MAIN REPORT

REPORT ON THE CONSULTATIVE WORKSHOP ON POLICY AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK FOR COCOA, CASSAVA AND OIL PALM

20 FEBRUARY 2020
FREETOWN, SIERRA LEONE

SIERRA LEONE – WEST AFRICA COMPETITIVENESS PROGRAMME – FUNDED BY THE EUROPEAN UNION
The Consultative Workshop on Policy and Regulatory Framework described in this report was organised by the Ministry of Trade and Industry of Sierra Leone and the International Trade Centre (ITC). It was financed by the European Union as part of implementing the Sierra Leone competitiveness project under the West Africa Competitiveness Programme (WACOMP). The project is executed by the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO) and ITC.

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BACKGROUND

The Sierra Leone competitiveness project under the West Africa Competitiveness Programme (WACOMP) aims to enhance the competitiveness of the cocoa, cassava and oil palm subsectors in Sierra Leone and thereby boost the country’s integration into regional and global value chains. It has a specific objective of improving the performance, growth and contribution to industry, regional trade and exports of the three value chains. The project is jointly implemented by the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation and the International Trade Centre, and is funded by the European Union under the 11th European Development Fund.

The Consultative Workshop on Policy and Regulatory Framework for Cocoa, Cassava and Oil Palm was organised by the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI) and the International Trade Centre (ITC) within the framework of implementing WACOMP Sierra Leone.

The purpose of the workshop was to engage with relevant national level stakeholders to deliberate on existing policy and regulatory instruments, practices and gaps in Sierra Leone in relation to cocoa, cassava and oil palm subsectors and to identify concrete capacity building solutions for implementation under the present project. The stakeholder consultation was one of the key preliminary actions undertaken towards mainstreaming regional trade rules and regulations into Sierra Leone’s national policy and regulatory framework for the three value chains.

A diverse group of representatives from different government and private sector institutions deliberated on Sierra Leone’s policy and regulatory framework for cocoa, cassava and oil palm. Through an active engagement, the participants of the workshop identified gaps and inconsistencies in the policy and regulatory framework and recommended key solutions to address the gaps identified. The stakeholders also deliberated on existing public-private dialogue platforms for the three value chains.

This report provides a detailed account of the proceedings, deliberations and outcomes of the consultative workshop.

THE RESULTS OF THE CONSULTATION

Opening Session

The consultative workshop was officially opened by Mr. Charles Mereweather-Thompson, Chief Director at the Ministry of Trade and Industry.

In his opening speech, Mr. Charles Mereweather-Thompson, Chief Director at the Ministry of Trade and Industry, said: “We are here to share ideas, to cross-fertilise and of course to discuss and consult on the way forward on the policy issues that we are about to embark upon. We know that the essence of this project that it provides or promotes competitiveness and value chains, and we have identified cassava, cocoa, and palm oil. We know it is critical for the Ministry of Trade and Industry to lead on this because for us as we want more or less to see how best our country can be the lead exporter. We believe that if this can be achieved with the support from all the people and through experience sharing, Sierra Leone will not only benefit but will also come to the fore.”

He alluded that the workshop aims to discuss policy and regulatory framework as regards the three value chains. He thanked the European Union for providing the support under the WACOMP.

Asking the participants to put shoulders together to discuss with due diligence, bring up all the critical issues and give it the best shot, Mr. Mereweather-Thompson declared the workshop officially open.
Facilitating the opening session, Mr. Emmanuel Konjoh, Ag Director of Foreign Trade at the MoTI, stated that in a thoughtful effort, the workshop was composed of a wide range of actors in the policy and regulatory issues, including the private sector companies and institutions, government ministries and agencies, agricultural research institutes, the academia, development partners and the press. In his concluding remark, Mr Emmanuel assured the Chief Director, Mr Merewether-Thompson, that the reports that we would come out of the consultation process would be very tangible action points which will take the policy and regulatory environment to the next level.

Following the introduction, a background about the consultative workshop and the overall project of the West African Competitiveness Programme was presented by ITC and UNIDO representatives. ITC provided the background for the workshop and set the stage for the consultation by describing the purpose and agenda of the workshop and elaborating the approaches for the consultative process, which included plenary discussions and workout group sessions. The representative indicated that participants were required to deliberate on what is existing in terms of policy, regulatory instruments and practices, and to identify gaps and inconsistencies with emphasis on cassava, cocoa and palm oil value chains. The ITC representative also discussed on the need for the participants of the workshop to evaluate any existing policy and regulatory dialogue platforms that could be used to advance regular stakeholder consultations, and requested the participants to actively participate and deliberate during the workshop in order to establish concrete solutions and recommendations.

Dr Shaukat from UNIDO stated that the aim of the WACOMP Sierra Leone project was to improve the competitiveness of the country in the three value chains. He indicated that the status of competitiveness in Sierra Leone is at low level so under the WACOMP project efforts will be put to improve competitiveness. Enhancing the competitiveness of the three targeted value chains will enable to create more jobs, attract investors, enable value addition and develop agro-processing of the products. He stated that the project has three thematic intervention areas namely, improving the quality infrastructure (with emphasis on standard testing facility, certification facility and capacity building training on international standards), improving value chains, and enabling the business atmosphere, which includes policy. Stressing the importance and role of having sound policies aimed at improving competitiveness of the value chains, Dr. Shaukat encouraged the participants to support the intervention and provide the necessary input to improve the policy and regulatory dimension, which would enable to create more industrialisation and jobs.

Commentaries from Participants

Mr. Francis Turay, Head of Tree Crops at the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security, said: “The Ministry is in support of the consultative workshop on policy and regulatory framework for cocoa, cassava and oil palm. Of course, as a Ministry we have already started doing policies on the cocoa, coffee and cashew nut. So, with this new development, we are in full support and we are here today to participate to see what we can put together as a Ministry.”

Dr. Isata Kamanda, Project Coordinator at the Sierra Leone Institute, said: “I am delighted to be part of this workshop this seeing the theme alone makes me very very happy. I have many meetings representing Sierra Leone where you talk and competitive market. If you fit in our technologies or meet with them. It is because we haven’t gotten to the are. But this can only be accomplished if we have strong we could get government to actually support the value the technologies we are developing in agriculture.”

Agricultural Research morning because fortune to be in so about quality produce commodities, we can’t standards where they policies in place where addition component of
Talking on behalf of Sierra Bo Garri, a producer of Garri and Fufu in Sierra Leone, the Managing Director, Mr. Rashid Conteh, said: “There is significant opportunity for us in Sierra Leone to produce our products, feed ourselves but not only feed ourselves to export to other countries, to our neighbouring countries. The amount of Garri that is coming out of this country is so significant. But is government getting any revenue for it? There is no revenue resource back to government; so as a result of that people like us are sure investing in the private sector to start producing our products, exports and get foreign exchange. So, I am very delighted to be here today to participate in this seminar and see how other people can join us in developing this country.”

Mr. Shiaka Kawa, the National Consultant for UNECA on the national trade strategy at the Ministry of Trade and Industry stated that “this consultative workshop, which is looking at the policy and regulatory reforms for the cocoa, cassava, and oil palm value chains is aligned to the continental free trade area agreement because this workshop looks at the ECOWAS region. And with other continental free trade area agreement, we are looking at several regions. Initially, we support trading, we look at trading within the West Africa region and then we will be looking at trading with other region is East Africa and Sub-Africa. So I believe that if we can consolidate all the opportunities we get, all our regulations and policies front up within the West Africa region, we can trade effectively with Guinea, we can trade effectively with Senegal, we will be able to trade with South Africa, Uganda, Morocco, and other countries.”

Presentations on the status of policy and regulatory framework

The consultation process started with presentation made by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security (MAFFS). Mr. Francis Turay, Head of Tree Crops at the MAFFS, indicated that in 2018 the Ministry already put together three key value chain policies on cocoa, coffee, and cashew nut, which are now awaiting cabinet approval. The work was supported under the Boosting Agriculture and Food Security (BAFS) project funded by the European Union (EU). The process involved different stages, including desk review; analysis of the data derived from relevant literature; stakeholder consultation through interviews and focus groups discussions; drafting of the policies and the action plans; as well as the analysis of the cocoa value chain, highlighting the status and potential challenges of sustainable development of the cocoa sector. In terms of cocoa, the work specifically covered important cocoa production areas, such as Kailahun, Kenema, Kono and part of Bo district in the whole of 2018. According to Mr. Turay, the development of policies for the cocoa, coffee and cashew sectors has been a laudable achievement for MAFFS as there had been no policies for the past years or decades and absence of policies had been one of the reasons for problems with regulations for the crops. Mr. Turay considered that MAFFS is moving forward in line with agricultural transformation plan to complement the government’s effort.

Subsequent to the presentation, Mr. Shiaka Kawa moderated the deliberations. Mr. Kawa activated the discussion by teasing out from the participants a number of key policy and regulatory issues related to the three value chains. He started by asking the question: what are the things that will make products from Sierra Leone, that is cassava, cocoa, and palm oil, attractive and acceptable in other markets? He asserted “as the local parlance goes, the gate is getting bigger” and “with trade the gate is getting bigger” and “everyday, new quality standards are being set”. He affirmed that without proper policies, regulations cannot be established. Noting the existence of a policy for cocoa, he invited the participants to deliberate and provide input for discussion by asking if Sierra Leone had policies on cassava and oil palm to which the participants jointly indicated that the Country has not had polices on cassava and oil palm yet. This set the scene by highlighting the clear gaps in policy for the two commodities. Deliberation continued by discussing the draft policy of cocoa.

Mr. Kawa then raised questions on issues related to the regulatory framework, stating the importance of regulations in enhancing Sierra Leone’s access into international markets and its support to facilitating domestic markets. He emphasized the fact that before trading across borders, it was of paramount importance to have to look at the domestic markets. He then asked the participants about the current issues
related to regulations, in particular if there were existing regulations governing cocoa, what the regulatory issues around cocoa were and how cocoa was being regulated in Sierra Leone.

The participants indicated that to export as a country to any market outside Sierra Leone, there a number of things from the farm up to the consumer that need to be considered apart from specific policies on the cassava, cocoa and oil palm value chains. They emphasised the importance of a holistic policy consideration in addition to sector specific policies, for example, putting in place an agricultural policy for cultivation, an integrated pest management policy to manage pests, policies to manage agro-chemicals such as the fertilizes and pesticides as well as policies related to logistics such as packaging and transport.

In terms of regulatory framework, it was indicated by the representative from the produce Monitoring Board that there is an existing regulatory framework for cocoa, oil palm, coffee and other crops, which is referred to as CAP 185, the Agriculture Ordinance\(^1\). This ordinance was last revised in 1974. In 2019, efforts were being made to have the CAP 185 revised to update it with new developments of the current time and a consultant was identified but could not match up to the actual framework of what was desired. Presently, the work was re-advertised with an aim to complete the revision before the end of the second quarter of 2020. The ordinance is not only talking about the legal aspects, it includes the processing of the crops and other agronomic aspects as well.

During the discussion, the issue of collaboration between and among institutions and absence of policy and regulatory coordination have been identified as some of the key challenges in terms of the regulatory framework for the various value chains.

As regards the Food Safety Authority, it was indicated that at a workshop organised by FAO concerning the formation of the Authority, concerns were raised that the formation of the Authority would bring about overlap functions with many institutions in the Country as it takes some functions of the Ministry of Fisheries, the produce Monitoring Board, and the ministry of health and Sanitation, and a number of overlapping functions were identified and recommendations were made to review the overlaps before the formation of the Authority. The participants of the consultative workshop agreed that although there may be overlaps in functions, the most important challenge is the lack of coordination in the implementation of the policies. The representative from the Parliamentary Committee indicated that institutions have to do their assignment well before bringing polices or acts for enactment to the Parliament for approval, by ensuring that what Parliament enacts does not affect or render deficit to the function of other institutions.

In terms of food safety regulations, the representative from the Ministry of Health and Sanitation stated that there is policy on food and food safety which was signed by Parliament in 2017 which has the objective of maintaining food safety at all levels, including manufacturing, transportation, storage and eventually at the end point, consumption, and the enforcement of the regulation was being finalised.

In furtherance of the deliberation, Mr. Kawa posed a question as to who was responsible for ensuring conformity assessment in Sierra Leone as this would come into play when dealing with international markets. The UNIDO representative, Dr. Shaukat Hussain, highlighted on the position of Sierra Leone and the ECOWAS region in terms of conformity assessment. He indicated that in the ECOWAS region the conformity assessment standards are available. The standards for cocoa, cassava and palm oil along with other standards were developed and validated with the involvement of ECOWAS member countries. In every member country, there is a standards body and this body is basically responsible for ensuring conformity assessment. In Sierra Leone, the Sierra Leone Standards Bureau (SLSB) is the responsible organ. The regional standards are available at the SLSB. With respect to conformity assessment, Dr. Hussain stated that the ECOWAS mark of quality that would be acceptable in the ECOWAS countries was being developed but that would not be the solution for the international market. For the international market, a management system certification and accredited testing labs will be developed at SLSB.

The participants recognised that in order for Sierra Leone to be competitive internationally, its exports must meet international quality and standard requirements. It was acknowledged that currently, Sierra Leone faces serious challenges of compliance with global food safety standards and requirements, and this is partly due to the fact the country does not have the institutions that have the capacity to do proper testing of food crops,\(^1\)

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\(^1\) The Agriculture Ordinance CAP 185 enables the making of “rules for the prevention of the introduction or spread of pests destructive to trees and crops; for the control of the growing of agricultural crops and for the preparation, marketing, movement, storage, transport and export of agricultural produce”.

including cocoa, cassava and palm oil. Participants claimed that SLSB does not possess the right capacity in terms of providing the testing and certification services required for the value chains. Accordingly, the need for building capacities of institutions and streamlining quality testing and certification services has been underscored as part of ensuring the existence of the right regulatory framework that works for Sierra Leone’s competitiveness at the global markets.

After an initial plenary discussion, the participants were divided into three groups along the three value chains to further deliberate the specific policy and regulatory issues affecting the respective value chains. The results of the breakout sessions are summarised in the sections below.

**Presentations of the breakout sessions**

Breakout sessions were held to facilitate a more closer deliberation among participants. The findings and recommendations that came out of the breakout sessions are the following.

**Cocoa Group**

The Cocoa group identified the following policy and regulatory gaps:

- The research bodies related to cocoa production, the institutions that should take part in the cocoa regulation, and how the regulation should be coordinated are undefined in the cocoa policy.

- No implementation strategy is envisaged in the cocoa policy. For example, who should carry out pest control? How should pest control be carried out? And who should undertake marketing are missing in the policy.

- The cocoa policy does not indicate or discuss about a regulatory body for implementation of cocoa related materials. If there is a need for importing planting materials into Sierra Leone, where is the point of entry? Who should certify? And how should the distribution take place? All these are not covered in the policy and hence are seen as gaps.

- The cocoa policy does not anticipate cocoa industrialisation. For example, the policy does not capture that in the next five years, Sierra Leone should start to export chocolates made in Sierra Leone. Even in terms of production, the policy does not indicate the level of improvement to be achieved in the volume of production by the next five years.

- The cocoa public-private stakeholders’ engagement platform does not involve all the relevant stakeholders involved along the value and supply chains, from farm to consumption.

- There is no budget allocated for the implementation of the cocoa policy.

**Recommendations**

The Cocoa group came up with recommendations, which include the following:

- Set up a presidential and inter-ministerial committee (Chairing Committee) for policies to look at the broader picture of the cocoa sector and ensure political support. The setting up of the committee can speed up the implementation and adoption of the policies.
• Improve the cocoa platform for policy dialogue by ensuring the inclusion of all relevant stakeholders along the cocoa value chain.

• Have one central body to coordinate cocoa regulations. There should be an umbrella organisation to coordinate the regulations, pest control and what should be followed in line with the experiences of other countries. For example, in Ghana, the Cocoa Board is the top most body for all regulations.

• Digitalization of documentation processes and provision of a one-stop-shop services. To enhance effective marketing, there must be a one-stop shop where in marketers can obtain all the documentations at one location. The issue of coordination of all the processes required for marketing should be part of the policy.

• Set up or revise the regulatory framework for cocoa taking lessons from the experiences of Ghana and Côte d’Ivoire, which are the best producers of cocoa beans in Africa. There should be need to examine the Ghana and Cote d’Ivoire models and to learn how they do it in practice.

• Strengthening of research institutions. Research plays an important role in improving or increasing production volumes. The significance of research in areas such as pest management and development of planting materials need to be incorporated in the policy.

• Child labour issues have to be properly addressed in the policy to ensure awareness and compliance with mandatory requirements.

Additional comments were provided by other participants during the discussion of the presentation made by the Cocoa group. These include the following:

• The need to ensure traceability from the farm to the market has been emphasised.

• There is a working group for the 3Cs (Coffee, Cocoa and Cashew); however, not all relevant entities are part to it.

• If Sierra Leone needs to follow the standard of Ghana, there is need to put in place good production and processing practices.

• Private sector should be working hand and gloves with the public sector to ensure sector coordination.

• Currently cocoa exporters and farmers are not properly following the standards, especially as regards phytosanitary. Exporters focus on only organic standards and certification, which are completely different from phytosanitary standards and certification. This is a key impediment for Sierra Leone’s competitiveness in the international market.

• Sierra Leone’s cocoa is low quality, low price and not respecting international market standards as standards are not being followed.

• There is lack of private sector involvement in the coordination of policy and regulatory matters, and hence, a need to hear the voice of the private sector through enabling increased public–private engagement.
The Cassava group identified the following policy and regulatory gaps and challenges as well as lessons learned:

- There has been no policy framework and regulations for the cassava sector.

- Cassava producers do not have access to improved planting materials (improved varieties) released by SLARI. This is partly due to lack of gen bank to conserve or that SLARI was not doing field banking because of lack of funding. SLARI does not keep improved varieties (SLICASS 1-6) and was not able to trace the varieties and

- The cassava plants that had been planted in most fields were the low cultivars, the varieties had not been worked on nor had they been improved, and had been affected by Cassava Mosaic Disease (CMD). With such a variety, it is not possible for Sierra Leone to compete internationally.

- Four years ago, 14 improved cassava varieties were released. However, the impact in terms of adoption of the improved technologies was disappointing in that only 34% of the Sierra Leone cassava varieties have been adopted. One of the main reasons for this include the absence of efforts in rightly responding to the preferences of the value chain actors. This required identifying the appropriate strategies that help combat the mistake and enable Sierra Leone compete at the international market for industrialisation.

- Lessons were learned from experience of other African countries and good models have been adopted in terms of industrializing cassava, a model which worked so well in the different countries, saving revenue, competing at the international level and making big noise. Sierra Leone learned from what other countries have done, an innovation platform was set up as a result. The innovation platform is an arrangement where all of the value chain actors are represented and meeting to deliberate and bring forward the ideas, opportunities and processes that will lead to the industrialisation model, linking cassava to export and international market; as well as to develop strategies and interventions and enable to draft a policy.

- The baseline value chain analysis conducted helped to pull out all the constraints of the sector, meeting with all stakeholders again to map out strategy and interventions that can be used to actually formulate or draft a policy in order to industrialise cassava.

- Cassava is characterized by lack of market segmentation and target markets, that is whether producers/traders are targeting the food sector, the feed or the industrial which focuses mainly on exports, like, alcohol, ethanol, noodles, corn flex, is not available, they just produce but they do not know where to target where to sell and so, there were no proper market structures, you can not bring your gari and put it on the floor because you cannot take it to international market because it is not allowed.

- Cassava producers and processors lack the knowledge of good agricultural practices, including in planting, spacing, harvesting, processing and hygiene.

- Cassava packaging is not standardised.

- The preferences of local cassava consumers are not captured in the market; people want to consume cassava with sweet test but you are bringing cassava with vitamin A, but not sweet, they
do not eat it so they do not buy it.

- Cassava from Sierra Leone is not consumed internationally at the industrial markets, due to the absence of varieties that can pull into the starch industry which can be processed into corn flex, noodles, and juices.

- There are only few input suppliers supplying the value chain for industrialisation of cassava and a lot of them do not have the knowledge of why they bring the inputs and of the specifications and the type of fertilisers.

- There is no adequate market campaign, advocacy and feasibility for cassava. For example, there no any documentary on cassava industrialisation in the mainstream international media.

- There is no linkage between technology developers (the researchers), the extension experts that disseminate improved varieties and farmers. If the farmers could not get improved varieties, Sierra Leone could not compete internationally.

- The financial service providers (banks) are not offering the right package which would contribute for exporters to compete internationally.

**Recommendations**

- All the issues or challenges that have been identified above have to be addressed in a policy document.

- There is need for capacity building in research in order to train scientists and researchers.

- Mapping out quality traits that meet international markets is important.

- Government should show commitment by putting financial resources and by-laws that will transform the cassava sector to meet international standards.

- The effectiveness of a cassava sector programme can only be successful if it is possible to a policy matrix analysis to look at the production systems of each and every cassava produce.

- It is important to put in place the right mechanisms for traceability, certification, packaging, auditing and fair trade, storage and good transportation facilities.

- To target international market, a cargo or a ship has to be deployed to transport cassava flours, such as a ship that keeps the food quality for a period of six months.

- Commitment to ensure compliance with standards and market requirements is important for Sierra Leone to compete internationally.

During the discussion on the presentation of the cassava group, a number of important comments were made including the following:

- Agriculture cannot be transformed without research. The participants indicated that the only solution for agricultural transformation in Sierra Leone is research. It is important to strengthen research institutions to obtain improved quality technologies or varieties for dissemination to producers/farmers. Presently, it is not possible to work with local cultivars, the yield will knock Sierra Leone out of market. Hence, genetic improvement and varietal development is essential.

- The Sierra Leone Agricultural Research Institute (SLARI) is an important institution to ensure that there is standard and quality. There should, therefore, be need for provision and allocation of financial resources to SLARI for research and development.
SLARI alone does not have all the resources it takes to conduct research, hence increased and regular collaboration need to be in place between the Universities and SLARI to ensure more and effective research on cassava.

One of the major problems in cassava is that the glucosamine is very high and is a major hindrance to exporting cassava from Sierra Leone. So, in terms of research, universities, SLARI and other relevant institutions can work together to explore how cassava with low level of glucosamine can be produced. This means getting the right varieties which are disease free. The cassava mosaic virus disease (CMD) that is affecting cassava is on the increase. So, a collaboration work on cassava varieties that are tolerant to CMD is important.

All national programme in Africa, not only in Sierra Leone, do not prioritize research.

There is a strong network with the cassava community internationally, this can be used to continue to share experience and transfer knowledge for improved cassava crop development.

Oil Palm group

The Oil palm group identified the following policy and regulatory gaps and challenges:

- There has been no policy on oil palm and palm oil.
- There is no proper coordination and consolidation of non-palm oil specific policies that affect the oil palm sector.
- Duplicity of functions and roles among different institutions and absence of proper institutional coordination.
- Additional in-depth research into tenera oil palm (high produce that grows within a short period of time) is lacking.
- There are issues of gender insensitivities with regards to land in Sierra Leone, in some areas, a woman cannot own a land even if she has money and able to acquire land
- Environmental issues: land is being given to industries that do harmful practices and do not follow corporate social responsibilities.
- Absence of database of relevant actors and experts in the oil palm sector.

Recommendations

- The land policy should be made gender sensitive.
- Environmental impact assessment should be undertaken.
- There is need for development of policy for oil palm and a review of multi-sectoral policies affecting the sector or participation in the sector, e.g - land policy.
- Policies should include clear-cut distinctions highlighting the different roles and responsibilities of relevant Ministries, departments and agencies so that they can be able to function properly and attain effective outcomes.
• To be involved in the business of oil palm, there should be a technical knowledge and expertise of what it takes from the nursery stage to transplanting to harvesting. Capacity building for actors along the oil palm value chain is paramount important.

• Public-private partnership is critical for the development of the oil palm sector as the government alone cannot address the all the requirements along the value chain.

• Establish a database of oil palm sector actors and institutions.

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS ON THE POLICY AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Among the main gaps identified include: absence of sector policy for cassava and oil palm, lack of implementation strategy and entity for implementation of the cocoa policy, no anticipation of industrialization and indication of a regulatory body for importation of cocoa related materials in the cocoa policy, and need for capacity building and greater stakeholders’ coordination for engagement in policy and sector development for each value chain.

The following have been identified and agreed:

• There is the “Sierra Leone Cocoa Coffee Cashew Platform (SLCCCP)” coordinated by the Produce Monitoring Board. The SLCCCP is a dynamic public private dialogue platform which can effectively be used to deliberate on and advocate for policy and regulatory issues and reforms for cocoa under the Sierra Leone WACOMP project.

• That there are no as such broader subsector-focused platforms with respect to cassava and oil palm.

• For Cassava, it was noted that there is a Cassava Innovation Platform, which is coordinated by the Sierra Leone Agricultural Research Institute (SLARI); however, it was felt that as this platform seem to be focussing on innovation, it may not address the broader issues of the subsector. Agreement has been reached to strengthen this platform to make it more comprehensive and serve as a broader stakeholder platform for discussing and advocating issues related to cassava.

• For oil palm, it was agreed to establish a broader national platform for oil palm, capitalising on the arrangement and membership of the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO), a non-for-profit structure, which is functioning to foster the development and implementation of global standards for sustainable palm oil.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

A number of recommendations ranging from policy and regulatory framework to issues aimed at improving production, processing and marketing of the three value chains have been made during the workshop. The detailed recommendations are elaborated below.

Recommendations on Policy and regulatory gaps

In response to the policy and regulatory gaps identified, the following key recommendations have been put forward by the participants for implementation in the immediate to short term under the WACOMP Sierra Leone Project:

• Develop a national policy for cassava

• Develop a national policy for oil palm

• Conduct a comparative assessment of the existing cocoa policy of Sierra Leone in relation to relevant policy frameworks of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).
• Strengthen public-private platforms for cassava and oil palm by improving the role of the Cassava Innovation platform coordinated by SLARI, and ensuring the establishment of a broader role oil palm platform, taking advantage of the RSPO as well as by ensuring the inclusion of all the relevant stakeholders (involved from production to consumption [end-users]) in each platform, including in the SLCCCP.

• Build the capacities of relevant stakeholders for better understanding and management of policy and regulatory issues in the three value chains.

The participants of the consultative workshop agreed that the recommendations stated above are relevant immediate term solutions that can be implemented under the WACOMP Sierra Leone Project. In order to consider the implementation of the recommendations, official decision and approval would be required. Specifically, approval would be sought if the development of policies for the cassava and oil palm subsectors could proceed within the context of the present project.

PARTICIPATING INSTITUTIONS

More than 30 participants from different government and private sector institutions attended the workshop. The institutions include: the Ministry of Trade and Industry, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security (MAFFS), the Ministry of Health (MOH), the Ministry of Justice (MOJ), the Parliament, the Sierra Leone Investment and Export Promotion Agency (SLIEPA), the Sierra Leone Standards Bureau (SLSB), the Sierra Leone Agricultural Research Institute (SLARI), the Produce Monitoring Board (PMB), the Sierra Leone Chamber for Agribusiness Development (SLeCAD), the Sierra Leone Women Farmers Forum (SLeWoFF), the Smallholder Commercialization and Agribusiness Development Project (SCADeP), the Sierra Leone Agro-Processing Competitiveness Project (SLAPCP), the Boosting Agriculture and Food Security Project (BAFS), Njala University, the Sierra Leone Produce Marketing Company (SLPMC), the Sierra Bo Gari, the Razpec Holdings, and the Lion Food.
ANNEX: WORKSHOP AGENDA

WORKSHOP PROGRAMME
20 FEBRUARY 2020
FREETOWN, SIERRA LEONE

CONSULTATIVE WORKSHOP ON POLICY AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK FOR COCOA, CASSAVA AND OIL PALM

SIERRA LEONE: WEST AFRICA COMPETITIVENESS PROGRAMME

Background

This national consultative workshop on policy and regulatory framework for cocoa, cassava and oil palm is organised by the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI) and the International Trade Centre (ITC) within the framework of implementing the Sierra Leone national competitiveness project under the West Africa Competitiveness Programme (WACOMP). The Government of Sierra Leone, the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation and the International Trade Centre jointly implement the WACOMP Sierra Leone project. The European Union funds the project under the 11th European Development Fund.

The purpose of the workshop is to engage with relevant national stakeholders to deliberate on existing policy and regulatory instruments, practices and gaps in Sierra Leone in relation to cocoa, cassava and oil palm subsectors and to identify concrete capacity building solutions. The consultation forms one of the key preliminary actions that need to be undertaken towards mainstreaming regional trade rules and regulations into the national policy and regulatory framework for the three value chains.

The expected results of the workshop are:

- identification of policy and regulatory gaps and inconsistencies pertaining to cocoa, cassava and oil palm that require immediate solutions
- establishment of recommendations on concrete solutions for implementation in response to the policy and regulatory gaps jointly identified during the workshop
- compilation of policy and regulatory framework lessons from the experience of Cote d’Ivoire
- evaluation of existing mechanisms for policy dialogue or formulation of such a mechanism for the value chains where it does not exist
- draft action plan for recommended solutions (next step activities) on improving policy and regulatory gaps

The deliberations of the workshop will be conducted in a fully participatory process and participants are expected to actively interact both in plenary and small group sessions to deliberate and identify recommendations for subsequent actions under the project.
BRAINSTORMING QUESTIONS FOR DELIBERATIONS

- What is the current policy and regulatory framework governing cocoa, cassava and oil palm production and trading? Are there issues that are not adequately addressed in the existing policy and regulatory framework?
- Are there presently policy and regulatory gaps and inconsistencies that may affect Sierra Leone’s capacity to benefit from regional/global trading opportunities for cocoa, cassava and oil palm and/or their derivatives? If yes, what are these gaps and inconsistencies?
- What needs to be done to reduce policy and regulatory inconsistencies and gaps? What short-term, medium-term and long-term solutions can be proposed to address the issues?
- Are there appropriate public/private dialogue platforms to deliberate and advocate for policy and regulatory reforms for cocoa, cassava and oil palm? If yes, are these platforms performing adequately to address the challenges faced by each value chain under consideration? If no, should there be one and in what form, ad hoc or permanent arrangement?

SCHEDULE OF WORKSHOP ACTIVITIES

08:30 – 09:00   Arrival and registration of participants
09:00 – 09:15   Opening introductory remarks
                 By Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI), ITC and UNIDO
09:15 – 09:20   Introductions
                 Self-introduction by participants
09:20 – 09:50   Brief presentation on Sierra Leone’s current policy and regulatory framework on cocoa, cassava and oil palm
                 MTI and other relevant ministries or agencies (MAPFES)
09:50 – 10:45   Moderated discussions on policy and regulatory gaps and inconsistencies
                 On the basis of the stated objectives of the workshop and brainstorming questions, participants will deliberate to identify policy and regulatory gaps in cocoa, cassava and oil palm sub-sectors
                 Moderated by MTI and ITC
10:45 – 11:00  Coffee Break
11:00 – 12:30  Small group discussions to identify solutions to address policy and regulatory gaps
                 Participants will be assigned groups to deliberate on key solutions.
                 Moderated by ITC
12:30 – 13:30  Lunch break and association
13:45 – 15:15  Presentation of solutions by groups and selection and endorsement of commonly agreed solutions
                 Moderated by ITC
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15:15 – 15:30</td>
<td>Presentation of policy and regulatory framework lessons from the experience of Côte d’Ivoire</td>
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<tr>
<td>15:30 – 15:45</td>
<td>Question and Answers on lessons from Côte d’Ivoire</td>
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<tr>
<td>15:45 – 16:00</td>
<td>Coffee break and association</td>
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<tr>
<td>16:00 – 16:30</td>
<td>Deliberations and recommendations on mechanisms for policy dialogue</td>
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<td>16:30 – 17:30</td>
<td>Participatory drafting of an action plan for recommended solutions</td>
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Participants will consult and define timelines for proposed solutions that shall be implemented as subsequent actions under the project.

Moderated by ITC