MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY

2024 - 2025

FEED SALONE

TWO YEAR REPORT





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MINISTER'S FOREWORD

October 16 is a landmark date in Sierra Leone. As we join the world in celebrating World Food Day, we also mark the anniversary of Feed Salone — President Bio's flagship initiative to transform our food systems. Launched in 2023, it set out to achieve food security and inclusive economic growth by transforming our national food systems.

What began as a bold commitment is now delivering real, measurable progress. This second annual report, covering October 2024 to October 2025, provides a clear account of that progress — showing how we have moved from planning to delivery, with results that matter to farmers, communities, and the economy.

At the heart of Feed Salone is a commitment to transparency and accountability. This report reflects that — outlining what has been done, the challenges we face, and where we are headed. I strongly believe that open reporting builds public trust and reinforces the shared responsibility of transforming our food systems.

In the past year, we've seen tangible gains. Food production is up, imports are down, new financing tools are in place, and rural infrastructure is improving. Thousands of farmers and agribusinesses have received support. And critically, we've strengthened our data systems — completing the first-ever National Crop Production Survey, with an annual commitment moving forward.

These achievements are the result of a whole-of-government effort, led by His Excellency President Julius Maada Bio. The Presidential Council, which he chairs, ensures food systems are integrated into national planning — from infrastructure and trade to economic growth and climate resilience.

As we enter Year Three, our focus is to make this transformation irreversible. We will deepen investments across the six strategic pillars and keep delivering results where they matter most. To sustain momentum, we must create the right conditions for the private sector to thrive — and lead. With the right policies, infrastructure, and incentives, the private sector can drive the transformation at scale, turning our collective ambition into lasting impact.

Our vision remains the same: a food system that delivers dignity, opportunity, and prosperity for every Sierra Leonean. Feed Salone is how we will get there — and the results are showing.

Let us stay the course.



DR. HENRY MUSA KPAKA
MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY

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
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
SMP	Seed Multiplication Program
SATF	Salone Access to Finance
TBI	Tony Blair Institute
UNCDF	United Nations Capital Development Fund
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
WFP	World Food Program
WFPF	World Food Prize Foundation
WPF	World Poultry Foundation

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 two years. Every step forward reflects the commitment and collaboration of individuals, institutions, communities, and partners working toward the shared goal of transforming Sierra Leone's food systems.

First, we thank His Excellency, President Julius Maada Bio, for his commitment and 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, including the Bank of Sierra Leone and the National Investment Board (NIB), for enabling an integrated approach — aligning agriculture with trade, finance, climate action, infrastructure, and public health — through the Presidential Council and its Technical Secretariat.

Special appreciation goes to the Presidential Initiative for Climate Change, Renewable Energy, and Food Security, as well as to our national research and regulatory institutions — including the Sierra Leone Agricultural Research Institute (SLARI), the Sierra Leone Seed Certification Agency (SLeSCA), the National Fertilizer Regulatory Agency (NaFRA), and the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) — for placing science, data, and innovation at the heart of our delivery.

We deeply value the technical and financial contributions of our international partners. In particular, we thank the European Union (EU), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the World Bank Group (WB), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), Islamic Development Bank (IsDB), African Development Bank (AfDB), Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA), OPEC Fund for International Development (OFID), World Food Programme (WFP), AGRA, the Tony Blair Institute (TBI), the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF), British International Investment (BII) and its Agribusiness Resilience and Investment Accelerator (ARIA) initiative, the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) and Invest Salone, the Qatar Fund for Development (QFFD), the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Overseas Development Institute (ODI), the World Food Prize Foundation and the World Poultry Foundation (WPF).

We also acknowledge the contributions of our bilateral partners, including but not limited to the Governments of China and the Republic of Korea, 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. Without your

commitment and energy, we cannot achieve the bold vision of Feed Salone. You are the real drivers of national progress.

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 (ACF), its Secretariat, and member countries, for their solidarity, shared learning, and collective ambition.

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

PRESIDENT'S CALL TO TRANSFORM OUR FOOD SYSTEMS

The transformation of Sierra Leone's food systems under Feed Salone is inseparable from the bold leadership of His Excellency, President Julius Maada Bio. From day one, the President has treated agriculture not as a routine development issue, but as a national economic and strategic imperative — tied to growth, dignity, and sovereignty.

His leadership has been both visionary and hands-on. Through personal oversight, regular field visits, and convening whole-of-government coordination, President Bio has ensured that Feed Salone moves from policy to delivery. He has consistently championed the idea that farming must be dignified, that agriculture must be profitable, and that Sierra Leone must grow what it eats.

Crucially, the President has shifted national thinking — mobilizing ministries, partners, youth, and farmers to treat agriculture as a business. His emphasis on reducing import dependency, raising productivity, and creating resilient food systems has already yielded results: rice imports have dropped, the production increased, food prices have stabilized, and severe food insecurity has declined significantly in just one year.

The Feed Salone agenda, shaped and championed by the President, has laid the foundation for an irreversible transformation of Sierra Leone's food systems — one that positions agriculture as a sustainable engine of inclusive economic growth. Two years on, that vision is taking root, and delivering results.

"Feed Salone is a promise to ourselves — that Sierra Leone will rise through the strength of its farmers, the unity of its people, and the power of self-reliance. We are building a system to grow what we eat, a nation that values what it produces, and leaves no one behind. Our goal is to create irreversible change — a food system that endures and uplifts for generations."

His Excellency

Dr. Julius Maada Bio

PRESIDENT | REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the second year of implementation of Feed Salone, covering the period from October 2024 to October 2025. The programme, launched in 2023 by His Excellency, President Julius Maada Bio, aims to address food security, strengthen agricultural value chains, and promote inclusive and climate-resilient economic growth through a systems-based approach.

In its second year, Feed Salone transitioned to scaled delivery. Interventions expanded across six priority areas: mechanisation and irrigation, seeds and input systems, agro-processing and market access, agricultural finance, climate-smart agriculture and digital tools, and support for women and youth in agribusiness. Coordination was facilitated through The Presidential Council and its Technical Secretariat, with delivery supported by a growing network of implementation partners and national agencies.

Food production increased across several crops, particularly rice, where local output rose by an estimated 8% compared to the previous year. This contributed to a 10% reduction in rice imports and an estimated $15 million in foreign exchange savings. These production gains were reflected in market prices: imported rice prices declined by 20%, onions by 32%, and eggs by 19%, indicating improvements in domestic supply and market integration.

Significant progress was made in seed systems. The Sierra Leone Agricultural Research Institute (SLARI) released seven improved rice varieties, three cassava, and four hybrid maize varieties. To support seed certification and quality control, the Sierra Leone Seed Certification Agency (SLeSCA) commissioned a new national seed testing laboratory.

In mechanisation and irrigation, Feed Salone supported the training of hundreds of youth as tractor operators, financed machinery service providers, and procured 30 harvesters, 10 industrial rice mills, and over 23 grain stores. Infrastructure works advanced on two major irrigation schemes in Tormabum and Gbondapi, covering a combined 5,000 hectares of land.

To improve market access and processing capacity, rice aggregation and processing hubs progressed in Tormabum, Gbondapi, and the Special Agro-Industrial Processing Zone (SAPZ) in Kambia. In parallel, public procurement mechanisms absorbed over 2,000 metric tonnes of local rice into the school feeding programme, reaching more than 270,000 children and reducing dependency on imported food for institutional supply chains. Private sector investments in cocoa processing also expanded, with associated gains in export volumes and local employment.

Access to finance was strengthened through multiple channels. Over $10 million in agricultural credit was disbursed to farmers and agribusinesses, alongside $13 million in matching grants and the rollout of a pilot weather-index insurance scheme for over 1,200 farmers. In addition, a new Agricultural Fund is being designed, with a $50 million initial commitment, aimed at crowding in blended finance and de-risking private investment.

The year also saw improvements in agricultural data and digital tools. The National Crop Production Survey was completed for the first time and institutionalised as an annual exercise. A fully digitised National Soil Information System was launched, covering over 10,000 soil samples to support improved land management and input recommendations. Digital farmer outreach expanded through new mobile platforms and a rural agriculture radio station.

Capacity-building and enterprise development programmes continued to target women and youth. Over 1,000 young people were trained through ENABLE and similar initiatives, while the EWASME

programme provided grants and mentorship to over 100 women-led agribusinesses, contributing to enterprise growth and employment generation.

Two years into implementation, Feed Salone is contributing to measurable improvements in production, input systems, price stability, and institutional capacity. These gains reflect both increased public investment and stronger coordination among implementing partners.

Looking ahead to Year Three, priorities include scaling successful interventions, completing ongoing infrastructure investments, improving efficiency of delivery mechanisms, and aligning policy frameworks to support private sector growth. The programme remains focused on long-term systems change to enable a more resilient, competitive, and inclusive agriculture sector.

2 YEAR HIGHLIGHTS



Achieved 72% national rice self sufficiency through expanded cultivation, improved varieties, and mechanization



Cultivated over 636,000 ha of rice nationwide, benefiting 91,982 farmers — 44% of them women —



4 major climate resilient bridges—two completed and two near completion—alongside 420 km of feeder roads



Commissioned 1st National Seed Testing Lab, a modern facility strengthening certification and seed quality assurance



Released new High yield Varitiesa cross rice, maize and cassava, boosting productivity, climate resilience



Operationalized the $10 million Ag Credit Facility at 10 % interest, financing over ten agribusinesses



New Poultry Policy with "One Child One Egg" initiative, provides local eggs to school children and market to farmers



First World Food Prize Youth Institute in West Africa, training students to innovate in food security and climate resilience



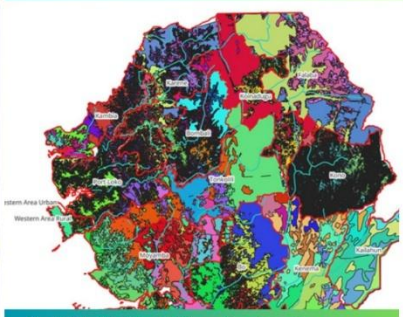
1st Weather Index Insurance protecting farmers from climate shocks through automatic rainfall-based payouts.



Delivered 10 high-capacity Sakata rice mills alongside harvesters, rice millers, and grain stores accross the country



first ever industrial poultry feed mill (22 tons per day) & large-scale hatchery now boosting domestic poultry production.



first Digital Soil Mapping System, consolidating 10,000 samples into GIS tools for crop and fertilizer planning.

LAYING THE FOUNDATION

FOR DELIVERING FEED SALONE



CRITICAL ENABLERS - THE FOUNDATION

The Feed Salone Strategy identifies a set of critical enablers that are essential for its successful implementation and long-term sustainability. These enablers form the backbone of Sierra Leone's food systems transformation — providing the policies, infrastructure, institutions, and investment frameworks needed to turn ambition into impact. They ensure that Feed Salone is not just a programme, but a fully supported national strategy equipped to deliver its goals of productivity, resilience, and self-reliance.



Chaired by the President, the Presidential Council is crucial to the effective execution of Feed Salone and is a manifestation of a whole-of-government approach when addressing food systems challenges.

The Council brings together key Ministers and industry leaders to provide strategic leadership resolve inter-ministerial bottlenecks and accelerate delivery.



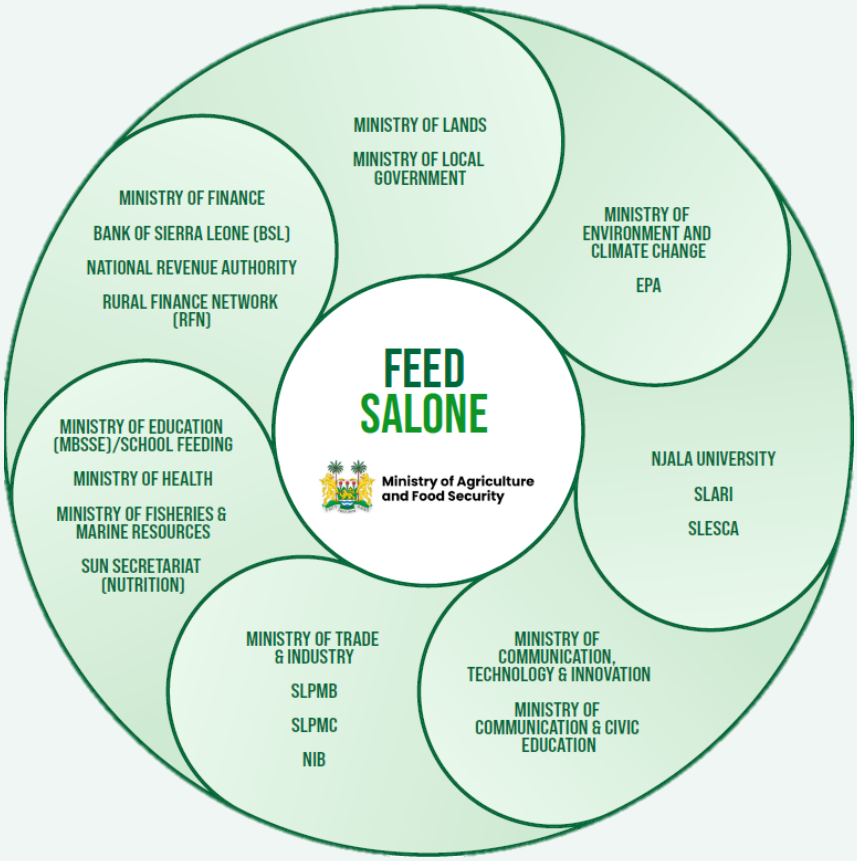
POLITICAL WILL

- **Increased budget allocation to the agriculture sector from 2% to over 7**%, with a target of reaching 10% in the coming years, 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. The MAFS is working to map and track these broader financial flows, including through efforts to join the 3FS (Tracking Financial Flows to Food Systems) framework, a global initiative led by IFAD and the World Bank, aimed at helping countries understand, align, and mobilise investments across their food systems.
- Leveraged the President's political capital to advocate for additional resources which resulted in unlocking **more than USD 1 billion in finance for** Feed Salone, of which **more than 27%** was already translated into transformative programmes and projects under delivery.
- Sierra Leone, together with 134 countries covering 70% of the world's land, has signed the **Emirates Declaration on Sustainable Agriculture, Resilient Food Systems, and Climate Action**

— committing to integrate food into climate plans by 2025. The MAFS is collaborating with **the Technical Cooperation Collaborative (TCC)**, established to support the implementation of this Declaration through technical cooperation and alignment of policy, finance, and investment.

- Finalising the update of 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.
- **Endorsed 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). This reaffirmed Sierra Leone's alignment with the African Union's vision for inclusive, climate-resilient, and investment-driven food systems transformation.
- Sierra Leone is a leading co-chair and a founding member of **the Alliance of Champions for Food Systems Transformation**, together with Rwanda, Brazil, Norway and Cambodia.
- **Joined 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.

Figure 1. Whole-of-government approach to food systems transformation under Feed Salone



INSTITUTIONAL SET-UP AND DELIVERY

The Presidential Council

Chaired by the President, the Council is crucial to the effective execution of Feed Salone and is a manifestation of a whole-of-government approach when addressing food systems challenges. The Council brings together key Ministers — including those responsible for Finance, Agriculture, Transport, Energy, Environment and Climate Change, and Health — to provide strategic leadership, resolve inter-ministerial bottlenecks, and accelerate delivery.

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, it bridges government ministries, departments and agencies, partners, private sector and other key stakeholder.

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, the MAFS, in collaboration with the African Agricultural Transformation Initiative (AATI), established the Agriculture Transformation Office (ATO) with the funding from Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and IFAD. The ATO 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 a dedicated unit to support policy implementation, data-driven planning, monitoring, and performance management to drive more effective delivery of the Ministerial priorities.

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. With a broad membership network, NaFFSL supports farmer mobilization, information sharing, and inclusion in national agricultural initiatives.

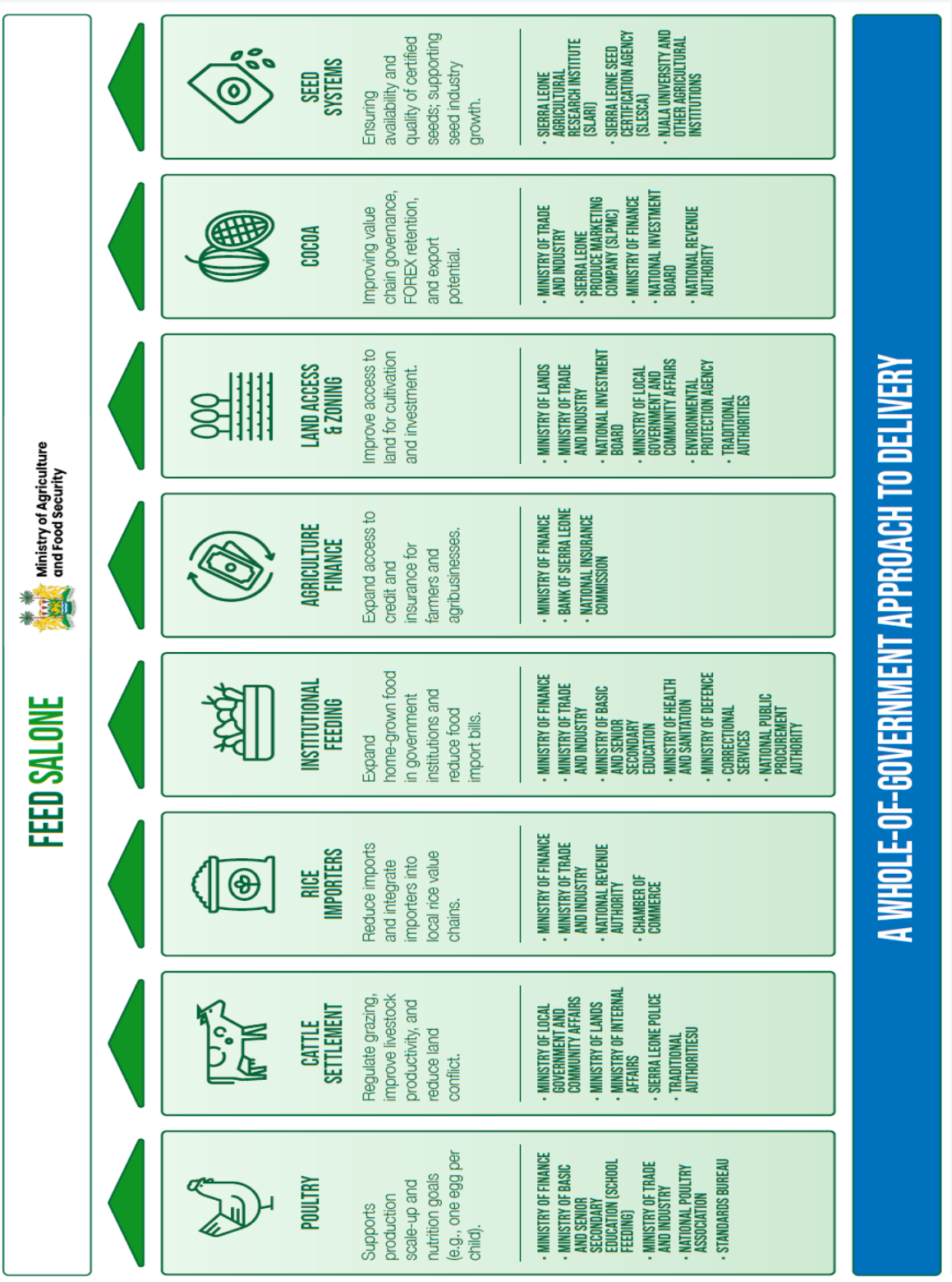
Research and Regulatory Agencies (SLARI, SLeSCA, NaFRA)

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.

Development and Technical Partners

Feed Salone's implementation is reinforced by strong partnerships with development and technical institutions that provide finance, expertise, and innovation. Key partners include the African Development Bank (AfDB), the World Bank, IFAD, IsDB, BADEA, FAO, WFP, the European Union, AATI, AGRA, and other international organizations working in alignment with MAFS to scale delivery and impact.

Figure 2. Cross-government collaboration required to deliver key food systems policies



RESOURCE MOBILISATION

Through coordinated whole-of-government efforts and President Bio's advocacy, Sierra Leone has successfully mobilized over USD 1 billion in pledges to drive transformation in the agricultural sector under the Feed Salone initiative, for example:

Vienna Energy and Food Security Roundtable hosted by the OPEC Fund *(June 2024)*

The government has mobilised over USD 800 million to support sustainable energy transition and its food security efforts. A major contribution from the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA) includes a USD 250 million pledge to establish the Integrated Rice Industrial Complex in Tormabum, aimed at increasing local rice production, creating jobs, and building necessary infrastructure. The OPEC Fund pledged USD 230 million for energy transition and food security.

Africa Food Systems Forum (AFSF) in Kigali *(September 2024)*

Following the presentation of Sierra Leone's investment opportunities in the agriculture sector during the Country Deal Room, the African Development Bank (AfDB) pledged USD 100 million for the development of rice clusters in Sierra Leone. In September, the AfDB delegation conducted an inception mission in Sierra Leone to outline the project components and validate clusters' locations in the Kambia District.

Sierra Leone Connectivity and Agricultural Market Infrastructure Project (CAMIP)

In collaboration with the Ministry of Transport and Aviation, CAMIP was launched, with a USD 74 million World Bank grant secured to enhance agricultural productivity and market access. CAMIP focuses on the construction and upgrading of climate-resilient transport and market infrastructure, significantly improving connectivity for rural communities and reducing post-harvest losses. The project is expected to generate new employment opportunities and support agricultural value chains by facilitating the efficient transportation of produce from farm to market.

Other Contributions

Sierra Leone has also secured support from key international partners to drive agricultural innovation and capacity building as part of the Feed Salone initiative. This includes:

- Korea-Africa Food and Agriculture Cooperation Initiative (KAFACI): USD 7 million grant for research and capacity-building initiatives with the Sierra Leone Agricultural Research Institute (SLARI).
- Islamic Development Bank (IsDB): USD 60 million secured for the industrialization of the cassava value chain.
- The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB), and the OPEC Fund for International Development (OFID): collectively secured a total of USD 100 million to support the growth of the livestock sector in Sierra Leone.

POLICY INTERVENTIONS

During the second year of Feed Salone, two policies were implemented, two policies were enacted, and several others are under review or development. These policy reforms are designed to advance the objectives of Feed Salone by creating incentives that catalyze private sector investment and promote sustainable agricultural growth.

Rice

To make domestic rice production more competitive and reduce the national rice import gap, the Government enacted two policy measures, complementing the introduction of a 5% import duty on rice sourced from outside the African continent. Both policies are under implementation during the second year of Feed Salone.

- **Rice Importers Policy** requires licensed rice importers to actively participate in Sierra Leone's rice value chain as a condition for maintaining their import licenses. It outlines strategies to progressively reduce imports and strengthen local production by involving importers in domestic cultivation, processing, and marketing activities.
- Home-grown **Institutional Feeding Policy** aims to gradually substitute imported rice with locally produced rice in the diets of government institutions such as schools, correctional services, and the military. By promoting local cultivation, the policy supports national food self-sufficiency and creates reliable domestic markets for farmers.

Livestock

Two major livestock policies were enacted in the second year of Feed Salone, both scheduled for implementation in the coming year. These policies are designed to strengthen livestock productivity, enhance nutrition outcomes, and reduce reliance on imported animal products.

- **Poultry Policy** provides a comprehensive roadmap to enhance productivity, foster innovation, and improve market access. Its flagship intervention, the "One Child, One Egg" initiative, provides each child aged 3 to 6 years with one locally produced egg per day through the national school feeding programme. This initiative not only improves children's nutrition—delivering essential proteins, vitamins, and micronutrients—but also stimulates investment and demand across the poultry sector, reducing food imports from the poultry value chain.
- **Cattle Settlement Policy** aims to reduce land-use conflicts between livestock grazers and crop farmers by regulating grazing patterns and establishing designated settlement zones. It promotes peaceful coexistence, sustainable rangeland management, and improved livestock productivity. The policy also paves the way for the effective implementation of the new **Livestock and Livelihoods Development Project (LLDP)** — a US $105 million investment — ensuring that national livestock interventions are harmonized under a coherent framework for sustainable growth and conflict-free land use.

In addition to the four policies enacted, several others are currently under review or development to strengthen the policy environment for agricultural transformation:

- **Cocoa Policy** is under review to improve governance across the cocoa value chain, enabling Sierra Leone to retain more foreign exchange earnings and comply with emerging international standards such as the EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR).
- **Seed Systems Policy** is being reviewed to establish a robust framework that ensures the availability and quality of certified seeds while supporting the growth of the domestic seed industry.
- **Agricultural Finance Policy** is under development to establish Agricultural Fund dedicated to supporting and performing agricultural finance for farmers and agribusinesses
- **Land Access and Zoning Policy** is under development to facilitate equitable and transparent access to productive land for cultivation and agribusiness investment, ensuring efficient land use and sustainable development

INFRASTRUCTURE

Infrastructure development remained one of the most visible achievements under the Feed Salone in 2024–2025. MAFS, together with its partners, implemented an integrated programme of works covering bridges, roads, irrigation systems, processing hubs, storage facilities, and youth training infrastructure.

- ### Rice Hubs and Agro-Industrial Clusters.

MAFS advanced the development of major rice hubs designed to transform production zones into fully integrated agro-industrial clusters. At Gbondapi in Pujehun District, construction is ongoing on a large-scale complex comprising an eight-metric-ton-per-hour rice mill, parboiling and drying units, a briquetting plant, solar systems, and administrative offices. In Tormabum, Bonthe District, works are progressing on irrigation canals, storage warehouses, and feeder roads that will support large-scale rice production and processing. Preparatory work has also advanced for the establishment of a Special Agro-Processing Zone (SAPZ) in Kambia and Port Loko Districts. The SAPZ will serve as a northern industrial hub linking rice clusters to reliable power, transport, and processing infrastructure. Together, these developments mark a decisive shift from smallholder subsistence farming toward integrated, mechanised, and market-driven rice production.

- ### Bridges, Roads and Rural Connectivity

Connectivity between farms and markets has improved significantly through the construction of new bridges and feeder roads. Four major climate-resilient bridges were delivered under Feed Salone: the Mattru–Senehun Bridge in Bonthe and the Gendema Bridge in Kenema were completed, while the Manowa Bridge in Kailahun and the Tomparie Bridge in Karene are nearing completion. Alongside these, 420 kilometres of feeder roads are under construction in key agricultural zones though the AVDP Project. These transport links have begun to ease the movement of goods, reduce post-harvest losses, and stimulate rural trade, while construction activities themselves created employment for over 1,300 local youth and women.

- **Strategic Grain Storage and Food Reserves**

  Construction is advancing on a 4,000-metric-ton integrated grain-silo facility in Gbondapi, Pujehun District, which will serve as the cornerstone of Sierra Leone's national strategic grain reserve. The facility forms part of the Government's broader effort to establish a resilient food-storage and management system capable of maintaining national stocks and responding effectively to shocks. In parallel, over 10,000 bags (approximately 1,200 metric tons) of locally produced rice were secured in Kambia as the first phase of the reserve, demonstrating early operational progress while construction continues. A dedicated Food Reserve Authority is being designed to manage the system once complete, ensuring stable markets, reliable food supply, and long-term national food security.

- **Irrigation Infrastructure**

  Complementing the hub developments, large-scale irrigation systems covering 5,000 hectares are now in advanced stages of construction in Tormabum and Gbondapi. The works include modern water-management structures, canals, and drainage networks designed to enable all-season cultivation and improve water efficiency. These are vital to sustaining higher productivity in the rice value chain and ensuring that the agro-industrial clusters operate year-round.

- **Energy**

  Through the Presidential Initiative on Climate Change, Renewable Energy and Food Security (PI-CREF), work is being done for solar systems to be being integrated into key agro-processing locations and sites to power operations sustainably. These renewable-energy investments complement the broader goal of developing energy-efficient, low-carbon food-processing infrastructure across the hubs.

- **Youth Incubation Centre – Njala University**

  The new ENABLE Youth Incubation Centre at Njala University is a modern facility that combines classroom instruction with hands-on training in livestock, poultry, aquaculture, crop production, and agro-processing. It also includes a dedicated daycare centre to enable women's full participation equipping them with the skills and resources to launch viable agribusinesses across the country.

- **Complementary Infrastructure**

  Beyond, complementary works under the Smallholder Commercialization and Agribusiness Development Project (SCADeP), the Food System Resilience Project (FSRP), AVDP, and the Regional Rice Value Chain Project (RRVCP) have expanded market facilities, storage centres, and access roads across farming communities.

Looking ahead, the Government has secured financing for additional infrastructure under the Sierra Leone Connectivity and Agricultural Market Infrastructure Project (SL-CAMIP, 2024–2029). This Project will expand rural connectivity through new four bridges at Sumbuya, Komrabai, Kabba Ferry & Moselolo, upgraded market centres, and modern storage facilities, further consolidating the role of infrastructure as the backbone of agricultural connectivity and transformation.

PARTNERSHIPS

Strategic partnerships remain a key for Feed Salone's progress and impact. As a critical enabler of food systems transformation, partnerships continue to unlock access to new technologies, catalytic finance, and technical expertise. These collaborations strengthen national capacity while delivering results at scale, supporting immediate interventions and laying the groundwork for long-term sustainability. Over the past year, Sierra Leone has deepened its engagement with development partners, research institutions, private sector actors, and international organizations—creating an integrated ecosystem that translates policy into measurable results across the country.

Finance, Infrastructure, and Pipeline Coordination

The coordination of multilateral and bilateral finance remains central to Feed Salone's delivery framework. A strong coalition of partners — including the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB), the OPEC Fund for International Development (OFID), the African Development Bank (AfDB), the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA), the World Bank, and the European Union (EU) — are financing projects and working in close alignment with MAFS to expand the sector's investment pipeline. Collectively, these institutions provide concessional finance, technical assistance, and policy support that sustain the infrastructure, value-chain, and agribusiness components of Feed Salone.

Nutrition, Markets, and Policy Support

Partnership with the World Food Programme (WFP) remained key to connecting local production with the school feeding program through which in 2025 more than 2,000 metric tons of locally produced rice was procured from over 12,000 farmers across seven districts, feeding 270,000 pupils in 1,155 schools and injecting over US $2 million into rural economies. These efforts reduced dependence on imported rice in WFP's supply chain from 90 percent to 60 percent and expanded predictable domestic markets for farmers.

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) provided complementary support through value-chain analyses, policy advisory work on rice and livestock systems, and the preparation of technical investment studies. UNDP and UNCDF, work strengthened programme design and local-finance mechanisms, ensuring that production gains translate into inclusive markets.

Research, Innovation, and Quality Systems

Feed Salone's science base is anchored in national and international research collaborations. The Sierra Leone Agricultural Research Institute (SLARI) partnered with the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) to develop the country's first Aflasafe biocontrol strain, with testing under way in maize and groundnut fields and construction of a five-ton-per-day Aflatoxin Laboratory and manufacturing facility at Njala University. The Sierra Leone Seed Certification Agency (SLeSCA), working with Nigeria's National Agricultural Seeds Council (NASC) and IITA, introduced the digital Seed Tracker platform to certify and trace seed fields in real time.

Data, Evidence, and Delivery Systems

Feed Salone's emphasis on results and accountability has been underpinned by a strong data and delivery partnership framework. The African Agricultural Transformation Initiative (AATI)—supported by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and IFAD—helped operationalise the Agriculture

Transformation Office (ATO) as a dedicated delivery unit within MAFS. The ATO integrates data analytics, performance management, and project tracking to improve ministerial execution and accountability.

Alongside this MAFS and IDinsight launched a two-year collaboration, supported by the Fund for Innovation in Development (FID), to embed evidence into decision-making. IDinsight's embedded experts are developing a robust monitoring framework, improving data architecture, and building staff capacity for sustained implementation.

Complementary technical assistance from the Tony Blair Institute for Global Change (TBI), the Overseas Development Institute (ODI), and the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) has strengthened policy delivery institutional effectiveness.

Bilateral Cooperation and Technology Transfer

Bilateral partnerships continue to strengthen technology transfer and capacity building in agriculture. Under the 14th Phase of the Chinese Agricultural Technical Cooperation Project, Chinese experts are working with local teams to introduce high-yielding rice varieties, improve agronomic practices, and provide small-scale mechanization support, alongside in-kind food assistance to enhance food availability and social protection. Collaboration with the Republic of Korea through KAFACI initiative focuses on research, seed multiplication, and the K-Rice Belt, which has been approved for implementation in 2026, will establish an integrated rice cultivation and research complex in Sierra Leone. The project will combine irrigation infrastructure, seed production, and mechanized farming to boost national rice productivity

Private-Sector Partnerships and Investment

Private investors have been key to scaling Feed Salone's delivery. The IFC's US $12 million investment with Pee Cee & Sons Ltd has expanded domestic production of onions and maize, reduced import dependency while supplying the poultry industry. The OCP Africa partnership is enhancing soil health through specialized fertilizers.

Domestic processors are also driving value addition: Capitol Foods Ltd has expanded cocoa processing in Kenema into powder, butter, chocolate, and biscuits, positioning Sierra Leone in regional value-added cocoa markets. Qatar Fund for Development (QFFD) and the World Poultry Foundation (WPF) have co-financed local private sector in Sierra Leone to establish of the country's first large scale hatchery to boost poultry production. Together, these ventures demonstrate the synergy between public policy and private investment in achieving food-system transformation.

Farmer Representation

The National Federation of Farmers of Sierra Leone (NaFFSL) has consolidated its role as the umbrella body for organized farmer groups across all districts. It provides an effective coordination link between the Ministry and farming communities, facilitating farmer mobilisation, information dissemination, and inclusion in programme delivery.

Together, these partnerships form an integrated ecosystem—linking science to seed systems, data to delivery, finance to infrastructure, and policy to producers.

GLOBAL COMMITMENTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Sierra Leone continues to play an active role in regional and global food-systems transformation processes, ensuring that Feed Salone is aligned with international commitments on food security, climate resilience, and sustainable growth.

Alliance of Champions for Food Systems Transformation (ACF)

As one of the founding co-chairs of the Alliance of Champions for Food Systems Transformation (ACF) — alongside Brazil and Norway — Sierra Leone has embedded the Alliance's ten action areas into its national planning and reporting frameworks. The Feed Salone Strategy and the country's Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC 3.0) have been deliberately aligned to promote sustainable agriculture, efficient water use, deforestation reduction, and climate resilience



UN Food Systems Transformation Commitments and Delivery

Building on its engagement in the 2021 UN Food Systems Summit, Sierra Leone has remained deeply involved in the UN Food Systems Transformation process, including the 2023+ Stocktaking Moments and UNFSS+4 (Addis Ababa, 2025). At the UN Food Systems Summit+4 Feed Salone was recognised for its comprehensiveness and delivery-focused national program. The initiative was highlighted for its integration of political leadership, private-sector engagement, climate action, and evidence-based delivery — serving as a continental model for translating food-systems commitments into measurable national outcomes.

Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) and the Malabo Declaration

Sierra Leone remains fully aligned with the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) under the African Union's Agenda 2063 and the Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth. The country's National Agriculture Investment Plan (NAIP II) and Feed Salone serve as vehicles for achieving CAADP's targets on public investment, agricultural growth, and food security. Sierra Leone continues to participate in the CAADP Biennial Review process, which benchmarks progress and strengthens accountability across African Union member states.

Global Climate, Energy, and Sustainability Platforms

In partnership with PI-CREF, Sierra Leone integrates agricultural transformation with climate and energy goals. The country is a signatory to the Emirates Declaration on Sustainable Agriculture, Resilient Food Systems and Climate Action (COP28) and actively engages with the African Adaptation Initiative (AAI) and the Africa Renewable Energy Initiative (AREI) to mobilize resources for green energy and climate-smart food production. These linkages reinforce Feed Salone's climate-resilient delivery framework and expand access to global adaptation finance.

FAO Hand-in-Hand and Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty

Sierra Leone participates in the FAO Hand-in-Hand Initiative, which supports investment mapping, geospatial analytics, and partnership matchmaking to accelerate inclusive growth. In 2025, the country also joined the Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty, an initiative launched jointly by Brazil, FAO, and the African Union, aimed at mobilising resources and coordination to eradicate hunger through sustainable food-systems transformation. These engagements strengthen Sierra Leone's positioning as an active contributor to global action on hunger and poverty reduction.

Continental and Multilateral Collaboration

Sierra Leone continues to collaborate closely with ECOWAS, the African Union, and development institutions to harmonise agricultural trade, research, and investment priorities across the continent. These partnerships ensure that Feed Salone remains consistent with continental frameworks while benefiting from shared technical expertise and financing opportunities.

PRIVATE SECTOR

This year saw a significant increase in the private sector's answer to the President's call to Feed Salone. Across the country, new agribusinesses have emerged, and many existing ones have scaled. This surge of investments shows growing confidence in agriculture and marks a shift from potential to delivery, as more Sierra Leoneans turn opportunity into enterprise. *While this section highlights a few standout examples, it represents only a fraction of the many private enterprises now driving agricultural transformation across Sierra Leone.*

2025 Highlights



Pee Cee & Sons Ltd: Formerly the country's largest onion importer, Pee Cee & Sons has transitioned into Sierra Leone's top domestic producer. In Lokomasama, Port Loko the company now cultivates over 80 hectares of onions and 60 hectares of maize for poultry feed, supported through IFC. Its mechanised operations and out-grower scheme with thousands of smallholder farmers are helping to reduce onion imports and supply local feed processors.



Eastern Farmers Ltd commissioned Sierra Leone's first industrial-grade poultry feed mill in Waterloo, operated by Eastern Farmers Ltd. Producing over 22 tons of feed per day and employing 20 staff, the plant has reduced feed costs for local producers and spurred new investments in egg and broiler production nationwide. Financed through the $10 million Agricultural Credit Facility with the Bank of Sierra Leone, the mill represents a breakthrough for domestic feed manufacturing.



Tivamya Limited, one of the leading Agriculture companies in Sierra Leone has grown into a champion of Feed Salone, expanding inland valley swamp rice production and ensuring that locally milled rice is now sold in major towns across the country. Beyond rice, Tivamya is building capacity in other value chains, but its rice operations stand out as a model of how private agribusiness can drive food self-sufficiency while creating jobs and opportunities for women and youth.



The SABCO Sardine Factory in Freetown, inaugurated in 2025, is Sierra Leone's first major fish-processing plant. Using locally landed fish and employing hundreds of youth and women, SABCO has introduced a new value-added product to domestic and regional markets, reinforcing Feed Salone's focus on nutrition and food-system diversification.



Capitol Foods Ltd has expanded its operations into value-added cocoa production, with finished products such as cocoa powder, cocoa butter, chocolate, and biscuits. The company's new product lines strengthen local value addition, create jobs, and enhance Sierra Leone's export competitiveness. By sourcing directly from local cocoa farmers, Capitol Foods is positioning Sierra Leone as a regional hub for premium cocoa-based products.



Mountain Lion Agriculture (MLAg) remains one of Sierra Leone's major rice producers and processors, operating modern milling facilities in Tonkolili and Bombali Districts. As the country's largest local rice brand, Mountain Lion is expanding processing capacity and farmer engagement under Feed Salone, strengthening local value chains and reducing imports through consistent year-round milling.



Seed Tech International Ltd is a Sierra Leonean seed-cleaning and agro-input enterprise in Makeni that provides certified seeds, seedlings, fertilisers, and tools to farmers nationwide. Working with SLeSCA and SLARI, the company operates modern seed-cleaning and packaging equipment to improve quality assurance across value chains.



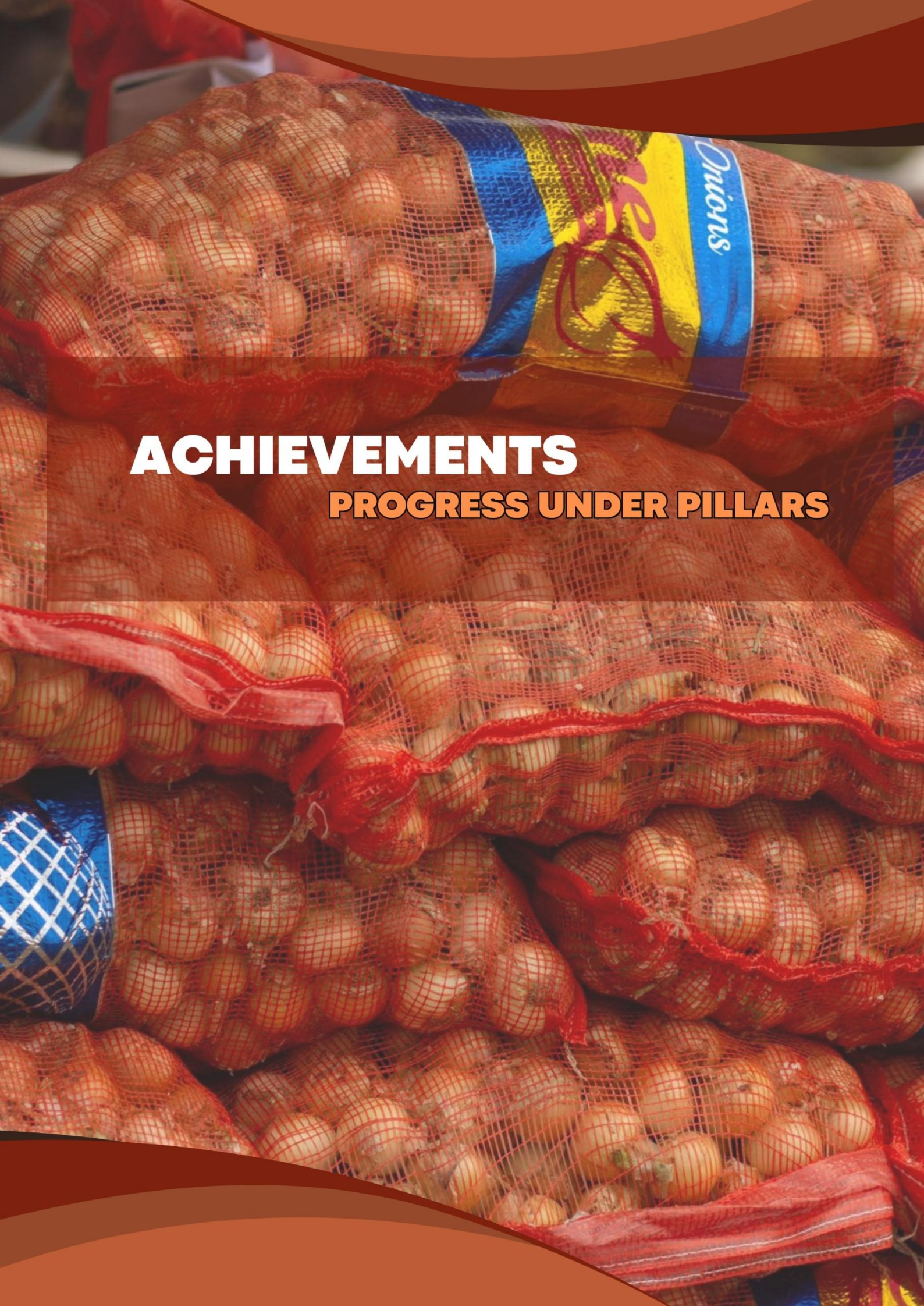
SLENC Ltd in Moyamba operates one of the country's largest maize farms. The farm supplies maize to poultry-feed manufacturers and serves as a practical demonstration of youth-led commercial farming. During a symbolic harvest attended by H.E. President Bio, SLENC Ltd was celebrated as a model for youth entrepreneurship under Feed Salone.



SierraTec Farms Ltd, located in Makari, Bombali, is leading an ambitious initiative: the development of a mechanized 2,500ha rice estate dedicated to large-scale production. Financed through the government's million Credit Facility in partnership with BSL, the project has already acquired 15 tractors, harvesters, and a modern rice mill to expand cultivation and post-harvest processing capacity in the northern region.



Muloma Farms, based in Koribondo Chiefdom, Bo District, is an integrated livestock enterprise combining poultry, aquaculture, and livestock fattening with an emerging agri-tourism venture that includes lodges and visitor attractions. The farm showcases how private initiative and innovation are creating full agricultural ecosystems that sustain jobs, supply protein, and attract domestic visitors.



ACHIEVEMENTS

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, and helping to streamline efforts toward achieving its objectives.

Important progress has been made across all the Six Strategic Pillars during the first year.

PILLAR 1: MECHANIZATION & IRRIGATION



In the second year of Feed Salone, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (MAFS) continued to expand farmers' access to agricultural machinery and invest in irrigation infrastructure and Inland Valley Swamps (IVS) to boost national productivity.

1. Driving Towards Rice Self-Sufficiency through Mechanised Expansion

Through large-scale land preparation, access to tractors, and harvesting equipment, rice cultivation expanded during the second planting season under Feed Salone — reaching 636,473 hectares nationwide. This figure includes both government-supported and privately managed cultivation. Government-supported areas grew from 15,320 hectares in 2023 to 27,688 hectares in 2024, with a target of 24,000 hectares for 2025.

2. Irrigation Infrastructure

Irrigation development reached an advanced stage in the Tormabum and Gbondapi rice-producing zones, where construction works are ongoing to cover 5,000 hectares. These schemes are being equipped with modern water-control structures, drainage channels, and pumping systems to support year-round cultivation and maximize yields. Once operational, these will mark Sierra Leone's most extensive irrigation system, forming the backbone of national rice clusters under Feed Salone.





3. Scaling Mechanization through Credit and Private Investment

To expand mechanisation, the Government — in partnership with the Bank of Sierra Leone — launched a NLe 230 million (USD 10 million) Agriculture Credit Facility. This concessional fund enables private businesses to access credit and invest in machinery, creating a new model where the private sector drives mechanisation while government focuses on enabling systems. Through this facility, five new Machinery Service Providers (MSPs) were established in Kono, Bombali, Moyamba, and Kambia, acquiring tractors and equipment to serve local farmers. These MSPs complement the existing Machine Rings model and are transforming how farmers access, operate, and maintain machinery.





4. Strategic Distribution of Machinery

MAFS delivered an additional wave of agricultural machinery to farmers, including 30 combine harvesters, over 200 rice millers strategically allocated to high-production zones. The Ministry also constructed and equipped 23 grain stores with complementary equipment — power tillers, destoners, transplanters, parboilers, winnowers, and mini rice mills — strengthening the storage, processing, and value-addition capacity of local farmer cooperatives.




5. Building a Skilled Mechanisation Workforce

To address the shortage of skilled machinery operators and reduce frequent equipment breakdowns, the Ministry trained 175 youths as certified tractor and machinery operators. The training went beyond tractor driving — covering combine harvester operation, equipment maintenance, drone application, soil mapping, and precision agriculture tools. Participants were drawn from seven districts and are now equipped to serve as the next generation of agricultural mechanics, filling a long-standing skills gap in Sierra Leone's mechanisation ecosystem.





6. Revitalising Inland Valley Swamps (IVS)

This planting season MAFS launched a campaign across the country to prioritize the rehabilitation of Inland Valley Swamps (IVS) — Sierra Leone's most fertile and naturally irrigated ecosystems. In 2024, MAFS supported the rehabilitation of 6,615 hectares, up from 1,950 hectares in 2023, with an additional 4,115 hectares under development in 2025. Beyond boosting productivity, this shift from upland to IVS rice cultivation is reducing deforestation, promoting efficient land use, and supporting Sierra Leone's transition to environmentally sustainable, climate-resilient farming systems.





PILLAR 2: SEEDS AND INPUTS SYSTEMS

At the start of the Feed Salone's implementation, MAFS and its agencies and partners developed a National Seed Systems Transformation Roadmap. This laid out the reforms and investments needed to ensure that every farmer in Sierra Leone can access high-quality, climate-resilient, and certified seeds. Two years later, these priorities are steadily being implemented.

1. The National Seed Testing Laboratory

The National Seed Testing Laboratory established at Mile 91, Tonkolili District, built through the SLARiS Project and managed by the Sierra Leone Seed Certification Agency (SLeSCA), provides full in-country capacity for seed testing, disease detection, germination analysis, and certification. The new laboratory now makes it possible to certify seed locally to international standards, ensuring that only high-quality and disease-free seeds reach farmers. It also serves as a regional training and calibration center for seed inspectors and analysts, forming the backbone of the country's quality-assurance system.






2. Release and Registration of New High-Yielding Varieties

Sierra Leone recorded formal releases and registration of several new improved crop varieties, driven by SLARI in partnership with SLeSCA and international research centers. These include seven rice varieties (one upland, five lowland, and one mutant type), three cassava varieties (two mutant and one TME 639), and eight maize varieties (four open-pollinated and four hybrids). An additional three cassava varieties are currently in advanced stages of release and registration. These varieties deliver higher yields, shorter maturity periods, and better tolerance to drought, pests, and diseases. They represent the first generation of certified, locally adapted planting materials produced entirely under the national seed system.







3.Research Partnerships with IITA and Technology Transfer

In March 2025, the Ministry signed an MOU with the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) in Ibadan, Nigeria. The partnership focuses on strengthening seed systems, improving crop varieties, and promoting technology transfer for productivity gains. Through this collaboration, IITA donated two key innovations: Aflasafe, a biological control agent that prevents aflatoxin contamination in grains, and NoduMax, a soybean inoculant that boosts nitrogen fixation and yields. Both technologies are now being piloted in farmer fields. The partnership also includes targeted training for extension and technical staff on cassava seed systems, integrated weed management, and good agronomic practices.

Further strengthening research infrastructure, construction began on a five-ton-per-day Aflatoxin Laboratory and Manufacturing Facility at Njala University, designed to produce locally adapted Aflasafe for maize and groundnut value chains — boosting food safety and creating a platform for regional biocontrol innovation.







4. Advancing Digital Certification and Traceability

Sierra Leone's seed certification process is now digital with the rollout of the SLeSCA Seed Tracker Platform, developed in collaboration with Nigeria's National Agricultural Seeds Council (NASC) and IITA. This digital system allows real-time field inspection, certification, and traceability of seed lots across the country. Forty-five technical officers from SLARI, SLeSCA, and partner agencies have been trained in GIS mapping, ODK data collection, and digital inspection tools, ensuring nationwide capacity to manage the platform. By digitizing the certification process, Sierra Leone is enhancing transparency, accountability, and speed of service delivery while building investor and farmer confidence in the seed market.

5. Building Research and Human Capital Capacity

In 2025, fourteen SLARI scientists received fully funded PhD scholarships to specialize in plant breeding, seed science, and soil management. This new generation of experts will strengthen national capacity for agricultural research and development over the coming decade.





To complement this, Njala University and SLeSCA introduced a Seed Science and Technology curriculum, the first of its kind in Sierra Leone. The programme will produce certified seed technologists and inspectors who can uphold quality assurance standards across the value chain.

6. Improving Input Systems and Soil Health

Complementing progress in seed systems, the Ministry launched the Digital National Soil Information System (NaSIS) — an interactive online platform built from over 10,000 soil samples collected nationwide. NaSIS provides real-time soil data, crop–soil suitability maps, and fertilizer recommendation tools to guide both farmers and policymakers. It allows seed varieties to be matched with the most suitable soils and nutrient regimes, improving yield potential and fertilizer efficiency while promoting climate-smart agriculture.

At the same time, SLARI and its partners have expanded seed multiplication programs for strategic crops. More than 200 farmers are now engaged in soybean seed multiplication, while nearly 10,000 clean, high-yield cassava plantlets have been distributed for breeder-seed production. These efforts guarantee a sustainable supply of high-quality planting materials for national distribution.

7. Strengthening the Policy and Regulatory Environment

The Ministry has initiated a comprehensive Seed Systems Policy review to harmonize regulations governing the production, certification, and marketing of seeds. The new policy framework will formalize private-sector participation, strengthen enforcement mechanisms, and align Sierra Leone with regional standards. Together with the Seed Roadmap and ongoing institutional reforms, it creates a coherent national framework to sustain and scale progress made under Feed Salone.





PILLAR 3: AGGREGATION, PROCESSING & MARKET LINKAGES

The third pillar of Feed Salone focuses on building a seamless bridge between production and markets — ensuring that what farmers grow can be efficiently processed, stored, and sold at fair value. In Year Two, government and partners made significant strides in creating aggregation hubs, industrial processing centers, and climate-resilient logistics infrastructure, while strengthening domestic demand through institutional procurement and private sector linkages. These interventions are transforming agricultural production into commercially viable value chains.

1. Strengthening Institutional Demand through Local Procurement

Feed Salone has firmly established institutional procurement as a strategic market anchor for farmers. In partnership with WFP and MBSSE, the government supplied 2,044 metric tons of locally grown rice (equivalent to over 40,000 50-kg bags) to support Home-Grown School Meals in the 2024/25 academic year. This rice, procured from over 12,000 smallholder farmers across seven districts, provided daily meals to more than 270,000 schoolchildren in 1,155 schools nationwide. Beyond improving nutrition, the initiative injected over NLe 45 million directly into rural economies, stabilized local rice prices, and demonstrated that structured institutional offtake can drive large-scale domestic market demand. Through this model, WFP's reliance on imported rice for its school feeding operations fell from about 90% in 2023 to under 60% in 2025, representing a tangible shift toward national self-sufficiency.







2. Building the National Grain Reserve and Strategic Storage Systems

To strengthen food security and price stability, the MAFS has initiated the National Grain Reserve System, to strategic storage and milling sites. In Kambia District, the first 10,000 bags of locally milled rice were secured for the national food reserve — entirely produced and processed within Sierra Leone. Complementing this, the construction of a 4,000 MT integrated grain silo and storage complex

is underway at Gbondapi in Pujehun District under the Food Systems Resilience Project (FSRP). This facility will serve as a buffer stock management site, capable of storing both paddy and milled rice to stabilize supply during lean periods. In parallel, design work is progressing on a Food Reserve Authority, which will institutionalize procurement, stock rotation, and emergency release mechanisms to strengthen Sierra Leone's resilience to food price shocks.







3. Advancing Rice Agro-Industrial Clusters

Feed Salone is accelerating the development of agro-industrial clusters as engines for large-scale post-harvest processing, aggregation, and commercialization. At Gbondapi (Pujehun District) through the SL-RAIC Project, construction of a modern rice processing hub is at an advanced stage. The facility integrates an 8 MT/hour mill, parboiling and drying units, storage warehouses, solar mini-grids, and waste-to-energy briquetting systems. At Tormabum (Bonthe District), complementary works are ongoing, including irrigation development, drainage canals, and on-site storage platforms. The Kambia and Port Loko clusters are being prepared under the forthcoming Special Agro-Industrial Processing Zone (SAPZ), financed by the African Development Bank (AfDB). Each of these clusters is designed to operate under a Public–Private Partnership (PPP) model, where the government provides infrastructure and enabling policy frameworks, while private agribusinesses manage processing, aggregation, and service delivery on a commercial basis.





Together, these hubs represent the backbone of Sierra Leone's new rice industrial ecosystem — concentrating investment, improving efficiency, and reducing logistical costs across the value chain.

4. Expanding Rural Connectivity and Market Access

Improving rural connectivity remains a cornerstone of Feed Salone, ensuring that farmers can move produce efficiently from field to market while reducing transport costs and post-harvest losses. Through SCADEP, four climate-resilient bridges were constructed to open key trade corridors linking production zones to aggregation, processing aand markets. Two bridges — at Mattru (Bonthe District) and Gendema (Kenema District) — have been fully complete, while the remaining two — at Manowa (Kailahun District) and Tomparie (Karene District) — are at advanced stages of completion.





In parallel, MAFS is implementing the construction of over 420 kilometers of feeder roads through AVDP. These feeder roads are strategically located in high-production areas to improve farm accessibility, enhance aggregation capacity, and support the movement of agricultural inputs and outputs throughout the year.

Further investments in connectivity are underway through the World Bank–funded Sierra Leone Connectivity and Agricultural Market Infrastructure Project (CAMIP), which will significantly enhance rural market access, bridge construction, and related infrastructure.

5. Sakata Rice Mills Deployed Nationwide

Through partnership with WFP and the Government of Japan, ten high-capacity Sakata Rice Mills (6T/hour) were deployed and commissioned across seven major rice-producing districts. Each mill processes approximately 20 bags (50 kg each) per hour, reducing post-harvest losses and improving grain quality. The mills are managed through local cooperatives, including women-led groups — and are directly linked to WFP's commitment to purchase locally milled rice. Strengthens market access, enhances local processing capacity, and anchors the shift from raw paddy production to a fully integrated domestic rice value chain.





6. Expanding Processing Capacity Closer to Farmers

Feed Salone continues to expand local processing infrastructure to minimize losses and improve quality. Beyond the deployment of small-scale mills and grain stores under the mechanization pillar, larger industrial mills are being installed within the rice clusters to handle higher volumes. In addition, the Ministry, WFP and SLPMC have formalized offtake arrangements to purchase milled rice from community-level mills and processing hubs for the national food reserve and school feeding programs — ensuring that value addition directly benefits rural producers.

7. Strengthening Private Sector Engagement and Value Addition







The Ministry's focus on private-sector-led growth is producing visible results across key value chains. Under the Feed Salone, agribusinesses such as Pee Cee & Sons, Tivamya, and Smart Farms have

expanded operations, investing in commercial cultivation, processing, and mechanization services that now anchor local production systems.

Capitol Foods Ltd. in Kenema stands out as a national example of value addition, transforming locally sourced cocoa and cassava into finished consumer products such as chocolate bars, cocoa powder, biscuits, and instant beverages. By linking smallholder farmers to regional and export markets, the company is generating rural income while positioning Sierra Leone as an emerging player in West Africa's processed food industry.

Investments such as the Newton Cashew Factory, the Leecon Hatchery in Makeni, and the SABCO Sardine Plant in Kissy further demonstrate how improved aggregation and processing infrastructure are driving wider agro-industrialisation. Through these partnerships, the Ministry is strengthening supply-chain linkages between producers, processors, and financiers, ensuring that farmers capture more value from their labour.

PILLAR 4: AG FINANCE

Access to affordable finance remains one of the strongest determinants of agricultural transformation. Under Feed Salone, the Ministry has moved decisively to unlock credit for agribusinesses, reduce financing costs, and build farmer resilience against climate and market shocks. In Year Two, these efforts translated into tangible delivery from concessional loans and matching grants to the country's first-ever agricultural insurance scheme.

1. Expanding Access to Credit through the Bank of Sierra Leone Facility

The Government, in partnership with the Bank of Sierra Leone, operationalized a NLe 230 million (US $10 million) Agricultural Credit Facility to finance agribusinesses along priority value chains. The facility provides loans through commercial banks at 10 percent interest rate, with up to 24-month maturity. More than 90 percent of the funds have been disbursed, supporting over ten agribusinesses nationwide. The financing has already delivered visible results — including the establishment of Sierra Leone's first industrial poultry feed mill in Waterloo (22 tons of feed per day capacity), and the expansion of five mechanization service companies that acquired tractors and implements to serve farmers in Kono, Bombali, Moyamba, and Kambia. Other beneficiaries invested in fertilizer blending, seed systems, and input distribution, directly strengthening the foundation of domestic food production.





2. Building Farmer Resilience through Weather-Index Insurance

In April 2025, the Ministry launched Sierra Leone's first-ever Weather-Index Insurance (WII) in collaboration with Activa International Insurance, the Sierra Leone Insurance Commission, and UNCDF. The scheme automatically compensates farmers based on rainfall deviations rather than lengthy loss assessments, ensuring timely protection against droughts and floods. During the pilot phase, 1,200 farmers across select districts were insured, marking a major step toward risk-informed agriculture. The scheme will scale nationally in 2026, providing a safety net for thousands of smallholders and helping stabilize credit repayment cycles for agribusinesses and community banks.





3. Catalysing Private Investment through Matching Grants

Feed Salone also leverages blended-finance instruments to de-risk private investment. Under the World Bank-supported Food System Resilience Program (FSRP), a US $7.9 million Matching Grant window was launched for agribusinesses engaged in rice, cassava, and livestock value chains. Sixty-two enterprises have already been selected, receiving co-financing of US $50,000–150,000 per project, with a 70:30 cost-share for small firms and 50:50 for medium and large ones. In parallel, the EU-funded Salone Access to Finance (SATF) Project, implemented with UNCDF, is rolling out a US $6 million matching-grant program to support 1,000 agribusinesses nationwide, beginning disbursement in early 2026. These mechanisms collectively expand the pipeline of bankable agri-enterprises while crowding in private capital.

4. Strengthening Rural Finance Networks

Through the Rural Finance and Community Improvement Program (RFCIP II) supported by IFAD, the Government has disbursed over NLe 130 million in agricultural and commercial loans, including NLe 19 million in 2024–2025. More than 257,000 households—42 percent women and 41 percent youth—now access financial services through community banks and Financial Service Associations. The program is building rural credit culture, supporting input dealers, processors, and small traders essential to the Feed Salone ecosystem.

5. Laying the Groundwork for the National Agricultural Fund

Looking ahead, the Ministry is finalising an Agricultural Finance Policy and preparing to launch a dedicated Agricultural Fund, with an initial US $50 million commitment from the OPEC Fund. The Fund will consolidate credit lines, matching-grant mechanisms, and insurance schemes into a single

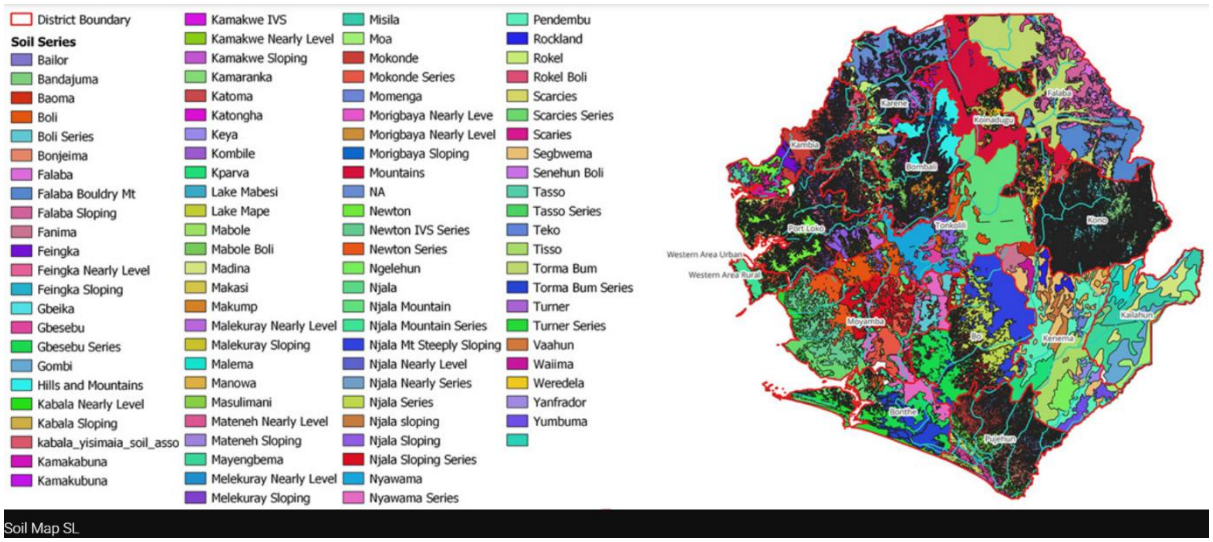
financing platform — enabling predictable, large-scale investment flows into Sierra Leone's agriculture sector.

PILLAR 5: AG TECH & CLIMATE SMART AGRICULTURE

Building on the progress achieved in the first year of Feed Salone, the government has launched several digital tools and platforms to strengthen climate-smart agricultural practices and enhance access to information and technology across the value chain.

1. **Digital National Soil Mapping System**:

MAFS, in collaboration with SLARI and the European Union, has developed a nationwide digital soil mapping system. Drawing on over 10,000 soil samples collected through the National Comprehensive Soil Survey (NCSS), the online platform consolidates all soil-related data into a single, accessible hub. The system provides crop-soil suitability maps, fertilizer recommendation tools, and a GIS-enabled data portal, enabling data-driven decision-making for farmers, private investors, and policymakers.



2. **The Rural Farmers Radio 98.9FM**

A dedicated agricultural broadcasting platform established by MAFS, located in Kenema District, the Radio station was officially launched by His Excellency President Julius Maada Bio during the 2025 World Food Day celebration. Its primary objective is to provide farmers across Sierra Leone with timely and relevant information that enhances their productivity and strengthens their engagement with agricultural markets. Rural Farmers Radio focuses on delivering regular updates on market prices, extension services, and key developments related to the Feed Salone transformation agenda. With coverage reaching nearly all districts nationwide, the station plays a vital role in ensuring that even

farmers in remote communities have access to critical agricultural information. This access empowers them to make informed decisions, adopt improved practices, and ultimately improve their livelihoods.







3. Expanding Climate-Resilient Rice Production

The rehabilitation of Inland Valley Swamps (IVS) has continued to be a central component of climate-smart rice production. In 2025, 6,615 hectares of IVS were rehabilitated — a significant increase from 1,950 hectares in 2023 — with an additional 4,115 hectares targeted for 2025. These naturally irrigated lowlands provide moisture retention throughout the year, reducing dependence on unpredictable rainfall and increasing rice yields. By promoting IVS cultivation over upland farming, the Ministry is also helping reduce deforestation and soil erosion, ensuring a more sustainable use of agricultural land.



4. The Interactive Voice Response (IVR) System

A digital platform designed to enhance communication between farmers and agricultural support services, providing last-mile access to agricultural information. The IVR system allows farmers to access real-time information on farming techniques, input availability, and market conditions through simple voice prompts. It also provides a channel for farmers to raise concerns, ask questions, and receive timely responses from extension officers and support teams. By integrating technology into agricultural outreach, the IVR system strengthens the delivery of services and ensures that farmers are better informed and more connected to the resources they need.

5. Integrating Nutrition and Resilience in Crop Systems

The Ministry continues to promote climate-smart crops that support both resilience and nutrition outcomes. Through collaboration with SLARI, nutrient-rich varieties such as orange-fleshed sweet potatoes and soybean have been introduced and integrated into the school feeding and community nutrition programs. These crops not only improve dietary diversity but also contribute to soil fertility through biological nitrogen fixation, linking food security with environmental sustainability.

6. Capacity Building for Climate-Smart Agriculture

Training and knowledge sharing have been scaled up across all districts to strengthen the adoption of climate-smart practices. Farmers and extension officers are being trained in soil conservation, integrated pest management, conservation tillage, and water-use efficiency. The Ministry, in partnership with SLARI, has also established Technology and Innovation Parks serving as demonstration hubs for new seed varieties, farming technologies, and climate-resilient production techniques.







PILLAR 6: EMPOWERING WOMEN AND YOUTH



Feed Salone continues to place women and youth at the center of Sierra Leone's agricultural transformation agenda — ensuring that they are not only beneficiaries but leaders in production, agribusiness, and innovation. The Ministry's programs are designed to build skills, expand access to finance, and promote inclusion across all value chains, laying the foundation for a generation of empowered agripreneurs driving national food systems transformation.

1. Empowering the Next Generation through the ENABLE Youth Incubation Centre

Through the AFDB supported SLARIS Project, the Ministry has established the ENABLE Youth Agribusiness Incubation Centre at Njala University — a national hub for practical agribusiness training and enterprise incubation. The centre combines classroom instruction with hands-on learning in livestock, poultry, aquaculture, crop production, and agro-processing. The facility also includes a dedicated daycare centre to enable young mothers to fully participate in the program — setting a new national standard for inclusive training design

Under the ENABLE program, over 1,000 young people have already completed training in entrepreneurship, business management, and agricultural production systems. Of these, 61 youth (27 women) received startup grants totaling $3.4 million to establish and expand agribusinesses across the country. Each beneficiary receives mentorship, business coaching, and direct linkage to community banks for continued financing. By the end of 2025, the ENABLE Centre will serve as a permanent pipeline for young agripreneurs, producing hundreds of skilled graduates each year equipped to manage profitable ag enterprises that contribute directly to Feed Salone's objectives.









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2. Empowering Women Entrepreneurs through the EWASME Program

Through the Empowering West African Women Small and Medium Enterprises (EWASME) Program, funded with a $2.4 million grant in partnership with the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) and the Women Entrepreneurs Finance Initiative, 100 women-led Very Small Enterprises (VSEs) have been selected as the first cohort of beneficiaries. The program is administered by the Apex Bank and provides a combination of matching grants, business development training, and mentorship to strengthen women's participation in the rice value chain. This first cohort includes 44 enterprises from Tormabum-Bonthe and 56 from Tonkolili, each receiving targeted support to enhance enterprise management, governance, financial literacy, and market linkages. By equipping these women with both the capital and capacity to expand their operations, the program is promoting inclusive economic growth and fostering stronger participation of women in Sierra Leone's agricultural transformation.





3. Promoting Youth Leadership through the World Food Prize Youth Institute

In **July 2025**, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, in partnership with the **World Food Prize Foundation (WFPF)**, the **Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education**, and **Njala University**, launched the **first-ever World Food Prize Youth Institute in West Africa**, hosted in Freetown. The Institute engaged **20 students** from across Sierra Leone in research and presentations focused on food security, climate change, and agricultural innovation. This initiative provides a unique platform for young Sierra Leoneans to explore practical solutions to national and global food systems challenges. By nurturing the creativity and leadership of students, the Institute marks a major milestone in advancing youth inclusion under Feed Salone, equipping the next generation with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to drive agricultural transformation and food systems resilience at home and abroad.









4. Enhancing Women's Livelihoods and Nutrition through FSRP

Under the Food Systems Resilience Program (FSRP), approximately 600 women have been trained in greenhouse technology and small-scale irrigation to expand modern vegetable production across Sierra Leone. These investments are enhancing women's incomes, improving local food availability, and demonstrating the potential of climate-smart, high-value horticulture.

Additionally, over 300 Mother-to-Mother Support Groups across six districts have been trained on household nutrition and behavior change communication, promoting better feeding practices and improved dietary diversity at community level. These initiatives link women's empowerment to nutrition security, ensuring that increased agricultural productivity translates into better health and wellbeing for families.

5. Expanding Inclusive Participation through SL-RAIC

Through the **Sierra Leone Rice Agro-Industry Cluster Project (SL-RAIC)**, the Ministry has expanded inclusion within the rice value chain by directly engaging **715 women** in rice production and processing, and **606 youth farmers** in related agricultural practices across **Bonthe** and **Pujehun** districts. These beneficiaries have received hands-on training in improved agronomic techniques, cooperative management, and post-harvest handling. By promoting equitable access to productive resources, the project reinforces Feed Salone's vision of inclusive, sustainable, and community-driven agricultural growth.

Driving Financial Inclusion and Gender Equity

Across all Feed Salone programs, women and youth are being prioritized in access to finance, training, and market linkages. Through the Agricultural Credit Facility, matching-grant schemes, and forthcoming Agricultural Fund, the Ministry has created dedicated financial windows for women- and youth-led enterprises. These interventions are paired with mentorship and technical support to ensure that emerging agripreneurs can transition from small-scale activities to fully structured agribusinesses with access to credit and commercial markets.





IMPACT

SECOND YEAR OF FEED SALONE

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The Feed Salone initiative aims to transform Sierra Leone's agriculture sector by achieving five key objectives: import substitution (reducing reliance on food imports), boosting export earnings for key cash crops, creating jobs for women and youth, alleviating hunger and malnutrition, and building climate-resilient food systems. This report presents progress based on indicators for 2023 (Year One) and 2024 (Year Two) in comparison to 2022 and earlier.

Objective 1: Import Substitution of Key Food Items

In its first and second year, the program prioritized three critical value chains for import substitution: rice, poultry products, and onions. These value chains were selected for their potential to increase domestic production, improve food security, and reduce the country's import dependence. Significant efforts were focused on expanding rice cultivation, enhancing policies for poultry farming, and boosting onion production by mobilizing private sector investment.

RICE

The rice value chain is a critical component of Sierra Leone's agricultural landscape, serving as a foundation for food security and economic development. The annual report highlights the transformative efforts made to achieve the targets by 2028.

Feed Salone Targets

The Feed Salone Strategy sets out to close Sierra Leone's rice import gap by 2028, anchored on three key targets:

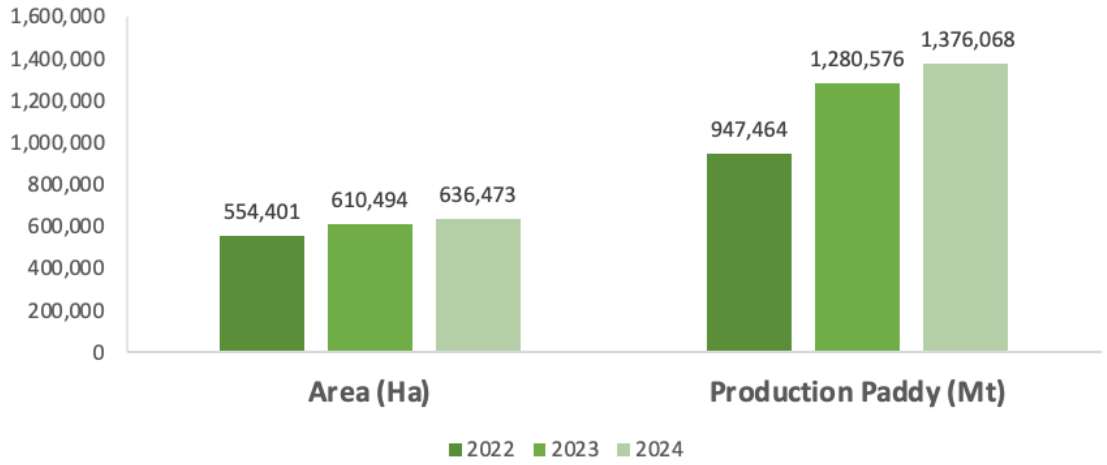
1. Expand production area – Scale up mechanized cultivation to bring 73,000 hectares of lowland rice ecologies under production.
2. Boost productivity – Raise average yields from 1.9 MT/ha to 4.0 MT/ha within five years.
3. Achieve self-sufficiency – Reach 100% national rice self-sufficiency by 2028.

Between 2022 and 2024, Sierra Leone recorded steady growth in both rice production and the area under cultivation. The cultivated area expanded from 554,401 hectares in 2022 to 610,494 hectares in 2023, and further to 636,473 hectares in 2024, reflecting ongoing farmer engagement and support under the Feed Salone program. This expansion translated into significant increases in paddy production, which rose from 947,464 MT in 2022 to 1,280,576 MT in 2023, and then to 1,376,068 MT in 2024. Average yields also rose from 1.9 MT per hectare in 2022 to over 2.0 MT per hectare in 2023 and remained stable through 2024.

The increased productions are driven by expanded areas and yields of three productive low-land rice ecologies, namely IVS, Mangrove, and Riverine. The area increased from 185,410 Ha to 198,414 Ha in IVS, 28,476 Ha to 30,289 Ha in Mangrove, and 11,198 Ha to 12,890 Ha in Riverine. These ecologies recorded yields of 2.56 to 2.59 MT per hectare, outperforming Boli land (1.99 MT) and Upland (1.81

MT). These gains underline the effectiveness of current interventions, particularly the scaling up of improved seed distribution, mechanization, and post-harvest processing. Sustained efforts in these areas will be critical to supporting higher levels of national self-sufficiency and reducing reliance on imports.

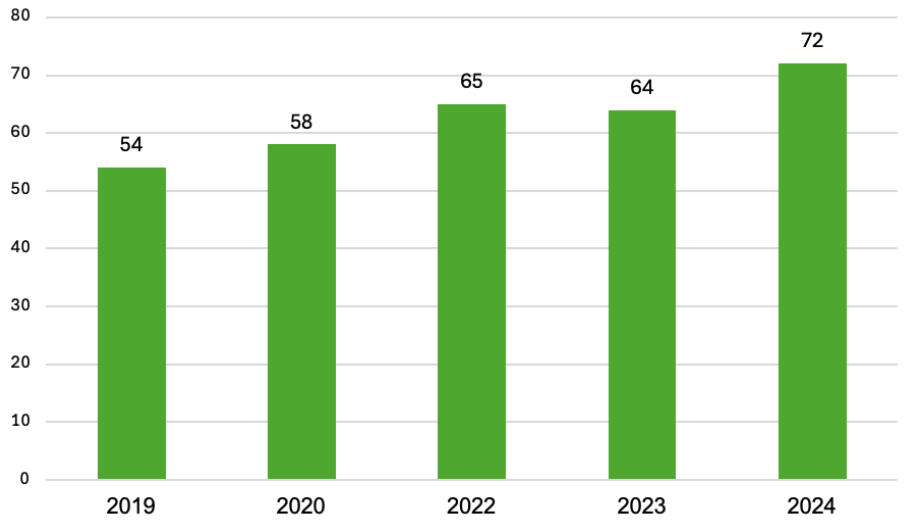
Figure 1: Rice production and area cultivated (2022-2023)



Source: *Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, 2024*

Sierra Leone continues to make steady progress toward rice self-sufficiency. Since the launch of the Feed Salone in late 2023, national self-sufficiency rose from 62% in 2022 to 68% in 2023 and reached 72% in 2024. This improvement reflects both gradual increases in domestic production and early momentum of the Feed Salone. Despite this positive trajectory, the gap between national requirements and local production remains significant, underscoring the importance of sustained investment, technology adoption, and farmer support. Continued implementation of Feed Salone presents a timely opportunity to accelerate progress and position Sierra Leone to achieve near self-sufficiency in the coming years.

Figure 2: Rice self-sufficiency (2019-2024)

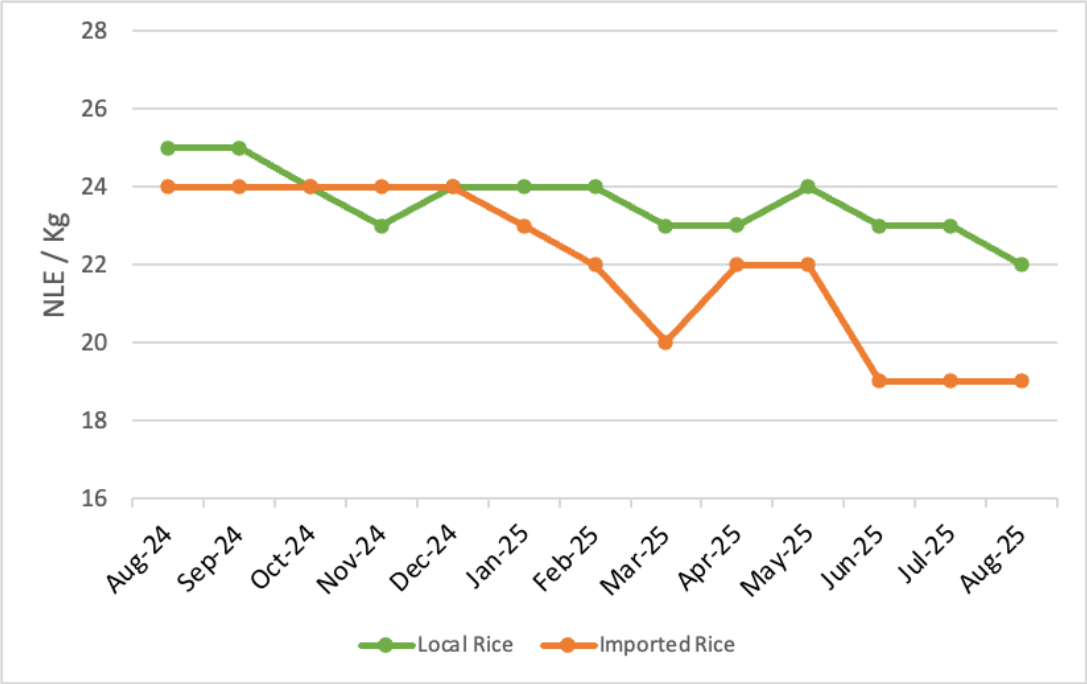


Source: *Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, 2025.*
Note: *Survey was not conducted in 2020/21 production season due to the COVID-19 pandemic.*

Rice Price

Figures 3 presents the market rice price in the last one year (both local and imported). The figure shows a clear trend of rice price reduction. Driven by enhanced local rice production from 2023/24 season, the local rice price has reduced by 12% (from 25 NLE/Kg to 22 NLE/Kg) and imported rice price has reduced by 21% (from 24 NLE/Kg to 19 NLE/Kg). Increased affordability of Sierra Leone's staple food under the Feed Salone programme has enhanced the country's food security (see Section on Objective 4).

Figure 3: Rice Retail Price (August 2024 – August 2025)

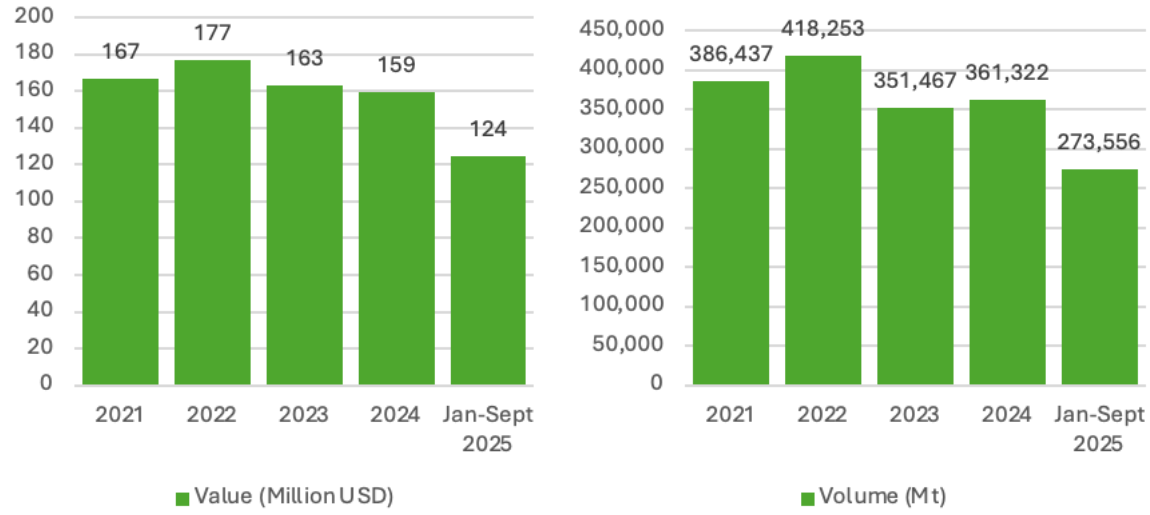


Rice Imports

Figures 4 illustrate the recent trends in rice imports to Sierra Leone between 2021 and 2025 (up to September). Import volumes reached 386,437 MT in 2021 and peaked at 418,253 MT in 2022, before dropping sharply to 354,467 MT in 2023. In 2024, imports rose slightly to 361,322 MT, largely reflecting the effect of reduced international rice prices. This import volume in 2024 accounts for roughly 30% of the national requirement. The value of rice imports has followed a similar trajectory. Imports were valued at USD 167 million in 2021 and USD 177 million in 2022 and declined to USD 163 million in 2023. By 2024, the total value fell further to USD 159 million and the trend is ongoing for 2025. Similarly, the total value of rice imports in USD shows a significant decrease in line with the volume trends. The estimated value was over USD 160 million in 2021 and peaked at around 180 million USD in 2022. By 2023, the total import value had dropped by around 25%.

Crucially, the decline in both import volume and value mirrors Sierra Leone's steady progress toward rice self-sufficiency, which has risen to 72% in 2024. This trend highlights the impact of expanding domestic production under the Feed Salone program, while also demonstrating that achieving full self-sufficiency will require continued efforts to reduce the remaining import dependency.

Figure 4: Rice imports (2021-2025), Volume (MT) and Value (Million USD)



Source: *Ministry of Trade and Industry, 2025*

Finally, we note that there is new evidence that Sierra Leone exports rice to neighboring countries, mostly informally, such as Guinea and Liberia. The survey conducted by Statistics Sierra Leone recorded more than NLE 1 million local rice exports for just 20 days (11th–31st March 2024) (Statistics Sierra Leone 2024). While there is no comprehensive data on informal export volume and values, the significance of unrecorded rice export is not negligible.

Driving Feed Salone Success

In 2024, the MAFS, alongside its partners, supported the cultivation of 27,688 hectares of rice, a significant increase from the 15,320 hectares cultivated in 2023. This represents an 81% increase in the area under cultivation in one year, demonstrating the impactful efforts of the Feed Salone initiative. These interventions for rice benefited 91,982 farmers, of whom 43.73% were women. The substantial increase in hectares cultivated and the number of beneficiaries reinforce the crucial role of MAFS in leading the rice transformation efforts in Sierra Leone (See Appendix 1).

For the efficient delivery of the inputs and mechanization services, one of the core initiatives is the Ministry's E-voucher scheme. All the supported rice farmers received inputs and mechanization services through this scheme. In addition, the Ministry has distributed locally produced, improved varieties of rice seeds, as well as seeds for maize and soybean, and seedlings for tree crops like cocoa and cashew. In 2024, Sierra Leone Agricultural Research Institute (SLARI) produced 31.04 Mt and 272.8 Mt of breeder and foundation seeds, which was used to produce 2,222.0 Mt of certified seed. As a result of continued promotion of the improved, high-yield rice varieties, 85% of rice farmers in 2024 used one of those two varieties, NERICA L19 and ROK 34 (MAFS 2025).

The Government also supported the land development in targeted areas to increase the yield potentials. More than 4,265 hectares of inland valley swamps (IVS), one of the most productive rice ecologies, were rehabilitated nationwide. These efforts were complemented by irrigation development, including 5,200 hectares of large-scale schemes in Torma Bum and Gbondapi, and small-

scale solar-powered drip irrigation introduced in 17 modern vegetable gardens. Together, these interventions strengthened rice productivity and resilience by combining inputs with land and water management support.

Another significant aspect of the government's support for rice farmers has been the large-scale distribution of agricultural machinery to enhance both production and post-harvest efficiency. To date, farmers have received over 100 combined rice mills with a capacity of 4 MT per day, as well as 15 rice dryers to reduce post-harvest losses. For riverine areas, the government also supplied four heavy-duty landing crafts to ease the transport of inputs and paddy from remote production zones. Together, this machinery package is significantly improving the efficiency of processing, transportation, and logistics, while empowering farmers to scale up production and strengthen Sierra Leone's march toward rice self-sufficiency.

POULTRY

The poultry value chain is essential as it contributes significantly to food security, nutrition, and economic development. Yet, domestic production is not keeping pace with national demand, and Sierra Leone continues to spend substantial foreign exchange each year on poultry imports. Strengthening this sector is therefore both a food security and a macroeconomic priority.

Feed Salone Targets

The Feed Salone Strategy sets out to close Sierra Leone's poultry import gap by 2028, by reducing eggs and chicken imports by 50%. The strategy aims to achieve these targets by following a three-pronged approach involving:

- Enhancing feed production, improving poultry breeds, and increasing access to high-quality day-old chicks to increase productivity in the poultry value chain.
- Improving the resilience of poultry farming for disease management by increasing access to veterinary services, vaccines, and medications.
- Increasing the area under commercially oriented maize and soybean production.

CHICKEN

Table 1 presents new data on the emerging commercial poultry sector. The number of registered commercial poultry farms increased from 94 in 2023 to 116 in 2024, while egg production grew from 57.9 million (3,303 MT) to 88.2 million (5,027 MT) over the same period. Although these figures highlight that Sierra Leone is still in the early stages of commercial poultry production, the growth trajectory demonstrates positive momentum. Policy interventions under the Feed Salone initiative, such as the poultry policy, are beginning to lay the foundation for attracting private investment.\

Figures 5 illustrates the quantity and value of chicken imports into Sierra Leone between 2021 and 2025. Imports peaked in 2021 at 16,736 MT, valued at USD 24 million. By 2022, volumes had dropped sharply to 7,446 MT (USD 12.8 million) and further to 6,570 MT (USD 14.8 million) in 2023. In 2024, imports rebounded modestly to 8,987 MT, while the total value fell to USD 13 million due to reduced global prices. The same trend continues in 2025.

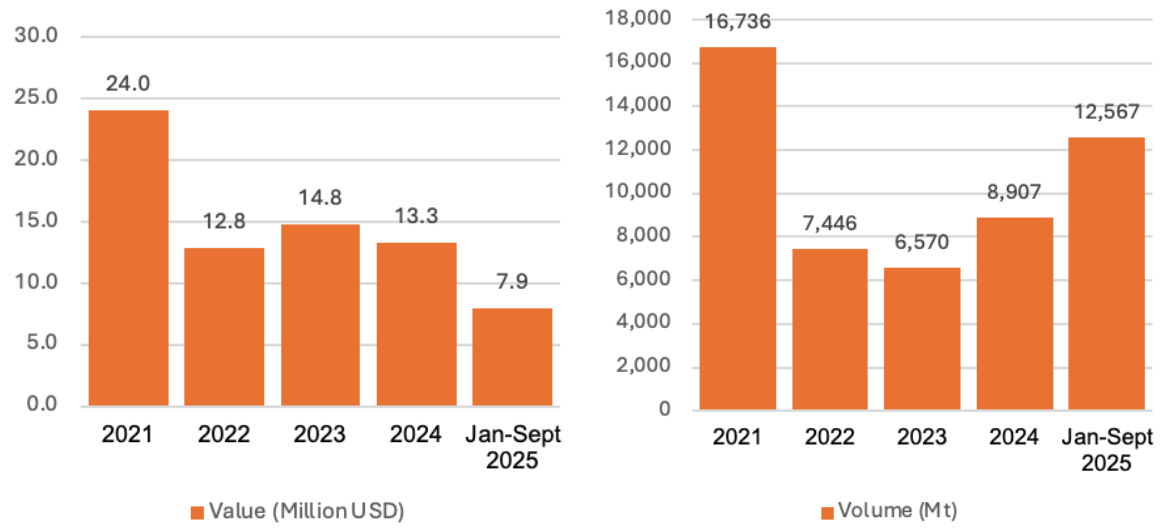
Table 1: Commercial poultry production (2023-2024)

	2023	2024
Number of poultry farms	94	116
Number of layer birds	52,105	64,300
Egg production	57,956,947 (3,303 Mt)	88,167,206 (5,027 Mt)

Source: *Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, 2025.*
Note: *The data covers registered poultry producers in the country.*

Overall, the import value is under the declining trend, achieving almost 50% reduction from 2021 to 2024. However, the 2024 and 2025 rebounds in terms of import volume highlight the continued role of imports in meeting increasing domestic demand. This underscores the need to further scale up local poultry production to ensure sustainable supply and reduce reliance on external markets.

Figure 5: Chicken imports (2021-2025), Volume (MT) and Value (million USD)



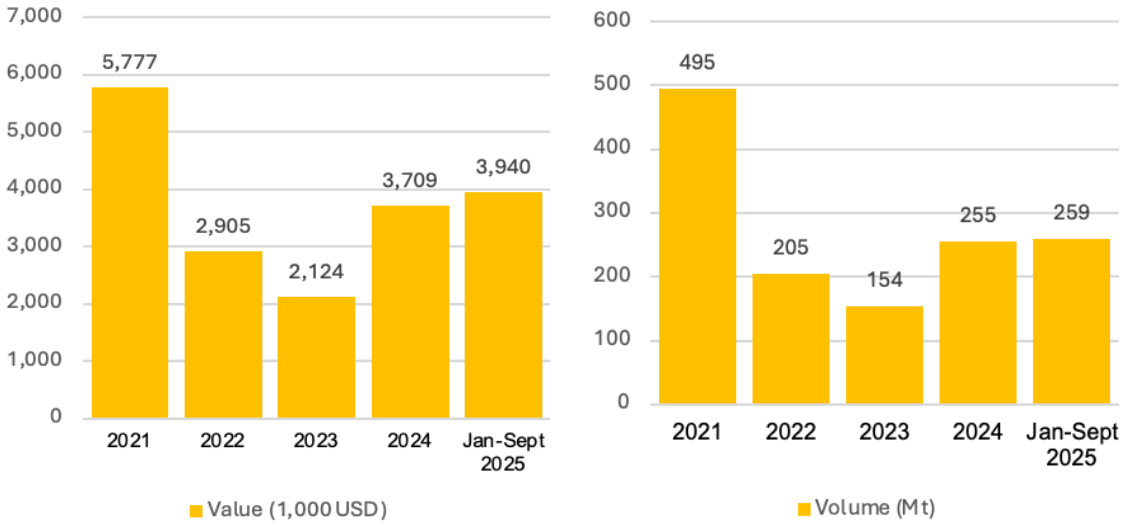
Source: *Ministry of Trade and Industry, 2025*

EGGS

Figures 6 shows egg imports into Sierra Leone from 2021 to 2025. Import volumes peaked in 2021 at 495 MT, valued at nearly USD 5.8 million. By 2022, imports had fallen to 205 MT (USD 2.9 million) and further to 154 MT (USD 2.1 million) in 2023. In 2024, volumes rebounded slightly to 255 MT, with values increasing to about USD 3.7 million.

Although the overall trajectory since 2021 reflects a sharp decline, the modest recovery in 2024 highlights persistent demand pressures and reliance on imports. While the longer-term reduction indicates progress in strengthening local poultry and egg production, there are strong needs to scale up local poultry production.

Figure 6: Eggs imports (2021-2025), Volume (MT) and Value (USD)



Source: *Ministry of Trade and Industry, 2025*

Driving Feed Salone Success

Following the establishment of Sierra Leone's first-ever large-scale hatchery in 2024, the second year also marked significant progress in the country's poultry production. In March 2025, country's first-ever industrial-grade feed mill has been commissioned in Waterloo. The Poultry Mill produces more than 22 tons of feed per day, providing affordable feed to poultry farmers. This investment, financed through the BSL's Agricultural Credit Facility, will contribute to reducing feed costs for poultry productions, one of the major challenges of the poultry sector.

In addition, the government is also creating an enabling environment for poultry production. Under the newly enacted poultry policy, the "One Child One Egg" initiative provides one locally produced egg for 3–6-year-old children through the school feeding programme. While providing thousands of children with a rich source of protein, vitamins, and key micronutrients, the initiative stimulates further investment across the poultry value chain and drives local egg production.

To accelerate the momentum, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security will start a Livestock & Livelihoods Development Project (LLDP) in the third year of Feed Salone. This 105 million USD project is the first-ever project of this kind dedicated to the livestock sector and will be an accelerator to boost the country's livestock production, including poultry.

ONIONS

Onions are not only a staple ingredient in Sierra Leonean cuisine but also a key agricultural product with substantial potential for local farmers. Recognizing the country's significant onion import gap, the Feed Salone initiative aims to empower farmers and enhance production through a targeted four-pronged strategy.

Feed Salone Targets

Feed Salone Strategy sets out to close Sierra Leone's rice import gap by 2028, anchored on two key targets:

- Increasing the area under commercially oriented onion production by 4,000 hectares.
- Reduce onion imports by 50 percents by 2028.

Figures 7 presents the trend of onion prices since 2024. The price was above 50 NLE/Kg in early 2024, and it dropped after onion from the 2024 season became available in the market. This price trend implies expanded onion production in the country. During the first year, the MAFS signed an agreement with the largest onion importer in Sierra Leone. This agreement marked a major shift, positioning the importer to the largest producers of onions in the country. The company launched a mechanized onion cultivation in Lungi, with an out-grower scheme of over 1,100 farmers, including women and youth. In 2024, the company expanded the cultivation areas from 20 Ha to 55 Ha, increasing the production from 488 Mt to 510 Mt. In In the 2025 cycle, the company further expanded its area to 85 hectares, producing 5,500 MT of onion. The government, through AVDP, also supported private farmers for the 200 hectares of onion production during 2023–2025.

Figure 7: Onion Retail Price (January 2024 – August 2025)

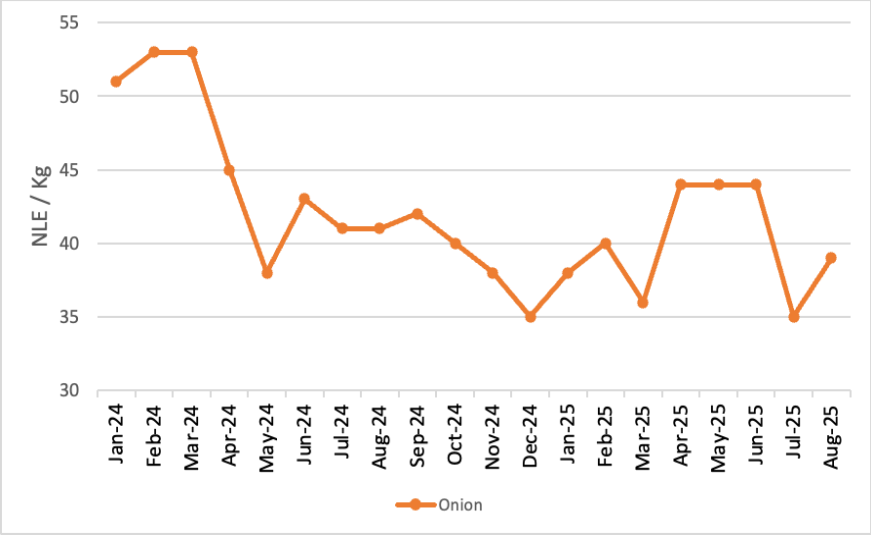
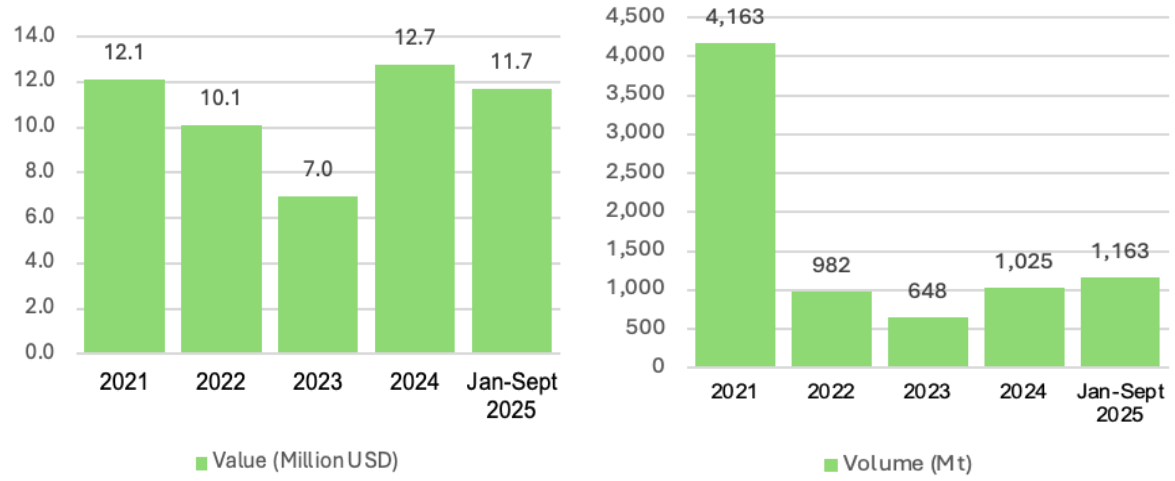


Figure 8 presents the trend of onion imports in Sierra Leone from 2021 to 2024. Import volumes were highest in 2021 at 4,163 MT, valued at USD 12.1 million. By 2022, volumes fell sharply to 982 MT (USD 10.1 million) and further to 648 MT (USD 7.0 million) in 2023. However, in 2024, imports rose slightly to 1,025 MT, with the value increasing to USD 12.7 million. The slight rebound in imports in 2024

reflects an increasing domestic demand and highlights the importance of further strengthening local production.

Figure 8: Onion imports (2021-2025), Volume (MT) and Value (million USD)



Source: *Ministry of Trade and Industry, 2025*



Objective 2: Boosting Export Earnings from Agriculture

This objective focuses on expanding Sierra Leone's agricultural exports by increasing the productivity and value of key cash crops such as cocoa, coffee, and cashew. By enhancing the quality and marketability of these crops, the initiative seeks to strengthen the agricultural value chain, increase foreign exchange earnings, and increase farm income, especially for women and youth.

Feed Salone Target

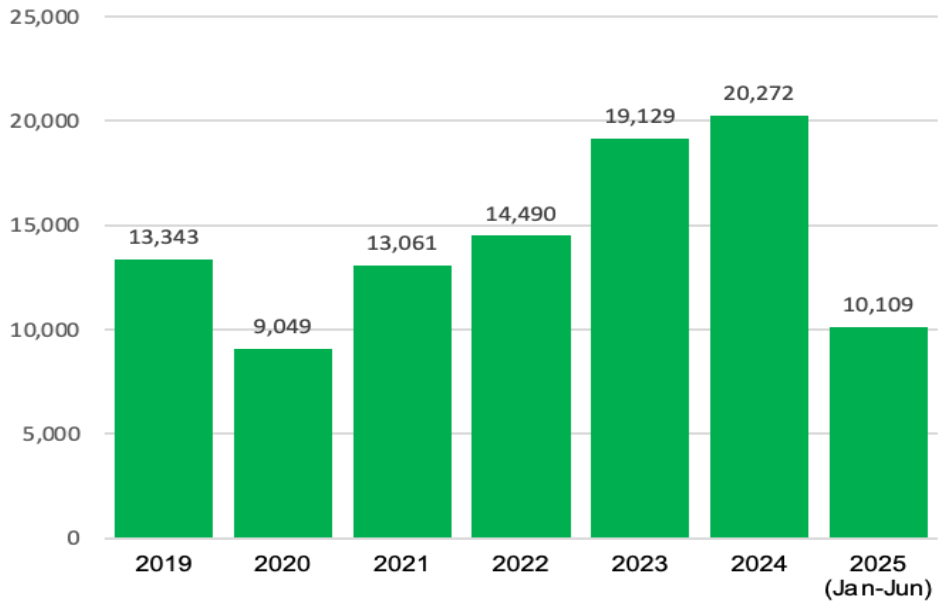
Increase export earnings through enhancing production and exports of cocoa, cashew, and coffee by 50 percent by 2028.

COCOA

The cocoa value chain remains one of the most important contributors to Sierra Leone's agricultural export earnings, making it a central focus of the Feed Salone Strategy. With a comprehensive approach covering cultivation, harvesting, processing, and export, the strategy aims to boost productivity, improve quality, and expand market access. This not only supports rural livelihoods but also strengthens Sierra Leone's competitiveness in international markets.

Cocoa exports have shown strong increasing trend (Figure 7). In 2022, exports recorded at 14,490 MT, significant increase from 2019-2021 with around 13,000 MT. The first year of Feed Salone recorded 32% YoY increase. In the second year, exported increased modestly by 6%, reaching above 20,000 MT. According to the Ministry of Trade and Industry, the government raised around 34 million Nle (about 1.4 million USD) tax revenue from the 2.5% levy on cocoa export. This suggests that cocoa export earned about 56 million USD in 2024.

Figure 7: Cocoa exports (2019-2025), MT



Source: *Ministry of Trade and Industry, 2025*

Nevertheless, Sierra Leone's cocoa productivity remains low, with average yield of1.36 MT per hectare in 2024 (MAFS 2025). The upward export trajectory and recent increases in international cocoa prices underscore the sector's potential to drive foreign exchange earnings. Recognizing this, the government has intensified efforts to reform sectoral policies and governance, with a particular emphasis on meeting international sustainability and traceability standards, including compliance with the EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR).

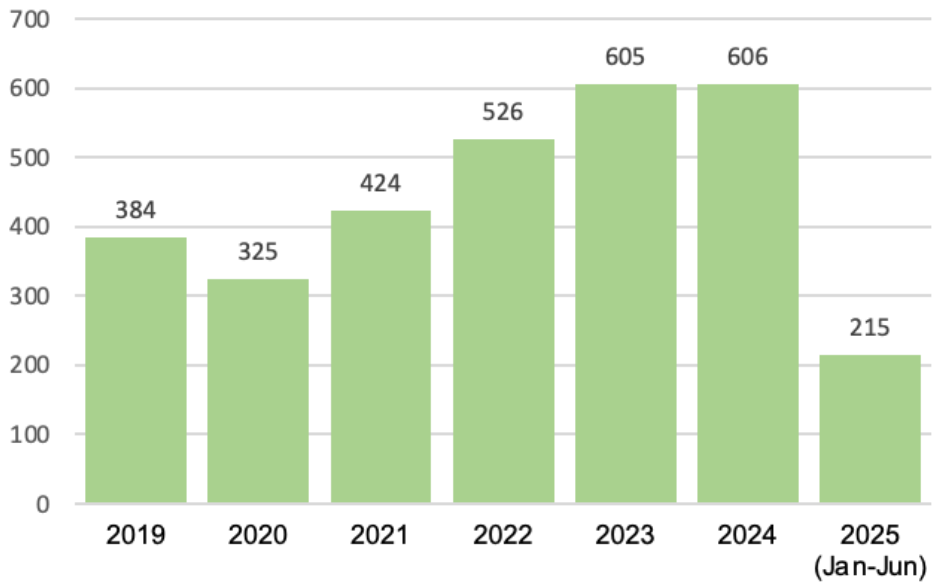
CASHEW

The cashew value chain is increasingly recognized as an important component of Sierra Leone's agricultural transformation, with strong potential to diversify export earnings and generate rural employment. While still smaller in scale compared to cocoa, cashew production and exports are expanding under the Feed Salone initiative, which aims to strengthen market linkages, improve processing, and attract private sector investment.

Cashew exports have shown steady growth over the past six years, though from a relatively low base (Figure 8). In 2019, exports stood at 384 MT, before declining to 325 MT in 2020. Since then, exports have trended upward: 424 MT in 2021, 526 MT in 2022, and a strong increase to 605 MT in 2023. By 2024, exports stabilized at 606 MT, the highest level on record.

This performance highlights cashew's growing role in Sierra Leone's agricultural export mix. Sustained investment in processing capacity, quality control, and farmer organization will be critical to unlocking the full value of the sector and positioning cashew as a significant contributor alongside cocoa in boosting foreign exchange earnings.

Figure 8: Cashew exports (2019-2025), MT



Source: *Ministry of Trade and Industry, 2025*

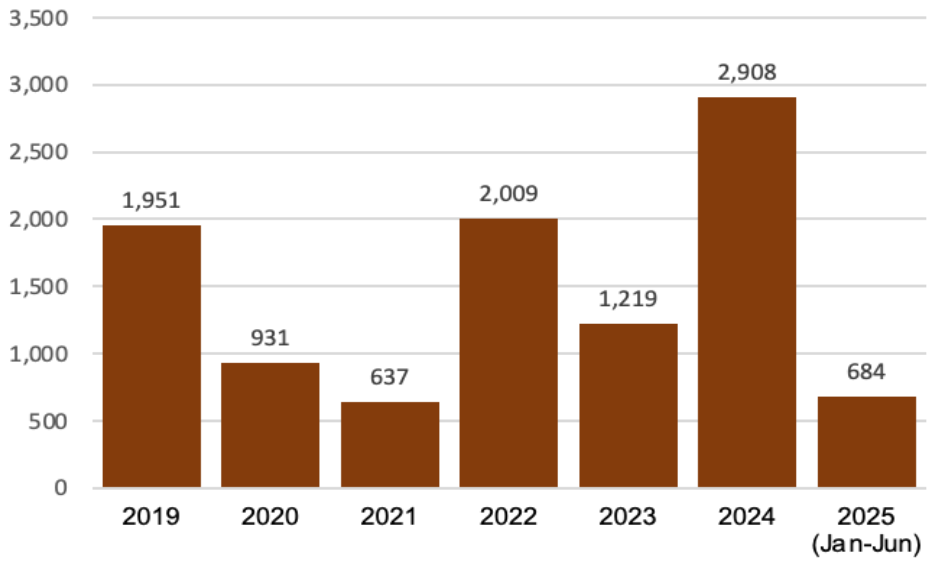
COFFEE

Coffee continues to be an important agricultural commodity for Sierra Leone, providing livelihoods for smallholder farmers and contributing to foreign exchange earnings. However, export performance has fluctuated significantly in recent years, reflecting both production variability and shifting international demand.

Figure 9 shows coffee exports between 2019 and 2024. The stood nearly 20,000 MT in 2019 but declined to less than half during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021. A recovery occurred in 2022, with exports increasing to 2,009 MT, but volumes dropped again to 1,219 MT in 2023. In 2024, exports rebounded strongly, reaching 2,908 MT, the highest level in the period observed.

This sharp rebound in 2024 highlights renewed potential for coffee as a foreign exchange earner. With sustained investment in quality improvement, farmer support, and stronger market linkages, Sierra Leone could consolidate this momentum and strengthen coffee's role in the country's agricultural export mix.

Figure 9: Coffee exports (2019-2025), MT



Source: *Ministry of Trade and Industry, 2025*

Driving Feed Salone Success

Expanding Cocoa Production

In the first two years of Feed Salone, the 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.

In tandem with these efforts, private sector across the country has been scaling up its cultivation, contributing to higher export figures for cocoa. In recent years, some private sector players have explored organic cocoa market, exporting Sierra Leonean cocoa as organic cocoa with premium price. These private sector players, together with the government's investment in the sector, is driving substantial growth in the cocoa value chain, increasing production capacity and bolstering Sierra Leone's presence in international markets.

Expanding Cashew Production

Building on the momentum from last year's milestones, Sierra Leone's cashew sector continued to expand through increased sourcing, processing, and farmer capacity development under the supports from the EU-funded Developing an Inclusive and Sustainable Cashew Agroforestry Value Chain (DISCA-VC) and the Woord Een Daad-funded Trust Cashew Project. The Waterloo Women Cashew Processing Factory (Newton), commissioned last year by the Minister of Agriculture in collaboration with the EU and Solidaridad, and Nianda Cashew Factory (Rogbere Junction) purchased and processed 100 MT of raw cashew nuts, where 60 MT were sold locally. Under the Trust Cashew Project sourced and exported 430 MT of raw cashew nuts.

Two cooperatives—Good Heart and One Word—were supported through governance and Fairtrade training, collectively reaching 1,437 farmers. One Word cooperative has achieved legal registration, while Good Heart's Fairtrade certification is under review. To enhance post-harvest management, two drying floors were constructed in Madina, Kambia District, and 54 trainees received business skills training. Furthermore, 177 acres of new cashew farms (7,090 seedlings) were established, expanding the production base across key cashew-growing districts









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

Feed Salone puts an emphasis on empowering women and youth by creating economic opportunities in the agriculture sector. By prioritizing their involvement in key value chains like rice, onions, cocoa and poultry, the Strategy seeks to enhance their participation in the agricultural workforce and boost their income. This aligns with the broader Feed Salone goal of increasing productivity and creating jobs. Through targeted investments, increased access to finance, capacity-building, and entrepreneurship support, the initiative ensures that women and youth gain access to essential resources and opportunities. Building upon the groundwork in the first year, the second year has seen a decisive shift toward scale-up and measurable results.

Feed Salone Target

Increasing the production of small ruminants and high-value horticulture crops, such as chili peppers, onions, and tomatoes to create 35,000 jobs for women and youth.

In the second year alone, it is estimated that over 25,000 direct jobs and more than 60,000 indirect or seasonal jobs were created. The number has increased from Year 1, which created fewer than 10,000 direct jobs under the Feed Salone interventions. Of the more than 25,000 direct jobs created, an estimated 45–50 percent were taken up by women and 40–45 percent by youth. This confirms that Feed Salone interventions are strongly aligned with job creation and income generation for women and young people in agriculture.

Driving Feed Salone Success

Strengthening Cooperatives and Women's Groups

In Year 1, interventions focused on piloting farmer mobilization and laying the groundwork for cooperative formation. By Year 2, under the SL RAIC project, 1,232 farmers (58 percent women and 49 percent youth) were mobilized into functional cooperatives and trained in Good Agricultural Practices, while 15 women-led Village Savings Associations were created, mobilizing nearly NLe 20,000. FSRP complemented these efforts by establishing Modern Vegetable Gardens with solar-powered irrigation and greenhouses in 17 locations, explicitly targeting women-led groups. The shift from pilots in Year 1 to operational cooperatives and savings groups in Year 2 highlights the transition from concept to practice, significantly strengthening the role of women and youth in collective production and financial resilience.

Expanding Rural Finance and Entrepreneurship

During Year 1, RFCIP-2 concentrated on system-building and strengthening community banks and financial service associations. In Year 2, the project reached 257,332 households (42 percent women and 41 percent youth), disbursed more than NLe 150 million in loans, and enabled 65 percent of community banks to meet the Bank of Sierra Leone's minimum capital requirement. This expansion marks a clear shift from establishing the financial network in Year 1 to mobilizing significant capital for

lending in Year 2. The impact is evident in thousands of direct jobs in rural finance institutions and agribusinesses, as well as widespread seasonal farm employment made possible by greater access to finance.

Building Infrastructure and Market Access

Year 1 concentrated on planning, procurement, and early works for rural infrastructure. In Year 2, delivery accelerated, most notably with the completion of four climate-resilient bridges under SCADeP, including the flagship Mattru–Senehun Bridge. Construction alone created 1,352 jobs, many for women and youth, while also transferring skills in welding, fabrication, and construction trades. Compared to Year 1's preparatory phase, Year 2 achievements demonstrate tangible progress in reducing transport costs, opening trade corridors, and cutting travel time for farmers and traders.

















Objective 4: Alleviating Hunger & Malnutrition

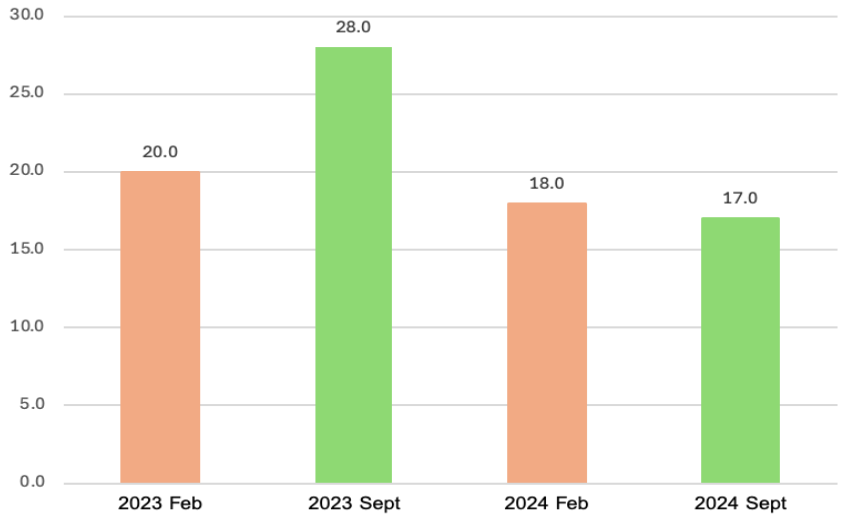
This objective focuses on alleviating hunger and malnutrition by increasing the availability of locally produced nutritious food such as fish, pulses, and tubers: cassava and orange flesh sweet potatoes.

Feed Salone Targets

1. Reduce share of severely food insecure households to 10%.
2. Increasing share of households with acceptable Food Consumption score to 65%.
3. Cut chronic hunger by half, child stunting by 30%, and significantly reduce micronutrient deficiency among children by 2030.
4. Contributing and aligning policies to enhance the aquaculture sector.

Food Security has multiple dimensions including availability, accessibility, utilization, and stability. Food Security Score combines all dimensions. Figure 10 shows the percentage of severely food insecure households based on food security scores. Comparing the 2023 and 2024 lean season, it has reduced by 11 percentage points, significant improvement in food security. The WFP attributes this improvement to 'good harvest' in the 2023/24 season.

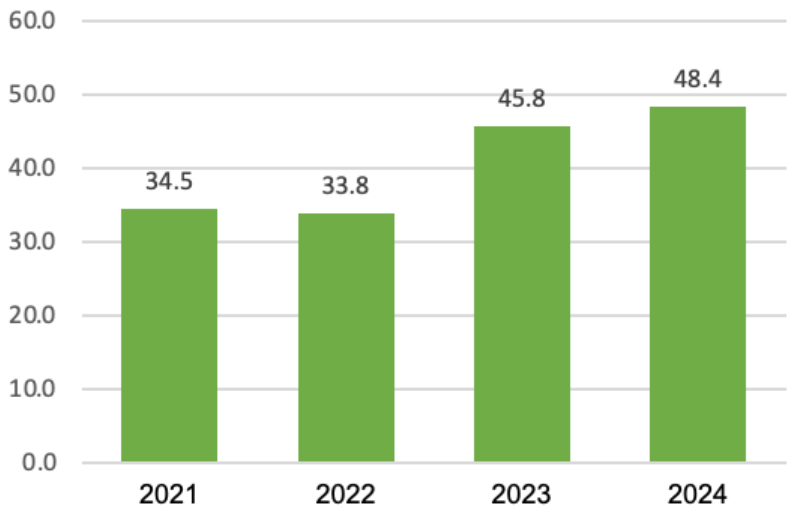
Figure 10: Percentage of Severely Food Insecure Household (2023-2024), %



Source: *World Food Programme, 2025*

Figure 11 shows the Food Consumption Score (FCS), which tracks the share of households with acceptable dietary diversity and frequency. It shows that the percentage of households with an acceptable FCS remained relatively stable between 2021 (34.5%) and 2022 (33.8%), before improving to 45.8% in 2023 and further to 48.4% in 2024. This upward trend reflects growing access to and utilization of diverse foods as well as enhanced crop production, supported by interventions under Feed Salone. Despite these gains, food security remains significantly below the national target of 65%, where continued efforts are necessary.

Figure 15: Percentage of acceptable Food Consumption Score (2021-2024), %



Source: *World Food Programme, 2025*

Driving Feed Salone Success

As part of its commitment to improving health and nutrition outcomes, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (MAFS) has launched several targeted initiatives to enhance the nutritional quality and safety of Sierra Leone's food supply. These efforts are designed not only to combat malnutrition but also to promote long-term health, especially among vulnerable populations such as children, women, and rural communities. MAFS collaborates closely with the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Secretariat, the Office of the Vice President, and other key stakeholders to ensure that nutrition is mainstreamed across agricultural policies and programmes, aligning food systems transformation with national health and development goals.

School Feeding Programs

The School Feeding Program has proven to be a key intervention in addressing hunger and malnutrition among school children. During the 2024-2025 academic year, 929,143 students from 3,774 schools, representing about 57% of schools nationwide, received nutritious meals, making significant contributions to increased school attendance and enhanced academic performance. The number of beneficiaries has nearly doubled from 2023-2024 academic year (about 500,000 students). Moreover, 35% of rice fed in the program was locally produced rice, providing opportunities for local rice producers and processors to generate income source and create jobs.

In April 2025, the government in collaboration with the World Food Program (WFP) flagged off 2,044 metric tons of locally grown rice to supply meals to schoolchildren across the country. The Minister launched the dispatch at the WFP warehouse in Kissy alongside the MBSSE Deputy Minister. The rice, produced by 12,000 smallholder farmers across seven districts, will feed more than 270,000 pupils in 1,155 schools during the 2024-2025 academic year.

The School Feeding Programs have been enhanced its nutrition intake by incorporating orange-fleshed sweet potatoes (OFSP) and yellow-fleshed cassava, which are rich in Vitamin A. The program will further make nutritious enhancements from the 2024-2025 academic year with “One Child One Egg” initiative under the poultry policy. Under this initiative, children aged 3 to 6 years-old will receive one locally produced egg per day, which will be a rich source of protein, vitamins, and key micronutrients.

Enhancing Locally Produced Nutritious Foods with SLARI

In partnership with the Sierra Leone Agricultural Research Institute (SLARI), the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (MAFS) has advanced innovations to improve the nutritional value and availability of locally produced foods that directly contribute to reducing hunger and malnutrition. Through soybean utilization and value addition initiatives, 200 farmers were supported in seed multiplication, and 16 agribusiness entrepreneurs trained on soybean processing and product development, resulting in locally produced foods with higher energy, protein, and mineral content. SLARI also produced 9,918 Semi-Autotrophic Hydroponics (SAH) cassava plantlets across 14 vitamin-rich varieties for breeder seed production, boosting the availability of improved cassava for household consumption and processing. In addition, orange-fleshed sweet potatoes (OFSP), a key source of Vitamin A, were integrated into the national School Feeding Programme, enhancing the nutritional quality of children’s meals. Complementing these efforts, commercial seed entrepreneurs were trained across the soybean, cassava, and maize value chains to build a sustainable, nutrition-sensitive seed system. Together, these interventions are transforming Sierra Leone’s food systems by linking agricultural innovation with better nutrition, livelihoods, and long-term food security.



Objective 5: Building climate resilient food system

This objective focuses on enhancing Sierra Leone's agricultural sector's capacity to adapt to climate change while ensuring sustainable food production. Through the adoption of climate-smart technologies and practices, this objective aims to reduce environmental degradation, promote agroforestry, and increase green cover through crops like cocoa and cashew.

Feed Salone Targets

1. Adopt smart climate technologies and approaches in our farming systems.
2. Improving the performance of critical dimensions of agroforestry for climate resilient food systems.
3. Increasing the green cover with cocoa and cashew.
4. Introducing policies and incentives to reduce slash and burn cultivation practice.

A number of impactful interventions were carried out that directly enhanced climate resilience of Sierra Leone's food system. These include:

1. Improved Seed Varieties and and Certified Seed Multiplication

During the reporting period, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security advanced Sierra Leone's transition toward a resilient and self-sustaining seed system, a core strategy for climate change adaptation and food security under the Feed Salone agenda. Recognizing that resilient agriculture begins with resilient seeds, the Ministry focused on the multiplication and certification of improved rice and maize varieties bred for drought tolerance, pest and disease resistance, and adaptability to local ecological conditions.

During the reporting period, a total of 2,222 metric tonnes of certified rice seed were produced, alongside 272.8 metric tonnes of foundation seed and 31.0 metric tonnes of breeder seed. Similarly for maize, 532.4 metric tonnes of certified seed were produced, with 41.6 metric tonnes of foundation seed and 7.8 metric tonnes of breeder seed. These results mark a historic shift from a baseline of zero certified seed production in 2019, reflecting the establishment of a functional national seed multiplication and certification system.

This progress demonstrates the success of institutional reforms and coordinated investment by the Ministry in partnership with research institutions and the private sector. Through an enabling policy environment, the private sector has been mobilized to engage in seed production and multiplication, while the Ministry, through the Sierra Leone Seed Certification Agency (SLeSCA), ensures rigorous quality control and certification. Certified seeds now serve as a front line of defense against climate change impacts by offering improved resilience to drought, floods, pests, and diseases leading to higher productivity and enhanced food security for smallholders nationwide. Going forward, the Ministry will continue to strengthen research, regulatory oversight, and private sector engagement to guarantee sustainable access to high-quality seeds suited to Sierra Leone's evolving climatic and ecological conditions.

2. Crop Rotation and Soil Fertility

To maintain soil health and productivity, the Ministry promoted crop rotation and diversification across major food systems. Through the cultivation of cassava, maize, sweet potato, groundnut, onion, and vegetables on more than 890 hectares, farmers were supported to alternate crops between seasons, restoring soil nutrients and reducing pest and disease pressures. These efforts, combined with mechanized land preparation and strengthened extension services, are enhancing soil fertility and long-term sustainability of production systems.

3. Agroforestry and Integrated Landscape Management

Integrated Landscape Management approaches were applied in six priority districts Bonthe, Kambia, Moyamba, Port Loko, Pujehun, and Tonkolili to encourage the integration of trees and perennial vegetation within farming systems. These initiatives promote erosion control, carbon sequestration, and soil stabilization while providing shade and wind protection for crops. The approach is establishing the ecological foundation for large-scale agroforestry expansion across farming landscapes.

4. Water Management and Irrigation Technologies

Significant progress was made in expanding water-efficient irrigation systems and flood-control infrastructure. More than 15,000 hectares of lowland rice ecologies were developed with improved bunds and drainage structures to enhance water retention and flood resilience. In addition, 17 Modern Vegetable Gardens equipped with solar-powered drip irrigation and greenhouse facilities were established in eight districts, enabling year-round vegetable production and minimizing water losses. These investments are strengthening resilience to erratic rainfall and boosting dry-season productivity.

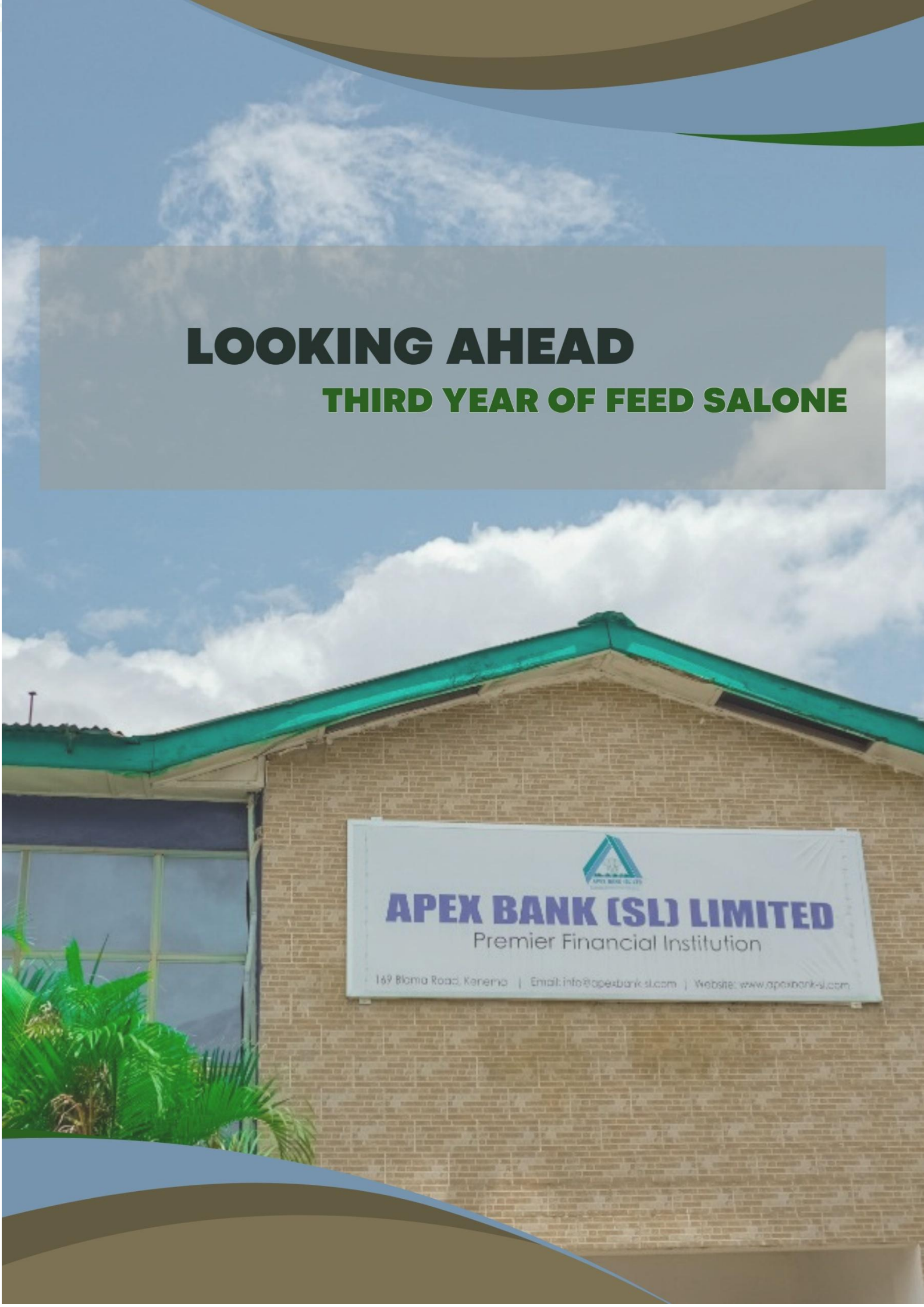
5. Building Resilience in Priority Landscapes

The Ministry deepened efforts to restore and protect vulnerable landscapes through climate-smart technologies for floodplain rehabilitation, erosion control, and soil management. Under the Integrated Landscape Management framework, targeted districts benefited from mechanized land development, contour bunding, and re-vegetation activities that stabilize soils and prevent degradation. Complementary Technology Parks established in the Northern, Eastern, and Southern regions now serve as demonstration hubs for climate-resilient innovations, research-extension linkages, and farmer training, accelerating nationwide adoption of sustainable practices.

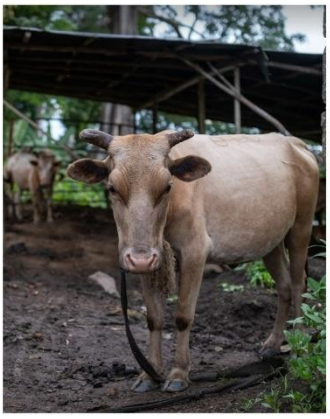


LOOKING AHEAD

THIRD YEAR OF FEED SALONE



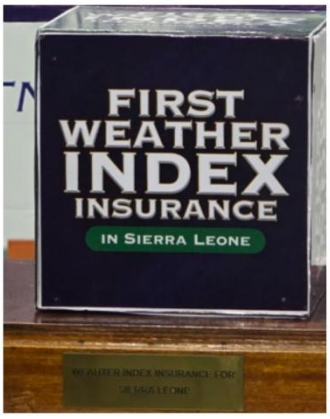
LOOKING AHEAD: THIRD YEAR OF FEED SALONE



Implementing the $105 million program to scale livestock and poultry production nationwide.



Special Agro Processing Zone (SAPZ) in Port Loko and Kambia to anchor agro-industrialization



Scaling up the Weather Index Insurance scheme nationwide to expand farmer coverage



Completion of the Rice Agro-Industrial Clusters in Tormabum, Gbondapi,



Completion of Tormabum and Gbondapi Irrigation Schemes



Rollout of National Digital Farmer Registry to improve targeting of support to farmers.



Agricultural Finance Policy and SPV To be launched to expand credit access and crowd in private investment



Full-scale rollout of the Youth Incubation Centre at Njala University training thousands in agribusiness



Completion of the National Food Reserve System with a 4,000-ton grain silo

Looking Ahead: The Third Year of Feed Salone

As Feed Salone enters its third year, the focus will sharpen on closing the food import gap, scaling proven models, and embedding systemic reforms that will transform Sierra Leone's food systems for generations to come.

Guided by President Julius Maada Bio's leadership and a coordinated whole-of-government approach, Year Three will prioritise five delivery areas: expanded domestic production, private-sector investment, infrastructure and irrigation, agricultural finance, and youth and women empowerment.

Scaling Production

A central objective for Year Three is reducing dependence on food imports — particularly rice and cassava, which together account for more than half of Sierra Leone's food consumption. Building on the 72 percent self-sufficiency achieved in 2024, the government will scale up the development of Inland Valley Swamps (IVS) and expand support to private sector to enhance production. Ongoing irrigation works are projected to be completed, enabling year-round rice farming, higher yields, and climate-resilient production. Investments in Livestock with the new 105 million dollars LLDP program and cassava industrialization will support value addition, processing, and job creation across the country.

Delivering Infrastructure for Market Access

The development of agro-industrial hubs remains central to Feed Salone's infrastructure agenda. In Year Three, major progress will be realized at the Gbondapi and Tormabum rice hubs, where processing, and storage facilities are taking shape to anchor commercial rice production in the south. These hubs will serve as models of integrated rural industrialisation — providing shared infrastructure, attracting private investment, and creating reliable markets for smallholders.

At the same time, the US $75 million Special Agro-Industrial Processing Zone (SAPZ) Project will become operational in Kambia and Port Loko, transforming the North-West into a dynamic agro-industrial corridor. The SAPZ will provide infrastructure, renewable power, and logistics support for processing and packaging, linking producers to both domestic and export markets.

To enhance connectivity and market access, the Ministry will continue to expand rural transport infrastructure. In collaboration with the Ministry of Transport and Aviation, implementation of the Sierra Leone Connectivity and Agricultural Market Infrastructure Project (SL-CAMIP) will expand on the successes of the Smallholder Commercialization and Agribusiness Development Project (SCADeP) focusing on the construction of four new bridges at Sumbuya, Komrabai, Kabba Ferry, and Moselolo. the completion of 420 kilometres of feeder roads connecting hubs to major trading centres through The Agriculture Value Chain Development Project (AVDP) is also projected to be completed .

Two climate-resilient bridges — Mattru–Senehun in Bonthe and Gendema in Kenema — are already improving rural connectivity, easing the transport of inputs and produce, and opening new market access for farmers, while the Manowa and Tomparie Bridges almost completed, will further consolidate these trade corridors and strengthen agribusiness linkages.

Complementary investments — including drying floors, seed stores, solar-powered irrigation systems, and climate-resilient storage facilities — will continue to expand around the hubs, improving aggregation, processing, and market efficiency. Collectively, these efforts will boost productivity, cut transport costs, and generate thousands of jobs for rural youth and women.

Mobilising Finance and Private-Sector Growth

Feed Salone's next phase will mark a new era for agricultural finance and private investment. The Ministry will operationalise a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) to mobilise and deploy blended finance at scale — bringing together government, commercial banks, and development partners to provide affordable credit to farmers and agribusinesses.

A landmark Agricultural Finance Policy will be tabled for Cabinet approval to institutionalize long-term financing mechanisms and attract private capital into mechanization, processing, and input supply chains.

Building on the momentum of 2024–2025, when over ten agribusinesses accessed the Bank of Sierra Leone credit facility and new Machinery Service Providers emerged, Year Three will expand financing for small and medium agribusinesses and strengthen linkages with the Agriculture Credit Facility, Matching Grant schemes, and community banking networks.

Empowering Youth and Women

Feed Salone's commitment to inclusive growth will be deepened through scaled-up youth and women programmes. The Njala University Youth Incubation Centre — now equipped with modern training facilities — will be operational in Year Three to train young people in agribusiness management, mechanisation, livestock, fisheries, and processing. Graduates will receive starter grants and financing linkages to community banks to launch their own enterprises.

Driving Innovation and Data Systems

Institutional reforms will continue to strengthen delivery. The National Farmers Registry will be rolled out nationwide to enable targeted access to inputs, services, and finance. The digital soil mapping platform, recently completed, will guide precision planning for fertilizer distribution and crop suitability.
A revised Theory of Change and full Monitoring & Evaluation Framework with baseline indicators will underpin transparent, data-driven decision-making. Beginning in 2025, the National Crop Production Survey will be published annually to track progress and guide future policy.

Consolidating Policy and Global Alignment

Year Three will also see the implementation of the new policies on poultry, livestock, seed systems, and land zoning, alongside progress toward an Agricultural Finance Act and land access reforms that facilitate responsible investment. For export crops like cocoa, Sierra Leone will align with international sustainability and traceability standards, including the EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR).

A Decisive Step Forward

With President Bio's continued leadership, unwavering political will, and increasing participation from the private sector and development partners, Year Three will be a decisive step toward building a competitive, self-reliant, and inclusive food system. The focus will remain clear: consolidate what works, remove bottlenecks, and scale impact. Through this, Feed Salone will lay a solid, irreversible foundation for food sovereignty, economic transformation, and lasting prosperity for all Sierra Leoneans.

APPENDIX

Overview of Rice Cluster Development

The Government's flagship Rice Cluster Project has transitioned from concept to implementation, anchored on large-scale rice production zones in **Torma Bum-Bonthe and Gbondapi – Pujehun (Southern Region), Kobia- Kambia and Katonga -Port Loko (North-West), and Magbas- Tonkolili (North)**. Each cluster is equipped with core infrastructure—roads, bridges, power connections, irrigation schemes, and processing facilities—to support commercial rice production and private sector investment. The approach concentrates public resources in high-potential zones while ensuring inclusive smallholder participation through contract farming and input financing schemes.

2. Key Achievements (Oct 2024 – Sept 2025)

Component	Progress to Date
Infrastructure	Four new bridges constructed under SCADeP and SL-CAMIP linking rice zones to markets (Tomparie, Mattru Jong, Gendema, Manowa). Feeder roads prioritized for Torma Bum and Kambia.
Mechanization & Land Preparation	17,000ha mechanically cultivated across 14 districts (FSRP + RRVCP), including 1,150 ha in Torma Bum and 2,100 ha of mangrove rice in Kambia.
Seed Production & Distribution	2,222 MT certified seed, 272.8 MT foundation, and 31 MT breeder seed produced (SLARiS & SLARI). 790 tons of clean seed rice distributed to farmers nationwide (FSRP).
Processing & Storage	4,000-ton strategic grain reserve under construction (Pujehun). Drying floors and warehouses built for seed multiplication centers (Kambia and Bo).
Capacity Building	Over 3,000 farmers are trained in Good Agronomic Practices (GAP), pest management, and post-harvest handling. 60 extension officers trained in herbicide use and digital tools (SLARI & IITA).
Finance & PPP	PPP framework operationalized with AfDB and BADEA. Over NLe 6.9 million in micro-credit to agribusiness operators through RRVCP.
Social Impact	1,352 temporary jobs created via bridge construction and fabrication works; 15 women village savings groups mobilized under SL-RAIC.

In its second year, Feed Salone's Pillar 3 has shifted from planning to execution. Physical infrastructure, seed production, and mechanization have expanded significantly across the rice hubs, while institutional and private-sector collaboration models are taking root. Collectively, these achievements demonstrate the Government's resolve to achieve rice self-sufficiency and to build resilient, market-linked agro-industrial systems that anchor Sierra Leone's economic diversification and food sovereignty.

3. Strategic Direction 2025-2028

The next phase will see integration of solar mini-grids, expanded irrigation networks, and cluster-based rice milling complexes operated through PPP arrangements. MAFS and partners plan to establish a national aggregation system that links rice clusters to urban consumption centers through the SLPMC and private off takers. Continuous support to SLARI, SLeSCA, and Njala University will ensure the research-extension-market continuum remains functional and innovation-driven.



Identified rice clusters under Feed Salone

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