
Please describe the vision of your partnership (max. 1,000 letters): What is the change the partnership wants/ wanted to bring about? (Optional: In case you have a visualization/ image of your vision, you can upload it later in the process. Please make sure to describe it here first.)

Land for Life - Sierra Leone visions an end to hunger and extreme poverty in Sierra Leone achieved through responsible management of the country's natural resources.

Working towards this vision, we aim to see that:

- i Laws, policies, regulations and procedures relating to land align with the framework of Human Rights and internationally recognized standards and practices to support national food security.
- ii Sierra Leone becomes a national food self-sufficient and food-secured country through effective land administration, upholding customary land rights, universal access by all citizens and tenure security.

In the interest of these goals, our mission is to:

- i. Facilitate and uphold the principle of inclusive land governance through multi-stakeholder partnership;
- ii. Create the platform for dialogue among various land-based interest groups amidst the circumstances undermining peace and tranquillity among various interest groups;
- iii. Advocate for the rights and contribute to the empowerment of vulnerable groups who are land owners or land-users, including women, youth and smallholder farmers;

How does your partnership create added value for all, and how do you measure progress and success? (max. 2,000 letters)

Land for Life is adding value to multi-stakeholder process in Sierra Leone through several further steps taken beyond the normal MSP routine engagements. The notable ones include:

1. Decentralization of Multi-actor process to the sub-regions of Sierra Leone - This action was underpinned by a deliberate effort to use the CLI's Dialogic Change Model. We first explored the context, then we conducted stakeholder analyses, built the necessary small containers and then agreed on the strategy which resulted in the formation of what we now call District Multi-Stakeholder Platforms (DMSPs). We are happy to state that our MAP Decentralization concept will now be furthered by the World Bank's USD 3m SPF opportunity exclusively meant to support CSOs in filling in the gaps in the implementation of the mainframe Sierra Leone Land Administration Project (SLLAP). The funds will come through FAO and the government of Sierra Leone. In addition, we are at an advanced stage of discussion with FAO and TMG to benefit from a BMEL-funded project that focuses on advancing local-level inclusive land governance.
2. Advocacy – We had noticed from inception that MSP engagements were naturally meant to facilitate inclusive decision-making processes. When there is a serious power imbalance among the stakeholders at the decision-making table, any decision taken is eventually questioned by the public. To guide the national MSP to the path of right-based decision-making, we decided to use some advocacy tools; including community legal empowerment, conflict mediation through alternative grievance redress process, credible information gathering and documentation to support our evidence-based

advocacy.

3. Using the Media Meaningfully – We paid exceptional attention to the mainstream and social media – credit to our dedicated Communication Officer, Jacob Wilson. We have ensured that our advocacy work is in the public domain through our in-person radio and TV engagements, regular social media updates and other media campaigns using jingles and radio soap operas. We have been able to use this space to emphasize the importance of the media to the national level MAP and the next level of action is to use a massive media campaign on the recently enacted land laws in Sierra Leone.

4. Gender Inclusion – We are taking specific steps to advance women’s land rights, to encourage youth into agriculture and to support marginalized vulnerable groups to have access to justice when they are deprived of their rights.

How did you set up your partnership? Please describe how you engaged stakeholders, and with whom you work/worked closely to implement the partnership (max. 2,000 letters):

In our application, we referred to our decentralised MSPs which we called the District Multi-Stakeholder Platforms (DMSP) currently in four districts of Sierra Leone. We established these DMSPs in (initially) five districts but later withdrew out of the fifth and currently only engaged in four districts. The withdrawal was due to some compliance issues with the facilitating CSO in that district. The establishment process was in strict accordance with the guidance we received from the CLI, as detailed in the Dialogic Change Model.

At the exploration stage (1), the Land for Life Initiative was just a project attached to Welthungerhilfe’s country office in Sierra Leone’s capital. The Head of Project visited several districts to explore the context and to analyse the stakeholder and power dynamics, the motivations etc. In each of the districts identified to work in, contact was made with a local civil society organization to serve as the facilitating organ of such decentralised level MSP. Then in mid-2019, a countrywide context assessment study was undertaken. The report gave the basis on which way to go about our MSP process in each of the districts.

The next step – having really understood the context – was to set up community-level, chiefdom-level groups that we called ‘land committees. These local-level groups comprising of village chiefs, women and youth leaders, later fed into the district-level MSPs.

The District MSPs are comprised of decentralized government officials, traditional authorities who are the custodians of customary land, CSOs and private sector entities.

Once established, we held a three-day orientation session with the members and our facilitating CSOs. The aim was to design a collaborative framework which we called the Memorandum of Understanding. The draft MoU, later elaborated by the LfL Secretariat was shared with our facilitating CSOs who then held a special session to further discuss the details. Some members signed up to the MoU while others – especially the decentralised government officials – declined to formalise any such collaboration without the approval of their line managers in Freetown. Yet, their full collaboration was committed. From this level, we then designed special need-based training for the members on selected thematic topics to build their capacities hitherto.

Which collaboration structures have you established, and how do these contribute to deliver results in your partnership? How/what do your stakeholders contribute? (max. 3,000 letters)

Land for Life established 40 Village-Area Land Committees, 12 Chiefdom Land Committees and 4 District MSPs. The Village-Area Land Committees are the end-point beneficiaries of our intervention. We have in each of the four districts a community facilitator who is a paid LfL staff. Their key roles are to conduct routine community visits, facilitate engagement with the leadership and key stakeholders of each community, collect the facts on any incident or action and decide on the next steps with the communities. The facilitator also organizes monthly chiefdom meetings and attends the monthly meetings of the DMSPs to give field-level updates.

After the field visit, the facilitator reports to LfL partner organization in that district. The team then decide on the next level of action based on the field-level report. In some cases, the facilitator may be required to just hold a cluster day's long engagement with a certain community based on issues he/she can easily address at that level – for instance, need for information sharing or mediation of a minor misunderstanding. All critical issues that the facilitator cannot address at that community level, maybe taken up to the chiefdom land committee. Some other matters coming from chiefdom levels can be reported to the DMSPs and so on to national level.

The DMSPs are a super unique set of stakeholders who have enormous local-level authority to facilitate engagements on several issues. Because of the presence of some relevant government officials in the DMSPs – for instance, the District Security Officer who operates under the office of national security and supervises all security sectors within the district. He/she holds district security meetings on every Thursday where issues relating to land are formed part of the agenda.

The District Officer (in some cases, Senior District Officer) who operates under the Ministry of Local Government and Community Affairs supervises the traditional authorities, including the paramount chiefs. If there is a matter in which a certain particular paramount chief is named, the District Officer can easily make sure that the named paramount chief attends the next session of the DMSP. The District Lands Officer operates under the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Country Planning. He (all males) provides the technical services on land. In the case of boundary disputes, he can easily provide survey service. In the case that a document is required to determine who owns a particular land, the District Land Officer ensures that such document is produced at the subsequent DMSP meeting. It is in the same spirit that the media representative on the DMSP provides the coverage to the actions of the platform and the private sector representatives commit themselves to taking the next positive action recommended by the DMSP members.

Our LfL civil society representative provides the much-needed financial support for these actions to happen. We have experienced some positive collaboration on resource mobilization when our project funds cannot meet all the financial demands of the DMSP.

Briefly describe your governance/ steering structures and how you make decisions in your partnership: (max. 2,000 letters)

It is important to differentiate Land for Life Organization which is a consortium of 4 legally registered civil society organizations in Sierra Leone, from the decentralized MSPs that Land for Life has established in four districts of Sierra Leone, called the District Multi-stakeholder Platforms (DMSPs). These DMSPs are not formal institutions rather, a collaborative group of institutions that have the authority to make some decisions on land and other nexus topics.

Land for Life Consortium is registered in Sierra Leone as a company limited by guarantee and further

registered with the NGO coordinating body as an NGO in Sierra Leone. Land for Life is also a member of the Sierra Leone Association of NGOs (SLANGO).

Land for Life's organisational structure is made up of a General Assembly as an overall decision-making body, a five-member Executive Board, the Secretariat based in Freetown, 4 partner organizations and 4 community facilitators.

The General Assembly meets once every year for the purpose of electing the members of the Executive Board, for any such decision that requires the approval of all members such as policy change, annual budget and plan etc.

The Executive Board is an inclusive body of 5 members (3 males and 2 females). 3 members are heads of LfL's member organization while the remaining 2 are drawn from non-member institutions. The chairman of the executive Board supervises the National Coordinator who is the administrative head of Land for Life.

The current secretariat has the National Coordinator as the head, a MEAL Officer, a Finance Officer, and support staff.

The head of each partner organization is the Land for Life's focal point in that locality, designated as District Director (DD). The partner organization receives and accounts for all funds meant for field-level activities, including those for the DMSP. The DMSP has a core group made up of the sitting chair, the District Land Officer, the Secretary and the Land for Life DD. This team meets to propose dates for the meetings of the DMSP and do other coordination. The DMSP also has a Technical Working Group responsible for facilitating technical mediation processes and other engagements.

How do you communicate and exchange with each other in your partnership? Do you have an approach to ensure joint learning? (max. 3,000 letters)

Land for Life maintains formal communication protocols within its staff and with the DMSP. Each of the four DMSPs has a WhatsApp platform where quick updates and information on meetings and incidents are shared. The Land for Life Coordinator and Communications Officer are members of all the four DMSP WhatsApp platforms.

Decision-making within the DMSP and overall Land for Life is collective. The DMSP meets monthly where they deliberate and make collective decisions. These meetings are facilitated by the LfL partner organization. At the end of the year, representatives of the four DMSPs meet for experience-sharing and learning. Each DMSP brings an update on the year's work and plans for the next year. The Land for Life Secretariat also designs special need-based capacity training sessions and other backstopping support actions on a quarterly basis for the DMSPs.

The Land for Life Consortium meets quarterly for review and planning. Each Land for Life partner comes with updates and plans for the next quarter. After each update, key issues are discussed in a plenary to facilitate shared learning. The Secretariat also facilitates several online meetings that are focused on specific issues, such as compliance, roll out of a new tool or to discuss any new topic relevant to the groups.

Communication with the wider public is facilitated through all possible media – social media platforms, reports and other communication materials that are posted on the website. The Land for Life Communications Officer also engages the mainstream media frequently – mostly based on invitation. Whenever the secretariat moves to offer backstopping support, a simulcast radio discussion is planned

in each location which gives an opportunity for the public to interact with the LfL management from Freetown. Feedback is always documented and follow-ups are made where required.

How does your partnership contribute to larger sustainability transformation efforts? (max. 1,000 letters)

The formalization of Land for Life structures and the institutionalization effort were all part of the sustainability plan. The current phase II implementation ends on the 30th December, 2023. The main funders, the BMZ, have consented to support a third phase for consolidation purpose which will start in April 2024. The proposal writing is at an advanced stage. An application for a 3-month no-cost extension (January – March, 2024) has been approved.

Already, as an institution, Land for Life has formulated five policies – Human Resources, Finance, Procurement, Data Management and Safeguarding policies. A fundraising strategy was also drafted. In similar interest, the Programme Coordinating office in Bonn, Germany had secured a tailored training opportunity for the Land for Life team on MAP sustainability strategy. All of these efforts are towards the sustainability of Land for Life and its structures.

Specifically for the DMSP, Land for Life is in discussion with FAO to facilitate two separate sessions – one that is aimed to connect the DMSPs with national-level authorities and a second three-day strategy session for the DMSPs