for managing land-use disputes.

A significant development was the advancement of the USD 105.46 million LLDP project, which provides a major investment platform for livestock production, animal health and related infrastructure. The project will support implementation of the policy through improved livestock services, productive infrastructure, and more sustainable livestock management practices.

Food Security Crisis Preparedness Plan

The government approved the Food Security Crisis Preparedness Plan, establishing a national framework for anticipating, monitoring and responding to food and nutrition security emergencies. The Plan strengthens arrangements for early warning, food-security assessments, inter-agency coordination and timely mobilisation of resources when risks emerge.

Supported through the World Bank-financed Food Systems Resilience Programme, the Ministry also advanced technical coordination and monitoring arrangements involving relevant Government institutions and development partners. These measures are intended to improve the country's ability to identify emerging threats and coordinate responses before they develop into major food-security emergencies. The Plan is particularly important as Feed Salone enters a phase of consolidating production and market gains. Together with strategic food reserves and climate-resilient agricultural investments, it strengthens the country's capacity to protect agricultural livelihoods, food availability and national food security against future shocks.

Agricultural Finance and Insurance Policy Reforms

The government made further progress in establishing a stronger policy framework for agricultural financing. MAFS completed the Agricultural Finance Policy, following technical consultations with the Ministry of Finance, the Bank of Sierra Leone and relevant stakeholders. The policy is awaiting Cabinet approval and seeks to improve the availability of agricultural credit, investment finance, guarantees and other financing instruments suited to farmers and agribusinesses. An important additional achievement was the validation of the National Agricultural Insurance Policy in September 2026, undertaken with support from UNCDF and other partners.

Cocoa Sector Policy Reform

The government continued work on cocoa-sector reforms aimed at strengthening export governance, traceability, quality standards and domestic value addition. MAFS, in collaboration with the Ministries of Finance and Trade and other stakeholders, advanced consultations with cocoa producers and exporters on a framework that improves sector coordination while preserving private-sector investment and market access.

The ongoing reform process also includes consideration of stronger institutional arrangements for the sector, including the establishment of the National Cocoa Board. The objective is to improve transparency, strengthen compliance with international market requirements, and ensure that cocoa exports contribute more effectively to farmer incomes and sector development.

Infrastructure

Infrastructure development remains one of the most visible enablers of Feed Salone. During Year Three, Government and partners advanced a broad programme of works covering bridges, feeder roads, farm tracks, irrigation systems, processing facilities, vegetable hubs and institutional infrastructure.

A major milestone this year was the commissioning of the 183-metre Manowa Bridge over the Moa River in Kailahun District under the Smallholder Commercialization and Agribusiness Development Project (SCADeP). The bridge, the longest of four new climate-resilient bridges developed to improve access in key agricultural production areas, replaced a manual cable ferry used by communities for more than 60 years.

Progress continued across the wider four-bridge programme. Rural connectivity has also expanded through AVDP: 420.82 kilometres of feeder roads are under rehabilitation across Kailahun, Kenema, Kono, Port Loko, Bo, Bonthe, Moyamba and Pujehun. Of this total, 224.43 kilometers are reported as physically completed, equivalent to about 53 percent of the planned work. An additional 74.7 km of farm tracks are under construction across eleven districts, with 59.75 kilometers completed, approximately 80 percent of the planned network.

Partnerships & Global Commitments

Strategic partnerships remain central to Feed Salone. They give Sierra Leone access to finance, technology and expertise, strengthen national capacity, and help turn policy into results on the ground. In Year Three, the emphasis moved towards investment. Sierra Leone took bankable projects to investors in Kigali and Rome, joined new market-building initiatives, advanced a national programme under the Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty, and took on a regional leadership role through the West Africa Integration and Investment Summit.

Finance, Infrastructure and Pipeline Coordination

Feed Salone's core financiers continue to fund projects aligned with Ministry priorities and to provide concessional finance, technical assistance and policy support. Year Three widened this group. The Republic of Korea committed grant financing through the K-Rice Belt programme and the Korea International Cooperation Agency. The rice agro-industry cluster programme opened new channels with the Global Agriculture and Food Security Program and the African Development Bank's Transition Support Facility.

Investment Promotion and Market Building

FAO Hand-in-Hand Initiative. At the Hand-in-Hand Investment Forum, held during the World Food Forum in Rome in October 2026, Sierra Leone presented a USD 760 million agrifood investment plan covering rice, poultry and feed, cassava and palm oil.

Africa Food Systems Forum. At the Forum in Kigali in September 2026, the Ministry presented a bankable case for an integrated rice milling facility in Kambia District, developed in partnership with AGRA. Anchored in the Special Agro-Industrial Processing Zone, the facility would mill 80,000 tonnes of rice a year with about USD 16.5 million in capital investment.

British International Investment. The Ministry and the Agriculture Transformation Office are contributing to a market-building design sprint for Sierra Leone's agribusiness sector, led by British International Investment, and the British High Commission. Running from August to November 2026 and covering poultry, cocoa, aquaculture and light manufacturing, the sprint will produce investor diagnostics, intervention concepts and a sector strategy.

Sierra Leone–Rwanda Agrifood Investment and Business Exchange. Building on the Agribusiness Investor Summit held in Freetown in October 2025, FAO and the Ministry are organising an exchange in Kigali in late October 2026. The delegation brings together government, the National Investment Board and Sierra Leonean agribusinesses to learn from Rwanda's investment promotion model and to build business links.

Regional and Global Leadership

ECOWAS. President Bio chaired the ECOWAS Authority of Heads of State and Government in 2025–26 and placed food systems at the centre of the regional agenda. Building on that role, Sierra Leone hosts the West Africa Integration and Investment Summit in November 2026, where a regional Agribusiness and Rice Sovereignty Facility is expected to be launched.

Alliance of Champions for Food Systems Transformation. Sierra Leone continues as a founding co-chair. In Year Three, the Ministry contributed to the Alliance's submissions to the Committee on World Food Security and on the Green Climate Fund's 2028–2031 strategic plan.

Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty. Working with the Alliance's Support Mechanism, the Ministry has developed an advanced draft of a six-year programme, Empowering Family Farmers for Inclusive Market Access. It targets 250,000 to 500,000 family farmers, especially women and young people. The programme is aligned with Feed Salone's priorities and integrates climate resilience, value chain upgrading and inclusive market systems.

Research, Innovation and Youth

Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT. The Ministry signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Alliance in early 2026 to collaborate on agricultural research.

World Food Prize Foundation. On 29 September 2026, the Ministry and the Foundation held the second Sierra Leone Youth Institute, together with national education and research institutions.

Data, Evidence and Delivery Systems

National Crop Production Survey. Conducted with development partners, the survey is now an annual exercise. It gives Government and investors reliable estimates of area, yields and production by crop, district and ecology.

The Agriculture Transformation Office. Established in 2024 with support from the African Agricultural Transformation Initiative, is hosted by AGRA under a grant running to mid-2028. Government plans to institutionalise the Office as a permanent Agriculture Transformation Agency.

IDinsight. A two-year collaboration funded by the Fund for Innovation in Development completed the monitoring, evaluation and learning framework for Feed Salone, and built a prototype AI-powered data system for the Ministry.

Private Sector

Year Three showed public and private investment working together. Several projects announced in the first two years of Feed Salone became operational. The expanded Sierra Leone Flour Mill at Cline Town was commissioned in April, followed by the new Sonoco mill and silo complex in May. Jolaks increased the throughput of its palm oil refinery, and Pee Cee Agriculture expanded its onion production.

Targeted government action helped unlock this investment. It included support with land acquisition, duty waivers on essential equipment and a 35 per cent import duty on eggs, which is already encouraging new investment in local poultry. Much of this year's agribusiness lending was channeled through domestic banks, backed by international risk-sharing facilities. Expanding that credit will be central to making the transformation self-sustaining.

This section highlights key private investments in the sector.

Private sector highlights

Major investments that became operational in 2026



Commissioning the new mill, 30 April 2026

Sierra Leone Flour Mill

Cline Town, Freetown

USD 50m+ MILL EXPANSION

His Excellency the President commissioned the expanded Sierra Leone Flour Mill on 30 April 2026, adding to the country's flour-milling capacity. The expansion is worth more than USD 50 million, including USD 12 million in IFC financing.



Sonoco mill and silo complex

Sonoco SL

Freetown

600 t/day WHEAT MILLING CAPACITY

Working with Eurograin, Sonoco SL opened a new wheat flour mill in Freetown in May 2026, backed by a USD 23 million investment from Proparco. With 40,000 tonnes of silo storage, it can produce about 140,000 tonnes of flour a year, raising the share of flour milled in Sierra Leone.



At the Jolaks refinery

Jolaks Manufacturing

Palm oil refining

300 t/day REFINING CAPACITY

Jolaks is scaling up its palm oil refinery. A USD 20 million Proparco senior loan, originated through ARIA, financed expansion, working capital and a biomass plant expected to save about 9,200 tonnes of CO₂ a year. With investor support from Invest Salone, capacity utilisation rose from 30 to 50 per cent.

Private sector highlights

Expanding rice and onion production at home



Packing onions at Loko Masama

Pee Cee Agriculture

Loko Masama, Port Loko District

140 ha ONIONS

Pee Cee Agriculture continues to expand local onion production. By April 2026 it had 140 hectares under cultivation, up from 85 hectares a year earlier, with more than 500 women working on the farm and in processing. Its shift to local production is one of the main reasons onion imports fell by more than 80 per cent in 2025.



Visit to Fambul Rice, Tormabum

Fambul Rice

Tormabum, Bonthe District

1,000+ ha RICE IN 2025/26

Fambul Rice is farming more than 1,000 hectares of rice at Tormabum in 2025/26 using drones and precision agriculture, and plans to double this area next season. It also plans a 50,000-tonne-a-year mill and an outgrower scheme for 700 farmers, at least 40 per cent of them women.



Field visit, Jamjay Agricultural

Jamjay Agricultural

Mile 91, Tonkolili District

5,750+ MT RICE A YEAR

Jamjay Agricultural produces more than 5,750 tonnes of rice and 1,700 tonnes of sorghum a year. It aims to reach 20,000 tonnes of rice and 9,000 tonnes of sorghum by the end of the 2026 production period.

Private sector highlights

Building the base for feed, poultry and seed



The SLENC team in the maize fields

SLENC Ltd

Moyamba District

120 ha HYBRID MAIZE

SLENC Ltd, a women-led agribusiness, has grown from a five-acre pilot to 120 hectares of mechanised hybrid maize in five years, an almost 60-fold expansion. It supplies maize for poultry feed and employs more than 200 young people, about 70 per cent of them women. It is helping to build a domestic supply of animal feed.



Layer house at Tokeh

Regeneration Investment Fund

Tokeh, Western Area

20,000 LAYING BIRDS

The Regeneration Investment Fund (RIF) has expanded and modernised its six-year-old layer farm at Tokeh. The farm now keeps 20,000 birds in a cage system. The expansion was supported by government-backed concessional finance and an FSRP matching grant disbursed in 2026.



Seed plot at Kangahun

Smart Farms (SL) Ltd

Kangahun

1,000+ FARMERS A YEAR

Smart Farms, a Sierra Leonean agribusiness founded in 2014, is building a rice and maize seed business. In 2026 it set up a 5-hectare irrigated seed-multiplication site at Kangahun under a five-year partnership with SLARI. With outgrowers in seven districts, it reports reaching more than 1,000 farmers a year.



INTERVENTIONS

PROGRESS UNDER PILLARS



STRATEGIC PILLARS

Six strategic pillars guide the implementation of the Feed Salone Strategy. These pillars were designed to address specific challenges in the agricultural sector and beyond, forming the foundation of the Strategy. Important progress has been made across all the Six Strategic Pillars during the first year.

PILLAR 1: MECHANIZATION & IRRIGATION

During Year Three, the government continued to expand access to agricultural machinery, strengthen irrigation systems, and bring more productive lowlands into cultivation. The emphasis moved beyond the provision of equipment towards using mechanization and water management to increase cultivated areas, support multiple cropping seasons, and raise domestic food production.

Driving Rice Self-Sufficiency through Expanded Production

Sierra Leone continued to expand domestic rice production during the period under review. The 2025 National Crop Production Survey estimated 661,016 hectares under rice cultivation and 1.44 million metric tonnes of paddy rice produced nationally. Paddy production increased by 4.21 percent over 2024, while the national average yield reached 2.37 metric tonnes per hectare. These results provide a stronger production base for Feed Salone as investments in mechanization, irrigation, seed systems and commercial rice clusters continue to scale.

Mechanisation for the 2026 season

New machinery for faster, larger planting



New tractors ready for deployment



Tractors for priority rice districts

MECHANISATION IN NUMBERS

40

new tractors deployed to priority districts and rice clusters ahead of the 2026 planting season

Timely land preparation lets farmers plant on time and **cultivate larger areas**. The smaller power tillers suit swamp conditions and open mechanised farming to **women and young people**.

400

power tillers being distributed to inland valley swamp farmer associations, with operator training

Sources: Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security; Agricultural Value Chain Development Project (AVDP), 2026.

Scaling Mechanization for the 2026 Planting Season

Ahead of the 2026 planting season, the government deployed 40 new tractors to priority production districts and rice clusters. Timely land preparation is one of the main limits on expanding production. When farmers have machinery at the right time, they can plant on schedule, cultivate larger areas, and bring more lowland and rice-cluster land into use. Building on this, the next step is to strengthen how machines are allocated, maintained, operated, fueled and paid for, so that the national fleet stays in working order and reaches more farmers.

Revitalizing Inland Valley Swamps (IVS) and Water Access for Year-Round Cultivation

Feed Salone continues to prioritise inland valley swamps for year-round rice production. In the 2025 season, swamps supported by the Agricultural Value Chain Development Project (AVDP) covered 1,831 hectares in seven districts and produced 5,064 MT of rice. A further 485 hectares have since been rehabilitated and brought into cultivation.

Inland valley swamps for year-round rice

AVDP-supported swamps in Bo, Bonthe, Moyamba, Pujehun, Kenema, Kailahun and Kono



INLAND VALLEY SWAMPS IN NUMBERS

1,831 ha

of swamp rice cultivated in the 2025 season

5,064 MT

of rice harvested from those swamps

2.6–2.9

MT per hectare across the seven districts

+485 ha

more rehabilitated and cultivated since

Next: six **100-hectare irrigation packages** in Bonthe, Moyamba, Pujehun, Kambia, Port Loko and Tonkolili, so that farmers can grow rice **more than once a year**.

Sources: Agricultural Value Chain Development Project (AVDP); Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, 2026.

Other water control and machinery initiatives include six 100-hectare irrigation packages under development in Bonthe, Moyamba, Pujehun, Kambia, Port Loko and Tonkolili. Twenty solar-powered boreholes are bringing water to rice and vegetable areas, with twelve more under development. Alongside this, 400 power tillers are being distributed to swamp farmer associations in the south-east, with training in operation and maintenance. These smaller machines suit swamp conditions, reduce manual land preparation and open mechanised farming to women and young people.

Advancing Large-Scale Irrigation and Commercial Production in Tormabum

Tormabum remains at the centre of Feed Salone's drive to rebuild Sierra Leone's historic rice bowl. Irrigation works are advancing through two major construction packages covering 3,250 hectares, including 2,250 hectares under one package and 1,000 hectares under a second. The works are designed to provide the water-control infrastructure required for reliable, large-scale and multiple-season rice production.

The irrigation investment is already being matched by stronger production activity. By July 2026, more than 5,500 hectares were under cultivation in Tormabum through a combination of private, military and farmer-led production, the largest cultivated area recorded in the region in the previous four years. Within this expansion, financial support to agribusinesses enabled 2,500 hectares of rice cultivation in Bonthe during the reporting period. This convergence of public infrastructure and commercial production is central to the emerging rice-cluster model.

Building the Next Pipeline of Irrigated Production Areas

Tormabum: cultivation at scale

Private investment, the Armed Forces and public irrigation, Bonthe District



Rice fields at Tormabum



Irrigation canal under construction

TORMABUM IN NUMBERS

5,500+ ha

under rice by July 2026, the
largest area in four years

1,000+ ha

farmed by Fambul Rice,
using drones

2,000+ ha

farmed by the Armed Forces
(RSLAF)

3,250 ha

of irrigation works under
construction

Irrigation will let farmers grow **more than one rice crop a year**. Next: an **industrial rice mill** of about 8 MT an hour, due for completion by early 2027.

Sources: Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, 2026.

Beyond the major rice hubs, Feed Salone is expanding the pipeline for small-scale irrigation. Preparatory procurement has advanced for 3,000 hectares of boli-land irrigation across Bonthe, Moyamba, Pujehun, Kambia, Port Loko and Tonkolili. This complements the 600 hectares of IVS irrigation already under development in the same six districts and broadens the geographic base for water-managed rice and vegetable production.

PILLAR 2: SEEDS AND INPUTS SYSTEMS

At the start of Feed Salone, the Ministry and its partners adopted a National Seed Systems Transformation Roadmap to give every farmer access to quality, climate-resilient, certified seed. Three years on, the core of a national seed system is in place, and for three seasons the government has supplied its rice seed programmes from Sierra Leonean producers, without imports. The system now has:

- A certification agency with its own laboratory: SLeSCA and the National Seed Testing Laboratory at Mile 91.
- A pipeline of new varieties: 32 rice, maize and cassava varieties developed by SLARI and its partners.
- A growing network of commercial seed producers: including the country's first registered foundation seed producers for cassava, in eight districts.
- The first controls on seed entering the country at the three main border crossings.

Certification and Quality Assurance

In October 2025, President Julius Maada Bio officially launched the National Seed Testing Laboratory at Mile 91, Tonkolili District. The laboratory is managed by the Sierra Leone Seed Certification Agency (SLeSCA) and equipped with modern seed-testing equipment, giving the country its own capacity to test and certify seed to credible standards.

SLeSCA has tightened field inspection, sampling, mandatory laboratory testing and enforcement, and in 2026 introduced a quality control protocol for cassava seed certification. It has set up seed control operations at the country's three main border crossings, where trained staff monitor seed imports and stop unauthorised and substandard seed.

Seed quality, tested at home

Certification and quality assurance by SLeSCA, Tonkolili District



National Seed Testing Laboratory, Mile 91



Inside the laboratory

SEED QUALITY IN NUMBERS

Oct 2025

National Seed Testing Laboratory launched by the President

3

main border crossings with seed control operations

3 seasons

of rice seed supplied by local producers

Field inspection, sampling and **mandatory laboratory testing** have been tightened, and a **quality-control protocol for cassava seed** was introduced in 2026.

Sources: Sierra Leone Seed Certification Agency (SLeSCA); Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, 2026.

New Varieties

At its Rokupr Agricultural Research Centre, the Sierra Leone Agricultural Research Institute (SLARI) presented new varieties developed with international partners and Government funding: 16 rice, 8 maize and 8 cassava varieties, bred for high yields, nutrition and adaptation to different agro-ecological zones. The cassava releases, developed with the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), include Game Changer, Baba 70, Obasanjo 2, No Hunger and Poundable, also known as Maada Cassava, in recognition of the President's support for agriculture.

Building a Commercial Seed System

With World Bank financing through the Food System Resilience Program (FSRP), IITA and SLARI onboarded eight community-based foundation seed producers in Kailahun, Kenema, Bo, Bonthe, Bombali, Tonkolili, Kambia and Port Loko, each cultivating half a hectare of the new cassava varieties.

New crop varieties for Sierra Leone

Developed by SLARI with international partners and Government funding



Rice trials



Vitamin A maize on trial



Improved cassava

NEW VARIETIES PRESENTED

32

new varieties, bred for yield and nutrition

16

rice varieties

8

maize varieties

8

cassava varieties

The cassava varieties, developed with IITA, include Game Changer, Baba 70, Obasanjo 2, No Hunger and Poundable, also known as **Maada Cassava** in recognition of the President's support for agriculture.

Sources: Sierra Leone Agricultural Research Institute (SLARI), Rokupr Agricultural Research Centre; IITA, 2026. Photographs: SLARI.

They are the country's first registered and certified foundation seed producers for cassava, which moves seed multiplication from research stations into the districts.

Soil testing for better fertiliser use

SLARI Soil Analysis Laboratory, Njala, rehabilitated with the OCP Foundation



Testing equipment



Flame photometer



Phosphorus analysis bench

SOIL HEALTH

10,000+

soil samples behind the national digital soil map

The rehabilitated laboratory is now a **national hub for soil fertility testing**. Measuring soil acidity and nutrient levels lets advisers recommend the **right fertiliser for each soil**, building on the National Soil Information System launched in Year Two.

Sources: Sierra Leone Agricultural Research Institute (SLARI); OCP Foundation; Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, 2026. Photographs: SLARI.

In April 2026, SLeSCA, the Ministry, IITA and SLARI trained 75 foundation seed producers of cassava, maize and soybean, seed inspectors and extension officers on certification standards, record keeping and post-harvest management. SLeSCA also trained district seed vendors and enterprises in handling, packaging, storage, marketing and compliance, bringing certified seed closer to farming communities.

The K-Rice Belt seed production complex at Rokupr, financed by the Republic of Korea, will add modern capacity for producing and processing rice seeds.

Digital Traceability

SLeSCA has introduced a computer-based national seed tracking system that follows seed from production and inspection through certification, packaging and marketing to farmers. It lays the foundation for a fully digital seed regulatory system.

Soil Health and Inputs

With support from the OCP Foundation, SLARI rehabilitated and re-equipped its Soil Analysis Laboratory at Njala, which now serves as a national hub for soil fertility testing. Precise analysis of soil acidity and nutrient levels allows evidence-based fertiliser recommendations, complementing the National Soil Information System launched in Year Two.

Food Safety and Aflatoxin Control

SLARI and IITA continued training and awareness campaigns on aflatoxin in maize and groundnut. Practical demonstrations of drying, sorting, storage and Aflasafe application proved effective in increasing farmers' willingness to adopt improved practices.

Soybean

Soybean for better household nutrition

Training extension and health workers to put soybean on the table



Locally grown soybean



Training in soybean processing



Cooking with soybean

SOYBEAN IN NUMBERS

220

extension workers, health workers and lead mothers trained

11

districts reached

4

new soybean products: soymilk, tofu, soy-ogiri and soy flour

The training links the crop to **household nutrition through health services**. Soybean entrepreneurs also received three days of training in **value addition and agribusiness**.

Sources: IITA; SLARI; Sierra Agrobased Industry; Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, 2026. Photographs: SLARI.

IITA trained 220 block extension supervisors, frontline extension workers, community health workers and lead mothers across 11 districts in soybean processing and use. The training links the crop to household nutrition through health services. Soybean entrepreneurs received a separate three-day training in value addition and agribusiness development, delivered by IITA, SLARI and Sierra Agrobased Industry.

Getting Technologies to Farmers

SLARI established technology and innovation parks on the Makeni, Bo and Kenema highways, with support from the West and Central African Council for Agricultural Research and Development (CORAF), FSRP, iREACH and the Government. The parks demonstrate new varieties and practices to farmers, agribusinesses, students and researchers.

PILLAR 3: AGGREGATION, PROCESSING & MARKET LINKAGES

Higher production only translates into farmer income when producers can aggregate, process, store, transport and sell what they grow at viable prices. Pillar 3 therefore brings together institutional procurement, strategic food reserves, processing infrastructure, rural connectivity and structured offtake to strengthen the market system around Sierra Leonean agriculture.

In Year Three, the focus shifted increasingly towards commercial operation: community mills supplying institutional markets, public procurement is reaching more farmers, strategic stocks are being rotated through military feeding, and the National Grain Reserve Policy has been approved. Major bridges and feeder roads are improving agricultural connectivity, while the Gbondapi and Tormabum processing centres have moved into their final delivery stages.

Home-grown food for school meals

Local procurement for the 2026/27 school year, with the World Food Programme



School feeding year open day



Local rice and pulses in store



Home-grown pulses

LOCAL PROCUREMENT BY AUGUST 2026

1,000+ MT

of local rice and pulses procured, of 2,500 MT

USD 900k+

spent on food grown in Sierra Leone

26

local suppliers: 22 for rice, 4 for pulses

22,000+

smallholder farmers linked to the supply

Every bag bought locally gives farmers a **reliable market** and keeps more of the school food budget **in Sierra Leone**.

Sources: World Food Programme; Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, 2026. Photographs: WFP.

Strengthening Institutional Demand Through Local Procurement

Institutional procurement remains one of the strongest markets for domestic agriculture. In Year Two, Government, WFP and the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education procured 2,044 MT of local rice for the 2024/25 Home-Grown School Feeding Programme. That rice came from more than 12,000 smallholder farmers in seven districts and injected more than NLe 45 million into rural economies.

In Year Three, the programme widened. By August 2026, more than 1,000 MT of locally produced rice and pulses had been secured for the 2026/27 school year, against a target of 2,500 MT. It came through 26 local suppliers and aggregators linked to more than 22,000 smallholder farmers. School meals are also diversifying. Between January and June 2026, more than 1,600 MT of food reached 1,204 schools, with decentralised purchasing increasingly including vegetables, orange-fleshed sweet potato and dried fish alongside rice and pulses.

From Strategic Stocks to an Operational National Grain Reserve

The National Grain Reserve is now buying, storing and rotating local rice. More than 10,000 bags of locally produced rice are held at the Kobia Store in Kambia District, placed through the Food System Resilience Program with support from the Sierra Leone Produce Marketing Company and WFP. In August 2026, the Ministry and the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF) signed an MoU for the military to buy rice from the reserve. In the first sale, RSLAF bought 9,000 bags of 50 kg, about 450 MT, for military feeding. The sale keeps stocks fresh and gives farmers a dependable market. A planned 4,000 MT silo and storage facility at Gbondapi will add capacity for paddy and milled rice.

An operational National Grain Reserve

Local rice stored for difficult days and rotated through public buyers



Local rice in the national reserve



Handover of local rice to the Armed Forces

NATIONAL GRAIN RESERVE

10,000+

bags of local rice placed in the reserve at Kobia, Kambia District

450 MT

bought by the Armed Forces in August 2026, 9,000 bags of 50 kg

4,000 MT

silo and storage facility planned at Gbondapi

The new **National Grain Reserve Policy** sets the framework for buying, storing and rotating local grain. Each sale to a public buyer keeps stocks fresh and gives farmers a **dependable market**.

Sources: Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security; Food Systems Resilience Project (FSRP); WFP, 2026.

Turning Community Rice Mills into Commercial Aggregation Hubs

The ten community rice-processing hubs installed with WFP in 2025 moved from installation to commercial operation. Located in seven major rice-producing districts, each can mill about one tonne of rice an hour. By August 2026, the network had milled 1,312 MT of rice and sold 845 MT of it to WFP for home-grown school feeding.

The hubs serve 245 farmer organisations and 4,235 farmers. The busiest are:

- **Takoradi Agricultural Business Centre, Kambia:** milled 295 MT and sold 250 MT to WFP.
- **Nongowa/Lambayama, Kenema:** milled 285 MT and sold 185 MT.
- **Ngoyilla Munde, Zimmi:** milled 235 MT and sold 155 MT.

70 mill operators have been trained, half of them women, and several hubs are run by women-led organisations.

The next step is to make the hubs commercially self-sustaining. That means working capital to buy paddy, prompt payment to farmers, regular maintenance, quality control, keeping trained operators, and reinvesting part of sales revenue. In Kambia, SLARI is also piloting improved parboiling equipment with mangrove rice farmers to reduce losses, improve grain quality and cut fuelwood and labour.

Community rice mills as commercial hubs

Ten hubs run by farmer organisations in seven rice-producing districts



Community rice mill



Milled rice for school meals



Women rice farmers

RICE HUBS BY AUGUST 2026

10

community hubs, each milling about 1 MT an hour

1,312 MT

of local rice milled

845 MT

sold to WFP for school meals

4,235

farmers in 245 farmer organisations served

Seventy mill operators have been trained, **half of them women**, and several hubs are run by **women-led organisations**.

Sources: World Food Programme; Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, 2026. Photographs: WFP.

Rice agro-industrial centres

Gbondapi and Tormabum: industrial milling and storage for the southern rice belt



Rice agro-industrial centre under construction

THE TWO CENTRES

2

centres, at Gbondapi and Tormabum

16 MT/hr

combined milling, 8 MT an hour each

10,000 MT

of storage for paddy and milled rice

Q1 2027

scheduled completion

Each centre combines **paddy reception, industrial milling, parboiling and drying** with solar power and rice-husk briquetting. They will handle larger volumes for **schools, the domestic market and the region**.

Sources: Sierra Leone Rice Agro-Industrial Cluster Project (SL-RAIC); Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, 2026.

Advancing the Gbondapi and Tormabum Rice Agro-Industrial Centres

Through the Sierra Leone Rice Agro-Industrial Cluster Project, the Ministry is building two large aggregation, processing and storage centres for the southern rice belt, at Gbondapi and Tormabum. Both are due for completion by Q1 2027. Each is built around an industrial mill of about 8 MT an hour, giving a combined 16 MT an hour, with around 10,000 MT of storage between them. The centres also include paddy reception, parboiling, drying, solar power and rice-husk briquetting.

In Year Three, civil works, equipment installation and energy and water systems advanced at both sites, in preparation for commercial operation. At Tormabum, the centre is being built alongside new irrigation, so that farmers can supply it all year round.

The model combines public investment in infrastructure with private operators in production, processing and marketing. Once running, the centres will handle the larger volumes that community mills cannot, supplying schools, the domestic market and, in time, the region.

From manual ferry to all-season access

Manowa Bridge, Peje Bongre Chiefdom, Kailahun District



Before: the manual cable ferry



After: the 183-metre Manowa Bridge

MANOWA BRIDGE IN NUMBERS

183 m

the longest of four new climate-resilient bridges

160,000+

people with reliable access all year round

4

chiefdoms served by the new crossing

60+ years

of crossings by manual cable ferry, now replaced

Built under the Smallholder Commercialization and Agribusiness Development Project (SCADeP), the bridge links farming communities to **markets, schools and health services**, and to regional trade routes.

Sources: Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, SCADeP, 2026.

Building Rural Connectivity from Farms to Markets

New bridges and feeder roads are shortening the journey from farm to aggregation point, mill and market, and making it easier to move produce all year round. Works under SCADeP and AVDP, and the next phase under CAMIP, are set out in the Infrastructure section under Enablers.

Connecting farms to markets

Bridges, feeder roads and farm tracks under SCADeP and AVDP



New bridge over the river



Linking farming communities



Rehabilitated feeder road

RURAL CONNECTIVITY IN NUMBERS

3

major bridges: Mattru Jong, Gendema and Manowa

421 km

of feeder roads, 224 km already complete

75 km

of farm tracks, 60 km already complete

3 + 7

AVDP bridges: 3 opened in March 2026, 7 under way

Next: **four more climate-resilient bridges** under CAMIP, at Sumbuya, Komrabai–Mile 91, Moselolo and Kabba Ferry, with link roads and market facilities.

Sources: SCADeP; Agricultural Value Chain Development Project (AVDP); Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, 2026.

PILLAR 4: AGRICULTURE FINANCE

Despite agriculture's importance to Sierra Leone's economy, the sector receives only around 3.5% of commercial bank lending. High risks, limited collateral and a shortage of affordable, long-term finance continue to constrain investment. In Year Three, Feed Salone made progress on two fronts: building a coordinated national agricultural finance system while expanding access to finance through existing programmes.

Building Policy and Institutional Architecture

During Year Three, MAFS and the Ministry of Finance finalised the National Agricultural Finance Policy (NAFP), establishing a framework to improve access to affordable finance, strengthen risk-sharing and mobilise private investment. Two complementary reforms are central to this approach.

National Agricultural Development Bank (NADB)

The proposed National Agricultural Development Bank (NADB) aims to address the shortage of long-term agricultural finance, mobilising capital and working alongside commercial banks and development finance institutions through lending, risk-sharing mechanisms, and technical assistance. Government advanced preparations for its institutional design and capitalisation, with up to USD 50 million identified under Sierra Leone's OPEC Fund country programme.

Agricultural Insurance Policy

The National Agricultural Insurance Policy was also finalised during Year Three, laying the foundation for a national, market-based insurance system to protect farmers and agribusinesses against drought, flooding and other agricultural risks. Through public-private partnerships, targeted premium subsidies and layered risk protection, the Policy aims to reduce risks for farmers and lenders, strengthen agricultural resilience and unlock private investment. A costed national programme has been developed to support phased implementation from 2027, subject to Government approval and financing.

Building farmer resilience through insurance

National Agricultural Insurance Policy, developed with UNCDF and K.M. Dastur & Company



Expanding Access to Credit through the Bank of Sierra Leone Facility

The NLe 230 million (USD 10 million) Agricultural Credit Facility, operated with the Bank of Sierra Leone, provided loans at 10% interest for up to 24 months. More than 90% of the facility was disbursed to 16 agribusinesses across priority value chains, supporting production, processing, mechanisation and agricultural inputs.

Catalysing Private Investment through Matching Grants

Matching grants continued to help mobilise private investment. Under the World Bank-supported Food System Resilience Programme (FSRP), 62 agribusinesses received awards totalling approximately USD 5.8 million, supporting investments in livestock, animal feed, rice and cassava. By requiring enterprises to contribute their own financing, the programme encourages private co-investment in machinery, processing, distribution and market expansion. Women-owned businesses accounted for 42% of grant recipients.

The EU-funded Salone Access to Finance (SATF) programme, implemented with UNCDF and participating financial institutions, further expanded access to blended finance. During Year Three, 32 MSMEs across the cocoa, rice, cassava, palm oil and poultry value chains received NLe 13.6 million in grants, matched by an equivalent amount in loans. Together, these mobilised NLe 27.3 million (approximately USD 1.2 million) in financing. Targeted support for women entrepreneurs also continued through the EWASME programme, which provided USD 450,000 in matching grants to 100 women-led rice enterprises, alongside business and financial management training.

Widening finance for agribusiness

Matching grants, new credit lines and a stronger rural finance network



Matching grants each grant is matched by the enterprise or a lender

FSRP • WORLD BANK

USD 5.8m

awarded to 62 agribusinesses across three value chains

27

22

13

■ Livestock and feed
■ Rice ■ Cassava

42% of awardees women-owned

SATF • EU AND UNCDF

NLe 27.3m

in blended finance for 32 MSMEs in five value chains

Grants

Loans

NLe 13.6m in grants, matched by an equal amount in loans

500+ applications by May 2026

EWASME • UNDP

USD 450k

in matching grants to 100 women-led rice enterprises

+25%

estimated rise in sales

29%

of new jobs held by youth

200 more women entrepreneurs trained

Credit lines and guarantees new facilities signed and approved in October 2025

EBID • VISTA BANK

USD 10m

credit line for SME and corporate lending, with agriculture a priority sector

FOSTER • AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK

USD 2.25m → USD 9m

A guarantee and grant package designed to mobilise four times its value in private finance by 2028

126,000+ farmers to reach **9,500 t** fertiliser

Rural finance network RFCIP II, funded by IFAD and delivered through APEX Bank



■ 17 Community Banks ■ 59 Financial Services Associations

76 rural finance institutions, all now being digitised

207,000+

loans issued by the network

USD 31.1m

total value of those loans

USD 7.8m

disbursed in agricultural loans

USD 12.6m

further funds mobilised in Year Three

PILLAR 5: AG TECH & CLIMATE SMART AGRICULTURE

Better information leads to better decisions, for farmers and for Government. In Year Three, MAFS invested in the data and digital tools that show who farms where, what each soil needs and what farmers need to know. These systems allow the Ministry to target inputs, advice and finance more precisely and lay the foundation for using data analytics and artificial intelligence in planning.

National Digital Farmer Registry

The National Digital Farmer Registry (NDFR) gives the Ministry a single record of who farms, where and what. It assigns each farmer a unique digital identity, maps the farm or plot and records the crops grown. The registry is being linked to the national identity system of the National Civil Registration Authority on the principle of One Farmer, One ID, which removes duplicate records. Registration is under way through web and mobile applications, with a target of 300,000 farmers by December 2026.

The registry is built as shared digital infrastructure. Once a farmer is registered, government, banks, insurers and agribusinesses can use the same record to deliver e-vouchers for inputs, advisory services, credit and insurance. The registry was developed with World Bank support through the Food System Resilience Program (FSRP).

Reaching Farmers with Advice

In October 2025, His Excellency the President launched Rural Farmers Radio 98.9 FM, established through RFCIP II, co-financed by IFAD and the Government (see Pillar 4). The station reaches about three quarters of the country, with transmission support from Africell. It broadcasts programmes on modern and climate-smart farming, financial literacy, entrepreneurship, and market and weather information.

Farmers can also call 899, the toll-free Interactive Voice Response line launched in 2022, for farming advice in local languages. The line also lets farmers put questions to extension officers, complementing the work of extension staff in the field.

Soil Data and Fertiliser Recommendations

MAFS, SLARI and the European Union have developed a national digital soil mapping system from more than 10,000 soil samples collected through the National Comprehensive Soil Survey. The online platform brings soil data into one place, with crop-soil suitability maps, fertiliser recommendation tools and a GIS data portal for farmers, investors and policymakers. SLARI's rehabilitated Soil Analysis Laboratory at Njala allows samples to be analysed in the country.

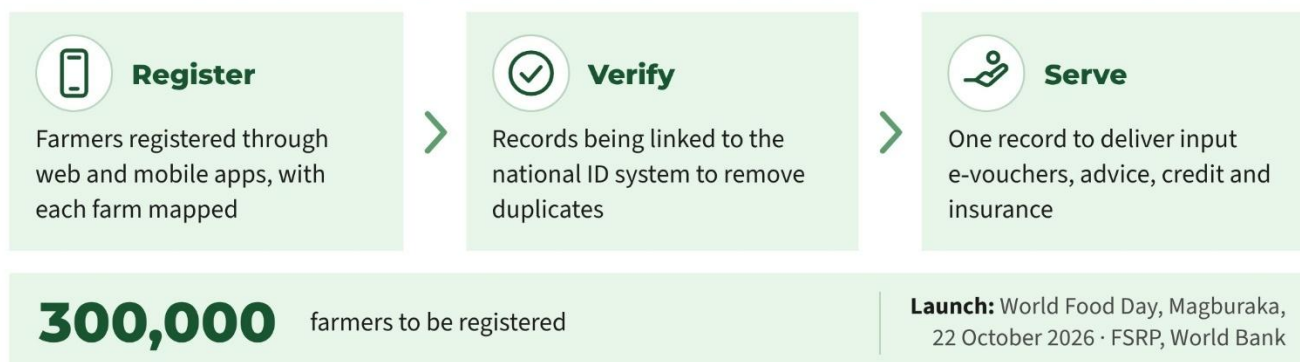
In 2026, FSRP launched a Soil Health and Digital Mapping Initiative. A regional consortium that includes IITA, IFDC and the African Plant Nutrition Institute delivers it, working with SLARI and Njala University. The initiative will update national soil maps, build a national Soil Information System and develop site-specific fertiliser recommendations for rice, maize and cassava. It will also train Sierra Leonean researchers and laboratory technicians.

Data for smarter farming

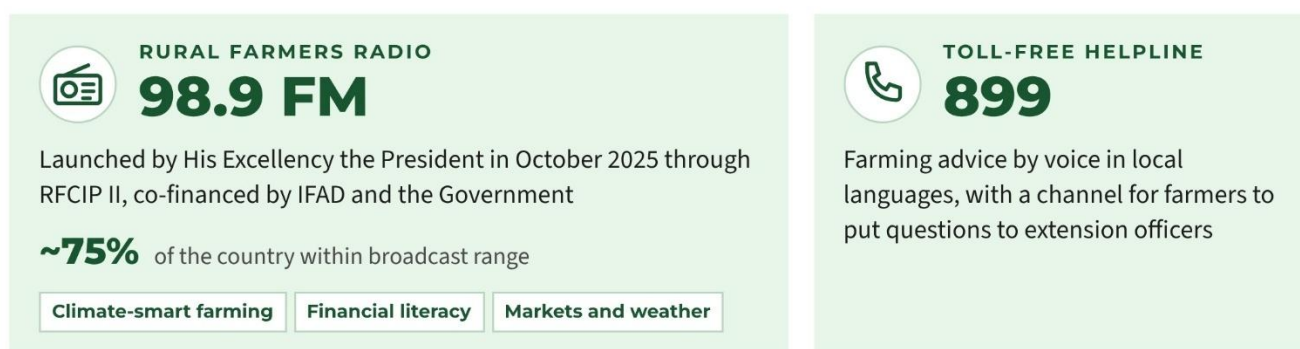
Knowing who farms where, what the soil needs and what farmers need to know



National Digital Farmer Registry One Farmer, One ID



Reaching farmers with advice by radio and by phone

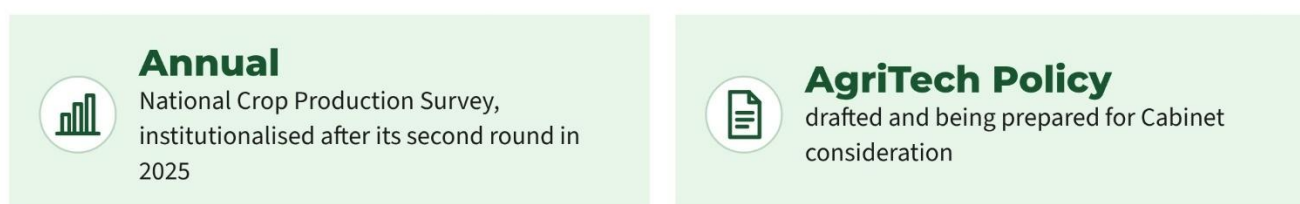


From soil data to fertiliser advice Soil Health and Digital Mapping Initiative, 2026



Partners: funded by FSRP and delivered with SLARI, Njala University, IITA, IFDC and the African Plant Nutrition Institute

Foundations for evidence-based policy



Sources: Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, 2026; IFDC, 2026; Premier Media, 2025.

livestock, poultry, aquaculture, crop production, fabrication and agro-processing, and is scheduled to open officially in November 2026.

Savings and Enterprise through SL-RAIC

Under the African Development Bank-funded Sierra Leone Rice Agro-Industry Cluster Project (SL-RAIC), 120 women and young people gained entrepreneurship and business development skills. Fifteen women's groups adopted the Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA) model. Of these, 14 have completed their first savings cycle, with a share-out of NLe 304,866 and loan recovery above 95 per cent.

Women Leading on Nutrition

Under the Food System Resilience Program (FSRP), more than 300 Mother-to-Mother Support Groups in six districts promote infant and young child feeding, dietary diversity and better household nutrition. Their work helps turn higher production into healthier diets for families.

Women and Youth in WFP-Supported Value Chains

In Falaba, ten women-led livestock cooperatives were established and trained in business and financial management. Under WFP's SAVING project, five women-led Nyam Nyam Pap centres and an out-grower system focused on women and young people link production to processing and markets.

Youth Leadership in Food Systems

In September 2026, the Ministry held the second Sierra Leone Youth Institute in Freetown with the World Food Prize Foundation, the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education and Njala University. There, 16 secondary school students presented research and solutions on food security, climate change and agricultural innovation. The two winners of the first edition in 2025, Borlaug Scholars Nancy Koyema and Joseph Moripeh, represented Sierra Leone at the World Food Prize Foundation's DialogueNEXT and the Kenya Youth Institute in Nairobi, Kenya.

The next generation of food system leaders

World Food Prize Foundation Sierra Leone Youth Institute, second edition, Freetown



The 2026 Borlaug Scholars



Students, teachers and partners

SIERRA LEONE YOUTH INSTITUTE 2026

2nd

edition, 29 September 2026

16

secondary school students
presented research

2

new Borlaug Scholars: **Aminata F. N. Kabba** and
David Issa Komeh

The background of the slide is a photograph of a rice field. In the foreground, several stalks of rice are in sharp focus, showing their green panicles. The background is blurred, showing more rice plants and some structures. A dark green, semi-transparent rectangular overlay covers the middle portion of the image, where the text is located. Decorative wavy lines in shades of green and yellow are present at the top and bottom edges of the slide.

LOOKING AHEAD

YEAR FOUR PRIORITIES

LOOKING AHEAD: YEAR FOUR

Rice remains the national priority. At Tormabum, two irrigation construction packages cover 3,250 hectares and are designed for more than one crop a year. The Gbondapi and Tormabum Rice Agro-Industrial Centres are scheduled for completion in 2027, adding industrial milling, drying and storage to the southern rice belt. In the north, the USD 75 million Sierra Leone Rice Special Agro-Industrial Processing Zone (SLERAZ) moves into full implementation in Kambia and Port Loko, developing integrated rice production and processing hubs. The K-Rice Belt seed complex at Rokupr will raise the supply of quality seed.

Year Four will also focus on moving the new finance architecture from policy to operation. The Ministry will advance the design and capitalisation of the National Agricultural Development Bank, and building on the weather-index pilot, will mobilise financing for a phased national agricultural insurance programme.

The National Digital Farmer Registry, targeting 300,000 farmers, will become the basis for delivering e-vouchers, advice, credit and insurance. Together with updated soil maps and site-specific fertiliser recommendations for rice, maize and cassava, it will allow the Ministry to begin using data analytics, including artificial intelligence tools, to target inputs and advice more precisely.

The USD 105 million Livestock and Livelihoods Development Project (LLDP) will extend support for livestock productivity, enterprise and veterinary services to 62,250 households across 11 districts, and One Health investments will strengthen animal-health surveillance and laboratories. In poultry, housing capacity already in place allows local egg production to grow quickly.

Year Four puts more weight on processing and value addition. The USD 40 million Cassava Industrialisation Programme is planned to start in 2027 and will expand cassava processing and market development. For cocoa, cashew, coffee and oil palm, the emphasis is on processing and quality: the government will complete consultations on cocoa-sector reform, including the proposed National Cocoa Board, and strengthen traceability and quality standards for export markets.

Year Four will also focus on finishing the works already under way: the remaining AVDP feeder roads, farm tracks and crossings, and the Tomparie Bridge. CAMIP is planned to add four climate-resilient bridges, with link roads and market infrastructure.

The emphasis in Year Four is delivery. With the major programmes financed and under way, the task is to turn them into irrigated land, working mills, healthier herds and wider access to credit and insurance. Progress will be measured against the goals Feed Salone set from the start: more food grown and processed at home, a lower food import bill, and more jobs and income in rural areas. The Ministry will keep reporting against these results, so that partners, investors and farmers can see what each investment delivers.

Year Four priorities

Key areas where investment turns into delivery



Rice cluster site

EXPANDED RICE PRODUCTION

3,250 ha

of land to be served by irrigation canals, with the Gbondapi and Tormabum agro-industrial centres due in 2027



Improved cassava

CASSAVA INDUSTRIALISATION

USD 40m

programme, mainly financed by the Islamic Development Bank, starting in 2027



Commercial layer farm

LIVESTOCK AND POULTRY

USD 105m

programme, providing livestock, enterprise and veterinary support to 62,250 households in 11 districts



Access to finance

POLICY INTO PRACTICE

Agric finance

implementing the new national policy, including an agricultural development bank, an insurance scheme and new credit lines



Vegetable farmer

NATIONAL DIGITAL FARMER REGISTRY

300,000

farmers to be registered: one record for e-vouchers, advice, credit and insurance

CASH CROPS

4 crops

cocoa, cashew, coffee and oil palm, with the focus shifting to processing, quality and traceability for export markets



Cocoa pods

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**Ministry of Agriculture
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