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Employment Promotion Programme (EPP III)

Agriculture Value Chains



→ BACKGROUND

Sierra Leone faces high unemployment and underemployment rates in its working age population. Current labor force is estimated to be **2.7 million** – out of this number **1.6 million (59%)**, particularly youth, are structurally unemployed or underemployed (UNDP, 2012).

The main causes are the gap between demand and supply on the labor market (weak dynamic of the private sector; low level of coordination amongst stakeholders to create employment; non-effective education and training system).

Youth marginalization, limited access to and control over resources and lack of employment opportunities remain destabilizing factors for the country. Supporting the private sector, particularly in agriculture, will strengthen the rural economy and improve income opportunities for youths and young people in the country.

Within this framework, the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) is supporting the third phase of the Employment Promotion Programme (EPP III). The Programme is implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH and has an order volume of **20.5 million EUR**. EPP III has as main partner the Ministry of Labour and Social Security (MLSS) to which it provides institutional support.

The third phase of EPP is aiming at the sustainable improvement of employment and income situation of young people in agriculture and micro-small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) through a multi-fledged approach.

EPP III FIELDS OF ACTION:

1. Capacity Support of Partners:

Supporting the capacity development of partners, it aims to reinforce the macro-economic policy framework for sustainable and equitable employment.



2. Youth Development: The youth development component designs and implements labor-market-oriented training modules in life skills, business skills and labor-market-integration measures for youth in the three target districts.

3. Agricultural Value Chains: Value-chain promotion activities aim at increasing production, quality of produce and ultimately employment in selected value chains, namely cocoa & coffee, rice and vegetables.



4. Private Sector – Business Loop: Training of enterprises through service providers in management and business skills, record keeping, marketing, client/customer relationship is one of the core interventions the Programme applies to support MSMEs development.

5. Private sector – Facility for Innovation:

This intervention targets 100 business ideas to be developed into “matured” business concepts which will create new opportunities for employment.



Farmer working on his cocoa plantation



→ AGRICULTURE VALUE CHAINS

One of the ways in which the EPP III is creating opportunities for self-employment is through strengthening selected agricultural value chains. Agriculture continues to be the principal labour sector in Sierra Leone, employing around 75% of the country's active work force. The sector has large unused potential to provide more employment opportunities for youth that can be tapped into once some structural problems are resolved. Among these are the large number of abandoned or neglected plantations, difficult access for youth to resources including land, low knowledge of agricultural techniques and processes, and limited relations with private companies. The Value Chains Component aims to address these problems, thus generating more opportunities for youth within the agricultural sector.

The Component focuses on the agricultural value chains of cocoa and coffee, rice and vegetables, reaching 12,500 youth in the districts of Kailahun, Kono and Koinadugu, areas that were heavily affected by the civil war. This component is implemented by the association AFC-GOPA, with Welthungerhilfe and GEFAC as subcontractors.

Main thematic focus of the component includes analysis of the value chains, rehabilitation of abandoned or neglected fields, production raising, capacity building activities, development of business models and linkages with private companies, upscaling and dissemination of successful models.

EPP III supported cocoa nursery



→ ACHIEVEMENTS

Some expected outcomes of from the Value Chains component are:

- I 4,500 ha of cocoa and coffee plantations will be rehabilitated**
- II 450 of Inland Valley Swamps will be rehabilitated**
- III Production will be raised to 250 kg/ha for cocoa and coffee, and to 2,500 kg/ha for rice on previously rehabilitated fields**
- IV Quality will be improved through links with certification and inputs**
- V 12,500 youth will be trained through the Integrated Farmer Training methodology in production, plantation management and entrepreneurship**



Close-up of dried cocoa beans

→ GIZ IN SIERRA LEONE

GIZ has been working in Sierra Leone since 1963 on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). Its operation came to a halt due to the outbreak of civil war in 1991. Although the country has achieved stability since the end of the civil war in 2002, living conditions remain critical for majority of the people. GIZ supports Sierra Leone on behalf of the German Government in the areas of employment promotion, infrastructure development, regional resource governance and health system reform.



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