

 Early Warning System

AFDB-P-SL-AA0-026

Sierra Leone - Rice Agro-Industrial Special Zone Project (SLERAZ) –
Phase I



Quick Facts

Countries	Sierra Leone
Financial Institutions	African Development Bank (AFDB)
Status	Approved
Bank Risk Rating	A
Voting Date	2026-03-26
Borrower	Government of Sierra Leone - Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry
Sectors	Agriculture and Forestry, Industry and Trade, Water and Sanitation
Investment Type(s)	Grant
Investment Amount (USD)	\$ 24.08 million
Project Cost (USD)	\$ 78.45 million



Project Description

According to the Bank's website, the Sierra Leone Rice Agro-Industrial Special Zone Project (SLERAZ) – Phase I is an agricultural transformation project designed to promote inclusive and sustainable rice agro-industrial development in Sierra Leone. The project supports an integrated rice value chain approach combining climate-resilient production, land and water development, post-harvest and aggregation infrastructure, agro-industrial processing, and private-sector investment promotion. It will be implemented in the districts of Kambia and Port Loko, with a focus on building a rice-focused agro-industrial platform that links farmers, aggregators, processors, SMEs and market actors. The total project cost is estimated at UA 57.57 million (USD 78.64 million), financed by an ADF grant of UA 17.67 million (USD 23.94 million), co-financing from the OPEC Fund of USD 50 million (equivalent to UA 36.90 million), and an in-kind Government contribution of UA 3.0 million (USD 4.70 million).

The development objective of the project is to strengthen inclusive and sustainable rice agro-industrial development in Sierra Leone, thereby contributing to reduced rice imports, improved food security and nutrition, job creation, and poverty reduction. This will be achieved by improving the enabling environment for a market-oriented rice sector led by the private sector and supported by government, in line with the country's Feed Salone strategy to achieve national rice self-sufficiency by 2030.

Early Warning System Project Analysis

Environmental Category: [1] High Risk

The project Environmental risk category is confirmed as high risk (Category 1).

The environmental risks are: (i) overuse of water resources during irrigation (ii) chemical runoff from use of agrochemicals (iii) community health and safety risks due to water contamination (iv) noise pollution during construction (v) degradation of ambient air quality during construction.

The environmental impacts are: (i) depletion of local aquifers and reduction in water availability for downstream communities (ii) contamination of water bodies from agrochemicals which could lead to waterborne diseases and other health risks to communities (iii) harm to aquatic life (iv) disruption of the peace and quiet of nearby communities and potential hearing damage for workers from increased noise levels (vi) respiratory health issues for workers and reduction in local visibility from air pollution.

The social risks are: (i) loss of land and productive trees will eliminate primary source of income and displace families economically, (ii) Social conflicts due to unequal access to resources developed by the project, (iii) labour rights violations for workers to be employed, and (iv) increase in GBV and community health issues associated with an incoming workforce.

The social impacts are: (i) loss of primary source of income and of affected landowners/families in Kambia through the permanent acquisition of 20 hectares of land and from the loss of economic trees, (ii) loss of social cohesion and community trust leading to protests and grievances, (iii) worker injury, illness and exploitation, and (iv) physical and psychological harm to women in the community.



Investment Description

- African Development Bank (AFDB)

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Finance Instrument: Project Cycle Grant

Commitments (UA): 17,670,000

Conversion Rate USD (2026-03-26): 1,36276



Contact Information

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ACCESS TO INFORMATION

You can submit an information request for project information at: <https://www.afdb.org/en/disclosure-and-access-to-information/request-for-documents>. Under the AfDBs Disclosure and Access to Information policy, if you feel the Bank has omitted to publish information or your request for information is unreasonably denied, you can file an appeal at <https://www.afdb.org/en/disclosure-and-access-to-information/appeals-process>.

ACCOUNTABILITY MECHANISM OF AfDB

The Independent Review Mechanism (IRM), which is administered by the Compliance Review and Mediation Unit (CRMU), is the independent complaint mechanism and fact-finding body for people who have been or are likely to be adversely affected by an African Development Bank (AfDB)-financed project. If you submit a complaint to the IRM, it may assist you by either seeking to address your problems by facilitating a dispute resolution dialogue between you and those implementing the project and/or investigating whether the AfDB complied with its policies to prevent environmental and social harms. You can submit a complaint electronically by emailing crmuinto@afdb.org, b.kargougou@afdb.org, b.fall@afdb.org, and/or s.toure@afdb.org. You can learn more about the IRM and how to file a complaint at: <https://www.afdb.org/en/independent-review-mechanism/>



Bank Documents

- [Appraisal Report \(EN\)](#)
- [Appraisal Report \(FR\)](#)
- [Environmental Study \(EN\)](#)
- [Environmental Study \(EN\)](#)
- [Environmental Study \(EN\)](#)
- [Environmental Study \(EN\)](#)
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