

Purchase for Progress - P4P

Sierra Leone



QUICK FACTS

Project start date:
2009

Number of farmers' organizations (FOs): 25

Number of members:
7,739 (54% women)

Sales to WFP:
US\$ 709,391 (1,092 mt)

Main commodities:
Rice, gari (processed cassava), pigeon peas, fortified blended foods and pulses

Main P4P activities

- Competitive tenders
- Direct contracting

Funding:

P4P's technical and administrative costs in Sierra Leone for the first three years were sponsored by the Howard G. Buffett Foundation. All food purchases are financed by donations to WFP's regular operations.

Figures as of March 2014

P4P in Sierra Leone

In Sierra Leone, P4P aims to increase the production capacity of smallholder farmers and enable them to access sustainable markets. WFP's presence as a reliable market gives agricultural development partners and farmers the opportunity to test innovative approaches for improving smallholder commercialization of rice and other staple foods. Assured demand by WFP also provides an incentive for farmer's organizations (FOs) to invest in production and develop their capacity. P4P and partners are working to improve farmers' access to production inputs, credit and land, expanding the markets accessible to them. P4P has also been integrated into the government's Smallholder Commercialization Programme (SCP), which focuses on improving productivity, marketing, infrastructure and rural finance.

Background

In Sierra Leone, two-thirds of the population depend on subsistence agriculture for their livelihood. Smallholder farmers still face many constraints, as agricultural production is recovering from the decline caused by a decade-long war. Limited access to inputs and credit hinders production, while poor processing and storage practices reduce produce quality and contribute to high post-harvest losses. Weak infrastructure and difficulty reaching markets provide little incentive for farmers to invest in production. Local production of rice, the main staple, remains inadequate to satisfy national requirements, making the country heavily dependent on food imports.

Learning and sharing

P4P has emphasized an honest and transparent examination of what works and does not. After five years of testing various approaches on the ground, the pilot is currently being evaluated. Key lessons are being compiled and will be shared widely.

Achievements

- **Collective sales:** P4P has acted as a catalyst for collective sales by FOs, allowing the majority of organizations to sell quality processed rice in bulk for the first time.
- **Crop quality:** Nearly all FOs were able to fulfil WFP quality requirements, indicating the success of capacity development activities carried out by WFP and its partners.
- **Partnership:** P4P has coordinated with a wide variety of agricultural and market stakeholders, allowing farmers to access training, credit and agricultural inputs.
- **Government partnership:** P4P has contributed to the SCP flagship programme and will continue to expand its involvement.
- **Sustainability:** FOs are beginning to perceive WFP as a business partner instead of an aid agency. In addition, selling to WFP has increased the exposure of FOs to other buyers and helped them gain confidence. This has been particularly important for women. One commercial bank has started providing credit to smallholders due to successful sales.



World Food Programme

For more information
wfp.p4p@wfp.org

Last update: August 2014



Aiah Fundowa, a farmer from Njagwema village in Sierra Leone's eastern district of Kono, is head of Quendordonya Farmers' Association. His organization joined P4P in 2010, and each year they have increased their sales to WFP, reaching 30 mt in 2012. Aiah has been able to increase his income and make investments to increase production, which as benefits the entire community.

"We need a tractor and we are planning to work so that we can afford to get one. We want to redouble our efforts. Next year we want to supply WFP with 1,000 bags of rice!"

KEY PARTNERS

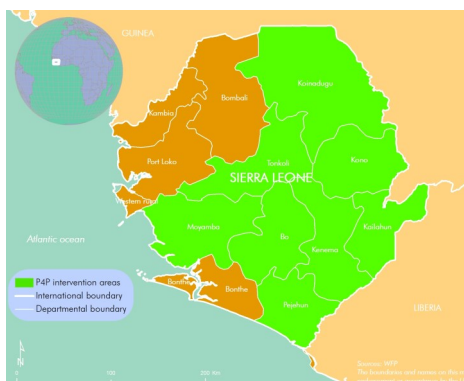
- CARE
- Catholic Relief Services (CRS)
- Concern Worldwide
- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
- Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)
- International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA)
- Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security (MAFFS)
- National Federation of Farmers of Sierra Leone (NFFSL)
- PAGE (implemented by ACDI/VOCA and World Vision)
- Sierra Leone Agricultural Research Institute
- Welthungerhilfe

Challenges

- **FO capacity:** More capacity development is necessary at all levels of the value chain, to assist FOs to meet WFP's quantity, quality, and marketing requirements. especially as new organizations join the programme.
- **FO leadership:** Effective governance and leadership continue to pose significant challenges for FOs. They especially require more support to engage with financial service providers. Supply-side support organizations were often limited by funding constraints, and projects which were part of P4P ended due to resource limitations on several occasions.
- **Procurement:** Local food prices in Sierra Leone are highly volatile and often more costly than the international price of the same commodity. Because WFP's procurement policy obligates the organization to buy maximum quantities of food at the lowest prices available, procurement from smallholder farmers in Sierra Leone has been limited. In addition, WFP's lengthy payment process compared to direct selling at the farm gate has caused some farmers to sell their produce to other buyers, defaulting on WFP contracts.

Partnerships

Partnerships have been vital to the success of P4P in Sierra Leone. The government has been a major partner throughout, undertaking joint missions with WFP and providing supply-side support. Fellow UN agencies, such as FAO, provided technical support through the construction of agro-business centres and other initiatives. NGOs including Concern Worldwide, GIZ, IITA, PAGE and World Vision provided training and resources to farmers along the value chain. The National Federation of Farmers of Sierra Leone (NFFSL) facilitated active participation of farmers, and Sierra Leone Agricultural Research Institute assisted with quality control. PAGE/World Vision, Concern Worldwide, and GIZ also provided sponsorship and assistance with post-harvest handling and transportation. The Programme Advisory Group (PAG) in Sierra Leone, consisting of key stakeholders, is known to be a successful example of effective P4P coordination mechanisms.



Read more about

[WFP in Sierra Leone](#)

[Farmers progress](#)

[Awards for best farmers' organizations in Africa](#)

WFP ACTIVITIES IN SIERRA LEONE

WFP's main focus in Sierra Leone is assisting poor, food-insecure and vulnerable households in rural, peri-urban and urban areas. It also supports the government in its transition from recovery to longer-term development. Since 2009, WFP interventions have included school feeding programmes, nutritional rehabilitation for vulnerable populations, community asset building and land rehabilitation in rural areas. Food procured through P4P, including rice, gari and blended foods, has been distributed through the school feeding programme and accounts for 70 percent of WFP procurement in the country.