



NaCSA NEWS

MAGAZINE

An Annual News Publication of all NaCSA
Programmes and Projects in Sierra Leone

2019 EDITION



NaCSA BECOMES A PERMANENT ENTITY UNDER THE OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT

In this Edition:



V P Jalloh extols NaCSA



NaCSA signs MoU with ACC



NaCSA concludes one day
field visit with Chief Minister



NaCSA 2019 : FROM THE EYES OF THE COMMISSIONER



Abu Bockarie Kokofele, NaCSA Commissioner

NaCSA is the Government of Sierra Leone's implementing agency responsible for delivering development related initiatives and programmes nationwide. At NaCSA, we strive to roll out the Government's development agenda in all sectors that contribute to poverty reduction and sustainable development. Working with international and local partners, our work spans regional, district and chiefdom levels, implementing projects funded by multiple donors.

Our vision of transforming local communities and contributing to poverty reduction, especially in rural areas, is supported by our mandate to deliver development down to communities. NaCSA is a dynamic and innovative entity that continues to work collaboratively with state and non-state partners for the realisation of sustainable development in Sierra Leone in line with the national development goals.

The Commission is governed by a Board of Directors and it is supervised by the Office of the Vice President.

This Magazine presents NaCSA in a very simplified form, capturing the work of the Commission for the period under review (January – December, 2019) and clearly highlighting the key events of commission in the delivery of its development initiatives.

NaCSA's interventions of public interest which had formed top stories in the press are described in a comprehensible manner. Few among these include:

- ◇ the passing of the New NaCSA Act into Law that makes the commission a 'permanent' development Agency in the country,
- ◇ the 8th Session of the National Social Protection Inter-Agency Forum (IAF) meeting held in Makeni which was chaired by the Vice President of the Republic of Sierra Leone Dr. Mohamed Juldeh Jalloh;
- ◇ the visit of the Chief Minister to NaCSA projects;
- ◇ the commencement of the payment of additional two thousand two hundred and fifty (2,250) being residual caseload women war victims;
- ◇ NaCSA MoUs signings with the ACC and that of Rokel Commercial Bank;
- ◇ the symbolic issuance of resident permit and the disbursement of local integration cash grant to Refugees, to name a few of articles in the Magazine.

It is our hope that this Magazine will not only serve as a souvenir but an enriched reference material to navigate you through NaCSA programmes and interventions aiming at poverty reduction and sustainable development.

Should you have any contribution to make on issues covered in this edition, feel free to do so through the editor - in - chief.

Happy reading.

Abu Bockarie Kokofele
(NaCSA Commissioner)

NaCSA CURRENT BOARD MEMBERS



PC FODAY MUSA

NaCSA BOARD CHAIRMAN



MADAM ALBERTA DEMBY

NaCSA BOARD MEMBER



PC SIDIQUE KAPUWA

NaCSA BOARD MEMBER



MR. BARBAR FORTUNE

NaCSA BOARD MEMBER



PC MD.

SALLY SATTA GENDEMEH

NaCSA BOARD MEMBER



ABU BOCKARIE KOKOFELE

NaCSA BOARD SECRETARY



GROUP OF ALL



NaCSA BOARD MEETS IN BO

From Left to right: Mr. Barbar Furtune, Comm. Abu Bockarie Kokofele, Md. Alberta Demby, P.C Foday Musa, P.C Md. Sally Sata Gendemeh and P.C Sidiki Kapuwa

In order to update board members on it's current programmes, achievements and challenges while projecting key deliverables for 2020, the National Commission for Social Action (NaCSA), on Monday, 23rd December 2019 held its end of year Board meeting at the Wizzard Complex, Dambala Road in Bo.

As an opening remarks, the NaCSA Board Chairman Paramount Chief (PC) Foday Musay reiterated the fact that the NaCSA Board is a policy one with key responsibility to look into all policy issues and advise the Commissioner for onwads cascading to management and staff.

In light of the above, PC Musa noted that they (the Board members) saw it as prudent to meet and discuss issues around the works that have been done by the Commission this year and to keep those, who due to one reason or the other were not with them abreast of the successes that were made during the year. He further appealed to colleagues Board members to ensure that they take up the responsibilities given to them; key among which is to interface with the internal auditors in order to be kept abreast with things happening in the Commission.

In his response, the NaCSA Commissioner Abu Bockarie Kokofele who doubles as Board Secretary described the current NaCSA Board as a supportive one from whom they (management and staff) have enjoyed quality leadership.

Commissioner Kokofele pointed at instances where the Board Chairman has gone to the extreme to ensure the Commission meets it objectives. These, he highlighted include taking the lead in ensuring that the most recent NaCSA Act being passed by Parliament, as well as Board members participated in joint field visits to inspect facilities and interventions undertaken by the commission.

Commissioner Kokofele further touched on a number of issues and development undertaking by the Commission this year. Key among which were:

- ◇ the structure and function of the new board
- ◇ the new mandate and
- ◇ the degradation of rehabilitated feeder roads by loggers which is becoming big concern to both the Commission and the donors.

Other issues deliberated upon by the board included the status of staff provident fund which is currently being investigated by the Anti Corruption Commission; the welfare of staff, especially dealing with medical insurance and staff end of service benefits; the remuneration of board members, to mention but few.

The event ended with an exchange of commendations and good wishes between the Board members and staff.



NaCSA BAGS MORE AWARDS



NaCSA Commissioner, Abu Bockarie kokofele receiving award from the organizers

With it's theme 'put Salone fos', the organizers of the Petriotic Sierra Leonean National Development Award 2019 has today, Wednesday 18th December,2019 awarded the Commissioner of NaCSA, Abu Bockarie Kokofele and NaCSA as Statesman and Parastatal of the year respectively.

This according to the Executive Director of the awarding Organization (Petriotic Sierra Leoneans), Peter Conteh is in recognition of the role of the Commission and it's Commissioner in the drive towards fighting poverty among the rural poor.

Commissioner Abu Bockarie Kokofele, who has enjoyed public admiration for his unique leadership style, raised concern over the rise of fake award-sharing entities aiming at exploiting

people in the name of awarding them with beautifully designed plaques. He noted how he has denied two of such. But following a background check of the organizers, he said, he was pleased to accept the Awards, which he described as small but valuable.

The event was held at the NaCSA Board Room, 7th Floor NaCSA Building Freetown and the symbolic handing over of the plaques plus photo shoots formed the highpoint



NaCSA BAGS AWARDS LONG SERVING STAFF IN THE COMMISSION



Sainku Fofanah, Out gone Director of Field Operations was among the awardees of NaCSA long serving staff

In what has been described by many as 'first in history' NaCSA, under the stewardship of Abu Bockarie Kokofele and Dr. Hannah Isata Max-Kyne has honoured over 100 staff from all levels for their long years of service to the commission.

The event which was merged with an end-of-year staff get-to-gather was held at Milton Margai campus, Congo Cross in Freetown on the eve of December, 20 and it served as a tool of appreciation from management, motivation to awardees and admirations to all.



PARLIAMENT PASSES NEW NaCSA ACT INTO LAW

Credit: Public Relations Unit
Sierra Leone House of Parliament



The Sierra Leone House of Parliament

The Parliament of Sierra Leone has on Thursday 7th November 2019 passed into law with some amendments the Bill entitled “The National Commission for Social Action Act, 2019”, following a debate on a Report presented by a joint-committee including the Legislative and NaCSA.

The committal was aimed at fine tuning some of the concerns raised by MPs including the composition of the Board and the placement of NaCSA under the direct supervision of the Vice-President; instead of the President of Sierra Leone.

The Bill is seeking to provide for the establishment of the National Commission for Social Action as a permanent agency of Government which will be responsible for the promotion and implementation of community-based, sustainable social protection and development programmes and to provide for other related matters.

Earlier, the Chairman of the Legislative Committee, Hon. Hindolo M. Gevao presented the Second Joint-Committee Report of the Legislative and the National Commission for Social Action on the Bill entitled “The National Commission for Social Action Act, 2019”, for consideration and subsequent approval by the House.

The Chairman of the Committee on NGO and NaCSA, Hon. Mustapha F. Sellu posited in his submission that “in spite of the concerns raised by MPs, it has pleased President Bio in a Cabinet conclusion that NaCSA should be placed under the direct supervision of the Vice-President”, whilst calling for the inclusion of the Financial Secretary in the composition of the Board and the retention of the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Labour and Social Security in the same Board.

Hon. Dr. Alhaji Kandeh Yumkella deposed that “NaCSA should be placed under the direct supervision of the President, who in turn should delegate to the Vice-President”, adding that the Board should be composed of experts in development. Hon. Sidie M. Tunis, the Leader of Government Business allayed the fears of Dr. Yumkella “that due to the exemplary performance of the Vice-President and in light of the New Direction to make the Office of the Vice-President more functional, it has pleased President Bio in a Cabinet conclusion to place NaCSA under the direct supervision of the Vice-President of the Republic of Sierra Leone, Hon. Dr. Mohamed Juldeh Jalloh”.

The Acting Leader of the Opposition, Hon. Ibrahim Ben Kargbo supported the position of Government to make NaCSA a permanent agency of Government that is responsible for undertaking development activities in every district in the Republic of Sierra Leone.



SPEECH OF THE MINISTER OF PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DR. FRANCIS KAIKAI, AT THE WELL OF PARLIAMENT - 5TH NOV. 2019



Dr. Francis Kaikai, Minister of Planning and Economic Dev

“The National Commission for Social Action (NaCSA) has led and continues to lead the implementation of national development projects and programmes with visible and tangible successes especially in the rural communities and for which the country is proud.

Despite its roles over the past twenty years as the leading government agency for the delivering of social services and social protection for the development of human capital in the country, the institution had has to request for the renewal of its mandate every five years. Mr. Speaker and Honourable Members would have to agree with me that, in the interest of making the institution a more permanent and robust one in support of Sierra Leone’s development programmes, there is need to upgrade its status to operate on a perpetual basis. This will not only give comfort to the staff of NaCSA but will transform that institution into a permanent development agency of government. It is against this backdrop that I am here to appeal that the NaCSA Act of 2019 be read for the second time.”

“This... will transform that institution into a permanent development agency of government”.



A session at the Sierra Leone House of Parliament



SPEECH OF NaCSA COMMISSIONER ABU BOCKARIE KOKOFELE AT NaCSA GENERAL STAFF MEETING - FRIDAY, 8TH NOVEMBER 2019



Commissioner Abu Bockarie Kokofele and Team breaking the news of the NaCSA New Mandate

“It’s a happy moment that an important event in the life of the Commission is being made known to everyone, so that we all can share the joy. This is the passing of the New NaCSA Act of 2019 into law (applause from staff).

I know that my predecessors have all longed for this. It did not happen over the years, not because they did not apply efforts, but it was ordained to happen under this present administration. So we don’t take all the praises. What has happened today is as a result of series of efforts over the years, culminating into the change that we have today.

The thanks should equally go to the first Commissioner, dating back to the days as ministry and all the other commissioners onto Mr. Alie Badara Mansaray.

... We are all aware that, some of our salaries and projects activities have been contingent to this approval.

Yesterday at last, the Bill was passed through Parliament and was endorsed unanimously (applause from staff).

It will now be finalized and presented to His Excellency the President to give his assent, and then it becomes law.

I thank you all, for your diverse but invaluable contributions in making it happen and feel free to disseminate the good news.

Congratulations to everyone.

It means that NaCSA is now a permanent institution.

“Yesterday, at last the Bill was passed through Parliament and was endorsed unanimously”.



NaCSA staff receiving the News



BRIEF HISTORY OF THE NaCSA 2019 ACT

REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE



Office Of The Vice President



Formally from the Office of the President, NaCSA now sits in the Office of the Vice President

NaCSA was established in 1996 as a government Ministry, known as the Ministry of National Reconstruction, Resettlement, and Rehabilitation (MNRRR) with a broad mandate to respond to the immediate humanitarian crisis that emanated from the civil war (1991 – 2002); and to handle the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants.

The Ministry could not however cope with the degree of urgency required for delivering humanitarian services because of bureaucratic procedures typical of the civil service in government ministries.

In order to address the administrative bottlenecks, the Government in November 1998, transformed the Ministry into a Commission called 'The National Commission for Reconstruction, Resettlement, and Rehabilitation (NCRRR) with a more focused three-year mandate of providing assistance for post conflict reconstruction, resettlement and rehabilitation.

The Commission was however made to retain the rank of Cabinet Ministry under the supervision of the Office of the President. The Government did not put the Commission under the supervision of a Ministry because such an action would have defeated the rationale that informed the decision to transform the entity into a Commission.

Government created a separate agency to handle Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration of ex-combatants known as the National Commission for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (NCDDR).

At the expiration of its mandate in November 2001, the Commission was restructured and renamed the 'National Commission for Social Action (NaCSA) through an Act of Parliament. This period coincided with the official end of the war; hence the Commission's new mandate "to provide and otherwise engage in social relief programmes and to promote community based demand driven and sustainable development activities leading to the alleviation of poverty and improvement in the speed, quality and impact of development initiatives in cooperation with Non-Governmental Organisations, relevant ministries, private sector partners and other interested parties.

NaCSA has since scaled up the provision of social and economic infrastructure and services in communities across the country.

On Thursday 7th November 2019 Parliament passed the new National Commission for Social Action Act 2019 into Law.

NaCSA has since scaled up the provision of social and economic infrastructure and services

WHY A PERMANENT AND SEMI-AUTONOMOUS GOVERNMENT AGENCY UNDER THE OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT?

Various studies and analytical work of development partners over the years including the World Bank indicate that “NaCSA is the lead and biggest Agency and actor in Social Protection”. The NaCSA Institutional Assessment conducted by the World Bank in 2015 revealed that NaCSA has:

- ◇ comparative advantage in implementing programmes with high degree of swiftness and efficiency;
- ◇ a good track record in terms of donor confidence and fiduciary compliance;
- ◇ the ability to attract donor funding for programmes managed by the Commission;
- ◇ a strong institutional memory on operational aspects of social protection;
- ◇ demonstrated ability to build capacity, coordinate social protection systems development and oversee their use;
- ◇ Provide technical support to MDAs and other stakeholders to execute social protection activities using the sub-project cycle.

In order to sustain continued donor confidence and interest, government requires an autonomous, transparent and accountable institution like NaCSA which overcomes the excessive bureaucratic challenges that usually characterize ministries.

NaCSA has the ability to manage inclusive programming initiatives which create room for multi-sector approach to development, an initiative that is currently trending in many developing countries globally. The Sierra Leone Community Driven Development Project (SLCDD II), a design that was first instituted by France but now largely implemented in India, Pakistan and other developing nations, concentrates social and economic infrastructural development in targeted rural communities with the aim of transforming them into semi-industrial settings through the construction of schools (Education), community health centers (Health), solar electrification (Energy), pipe born water, water wells and VIP latrines (Water and Sanitation), construction of modern market centers with ancillary facilities, the development of Micro-Enterprise Groups and Self-help Affinity Groups ((Social Welfare and Trade) etc, is one key example of reasons why NaCSA needed to continue as a semi-autonomous government entity.



The operationalization of this model requires a central, semi-autonomous and flexible institution like NaCSA that is capable of mirroring various MDA mandates into practical field operations in the unique structure. This is why successive governments maintained the wisdom of keeping the supervision of NaCSA under the Presidency.

In this New Direction administration, it has pleased the President to delegate some of his key functions to his Vice President; (a) to boost efficiency and effectiveness, (b) to make the Office of the Vice President increasingly active, beyond the usual ceremonial presence, and (c) to decongest statehouse, among other reasons.

This arrangement is not peculiar to Sierra Leone. In fact, Sierra Leone could be said to be trailing behind contemporary nations like Nigeria, Ghana, South Africa, Tanzania, Rwanda, Ethiopia and Kenya in this respect.

“...it has pleased the President to delegate some of his key functions to his Vice President;”



VP JALLOH EXTOLS SOCIAL PROTECTION IN SIERRA LEONE



Dr. Mohamed Juldeh Jalloh, Vice President of Sierra Leone

“I am very excited, particularly for the efforts we are making to expand the scope of social protection,” the Vice President of the Republic of Sierra Leone Dr. Mohamed Juldeh Jalloh noted on Thursday 15th August 2019 while chairing the National Social Protection 8th Session of the Inter-Agency Forum (IAF) meeting held in Makeni, Northern Sierra Leone”.

The Honourable Vice President added that “the expansion would be essentially taking place along three-axis; technological expansion, the substantive nature of social protection, and lastly, political engagement, hence the forum is very vital for government officials.”

According to Dr. Juldeh Jalloh, Makeni was chosen to host the event to offer the needed grass root perspective of the Social Protection programmes in the country; bringing it closer to the beneficiaries which, he added, necessitated the visits to hospitals, under-five and prenatal clinics including villages to meet with the communities receiving unconditional cash transfers.

He further spoke on the additional financing of the programme by the World Bank and Government of Sierra Leone (GoSL); enabling coverage of the Social Safety Net (SSN) moving upward from about 90, 000 beneficiaries to 210, 000 nationwide.

The IAF meeting witnessed presentation of the progress report by the Commissioner of the National Commission for Social Action (NaCSA) prepared by the National Social Protection Secretariat. The Meeting enjoyed the participation of many national and international dignitaries including the Minister of Labor and Social Security, Adekunle King; the Minister of Basic and Secondary School Education, Alpha Timbo Esq., Minister of Health and Sanitation Prof. Dr. Alpha T. Wurie, Minister of Development and Planning, Dr Francis Kaikai, Minister of Local Development, Tamba J. S. Lamina, Minister of Youth, Mohamed Bangura as well as traditional authorities and elders among other dignitaries.

Among the international dignitaries were UNICEF Country Rep, Dr. Hamid E. I. Bashir, World Bank Country Manager, Ms. Gayle Martins and Irish Aid Country Director, Ms Mary O’neill among others.

The NSPS is an initiative of the development partners including UNICEF and World Bank embraced by the New Direction government of President Julius Maada Bio aimed at coordinating the works of Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) in providing social protection coverage for the extreme, and the most vulnerable in our society in a bid to reduce poverty and insecurity in the country.

Also in his speech, the Vice President thanked the organizers including the Chairman of the event, Hon. Adekunle King and the ministers and other dignitaries present for holding the Inter-Agency Forum meeting in the provinces while applauding all the partners that were part of the process. He emphasized the importance of coordination of SP programmes in order to promote complementarity and efficient use of resources and avoid duplication.



Cross section of the High Table at the inter-agency forum in Makeni

In his presentation, the NaCSA Commissioner Abu Bockarie Kokofele, among other things, gave a background to social protection in Sierra Leone while tracing the strategic approach to the Sierra Leone PRSP 2005 – 2007 with Pillar Three's emphasis on food security, job creation and good governance.

The Agenda for Change of 2007 – 2012 had Priority 4 on social protection policy revision while the Agenda for Prosperity of 2013 – 2018 had Pillar 6 on social protection establishing the Free Health Care initiative, establishment of the social safety net and the social protection policy revision 2018.

Commissioner Kokofele further explained that the Medium Term National Development Plan 2018 – 2023 has clusters I, 5, 6 and 7 dealing with the expansion of social protection to all the extremely poor population, the Free Quality Education and School Feeding programme including disability friendly social protection.

NaCSA Deputy Commissioner Dr. Hannah Isata Max-Kyne, on her own part, presented one of the cases for endorsement on additional financing of the SSN. She noted that the Social Safety Nets project commonly called the *Ep Fet Po* project was launched in 2014 to establish the core social protection systems and progressively expand the coverage of cash transfers to extremely poor households in Sierra Leone.

According to her, the project has three components including Development of Systems: The systems developed includes:

(i) targeting systems (ii) Integrated Beneficiary Registry that creates linkages to existing national systems and social programs (iii) Robust Management Information System (iv) Enhanced electronic payment system (iv) Grievance redresses mechanism (GRM) and anti-corruption measures and (v) strengthened social protection sector coordination mechanism.

Dr. Hannah Isata Max-Kyne also narrated that the initial funding of the project was \$23million from the Government of Sierra Leone, World Bank, UNICEF and DFID. *Ep Fet Po* is currently implemented in 10 districts including Western Rural, PortLoko, Bombali, Karene, Tonkolili, Moyamba, Kono, Kenema, Kailahun and Bo.

The Deputy Commissioner further observed that following the successful implementation of the project, GoSL and World Bank have agreed on Additional Financing (AF) of \$30million to expand to all districts including Bonthe, Koinadugu, Pujehun, Western Area and Kambia for 3 years.

She added that the Additional Funding will cover additional 210,000 beneficiaries in 35,000 extremely poor households and persons with disability with the Social Safety Nets project expected to close in June 2023.



*Dr. Sao-Kpato Hannah Isata Max-Kyne ,
Deputy Commissioner of NaCSA*

The Social Protection Secretariat Director Idris Turay dwelt on National Social Protection Floor, Fiscal Space Analysis and Business case study.

In recent times, countries face significant reductions in aid flows and in national budget support needed for social services including education and health. It was popularly held that if this situation persists there will be negative impact on the fundamental elements of social cohesion – social protection, education, and health.

The UN set the pace for countries to invest in social protection, with the establishment of Article 202 of ILO 2012 which requires countries to develop context -specific social protection floor. With fiscal constraint, countries were required to provide the minimum as guarantee for social protection to the poorest and most vulnerable population.

The SPF is a global social policy approach to promote integrated strategies to ensure access to essential social services and income security for all. The SP floors are nationally defined sets of basic social security guarantees that should ensure, as a minimum, for all in need to have access to essential health care and to basic income security which together secure effective access to goods and services defined as necessary at the national

In December 2018, government technical team with the support of UNICEF, ILO and World Bank, held a workshop to establish the Sierra Leone social protection floor. The meeting established the SP floor on the following four guarantees – *Social services (Health & Education), Income security for Children, Income security for the working age, and Income security for the Elderly/aged.*

The technical team noted that in spite of many SP interventions forming the minimum guarantee, the country is lacking some important benefits crucial to addressing poverty and vulnerability. On that note, the team recommended, among others, child grant, family allowance, assistive devices for persons living with disabilities, social pension and free health care for the aged to be included in the existing national SP floor.

In every making a case for Social Protection initiatives, the question arises about the provision in the national budget based on the fiscal space. Guided by the minimum guarantee for SP in the country, there is a need to make a business case for social protection intervention based on the returns on investment.

Government with the support of development partners has commenced analysis of a Fiscal space and Business Case for Social Protection in Sierra Leone.

The study will form a key component collecting evidence and creating awareness about social protection in the country. It will also explore the fiscal space available. The study will present costing scenarios that would guide the government on possible pathways to reduce vulnerabilities, improve human capital outcomes and reduce poverty.

The outcome of the analysis is expected to inform investment for financing and creating additional fiscal space for social protection in the country.

Representing the Minister of Health, Dr. Francis Smart briefly noted that the Health Ministry's social protection focus targets Pregnant women, Lactating mothers, Under Five Children, Disabled, Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) Survivors).

Key Interventions: Free Health Care services at all level of health facilities. Increased GoSL funding for Free Health Care drugs including vulnerable groups. Government has contributed 10% of the cost of the Free Health Care drugs for 2018 and is committed to provide 30% for 2019 and 50% for 2020.

Government has enhanced distribution of free healthcare drugs to hard-to-reach communities and vulnerable groups.



SPEECH DELIVERED BY THE HONOURABLE VICE PRESIDENT DR. MOHAMED JULDEH JALLON AT THE IAF MEETING IN MAKENI



V.P Dr. Mohamed Juldeh Jalloh being taken on a guard of honour in Makeni

Honorable Ministers
Representatives and Heads of Donor Missions
Paramount and Section Chiefs
Ladies and Gentlemen

Our country has embarked on remarkable economic growth and progress has been made in the areas of health, education, infrastructure, food production and social safety nets.

In 2002-2007 we included in our National Programme for Food Security, Job Creation and Good Governance under Pillar Three: Food security, Job creation & Good governance to strengthen our peace through food security, employment and good governance for all cohorts of people in the country.

Our government played a critical role in establishing the social insurance scheme replacing the civil servant and armed forces pension; also, continue to provide social cash transfer to the aged. As required by global practices, our country established and applied structures consistent with achievement of key priorities in the Sustainable Development Goals as contained in several clusters under the new initiative's MTNDP.

In 2011, Government approved the Social Protection Policy. In 2013, we included the Social Protection pillar as a priority in the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper III (Agenda for Prosperity) and in the national budget. This provided added impetus to build the social protection system and launch programmes to aid the extremely poor and vulnerable constituents.

However, recently our country has experienced new challenges and emergencies such as the Ebola virus disease, flooding and landslides that threaten our progress towards economic and inclusive growth and increase vulnerabilities and risks particularly for the poorest of the poor and our youth. As a people, we have demonstrated resilience in the face of these challenges and emergencies.

Since our government assumed the leadership of this beloved nation, our strategic priorities are set around promoting pro-poor economic growth. As a government, we took on the challenge to continue to help protect extremely poor households from shocks and emergencies (such as mudslides and flooding) that continue to affect our country.

Our initiative is rooted in the principles of improving *human capital outcomes*, particularly for the poorest households, and *mitigating the negative impacts of shocks* and different vulnerabilities as outlined in the Medium-Term National Development Plan (MTNDP).

The MTNDP establishes a sound framework for Social Protection (SP) initiatives in the country. As a government, we have promoted the Free and Quality Education programme, School Feeding programme, strengthened the Free Health Care initiative, expanded the Social Safety Net programmes to the extremely poor population in all the districts with a focus on persons living with disability, promote employment creation, skills development and micro-enterprise schemes.

Crucial to achievement of the goals of the MTNDP is the need to improve coordination of sector Ministries, Department and Agencies (MDAs) participating in the implementation programmes and initiatives in the country. Several efforts have gone into promoting coordination of social protection in Sierra Leone

We are all aware that Social protection interventions are many and differ in design, components, coverage with limited synergy and documentation of best practice, lessons and impact. Thus, no knowledge on efficiency and effectiveness of the sector at policy, administrative and implementation levels

Thus, we need to adopt a system approach to:

- ◇ achieve greater impact of Social protection interventions on poverty alleviation, human development and economic growth
- ◇ build synergy of policies and programmes across sectors
- ◇ improve in the equitable distribution of resources
- ◇ enhance transparency, accountability and governance of SP delivery
- ◇ achieve greater coverage and multiplier effect of interventions
- ◇ harmonize of processes such as Targeting, Registry, Payment Systems, M&E, MIS
- ◇ improve in efficiency and sustainability of SP programmes.
- ◇ share resources, experiences and lessons across programmes and agencies
- ◇ better track and report on SP programmes and results
- ◇ better resource allocation

Ladies and gentlemen in the absence of a system approach, our efforts risk

- ◇ Political economy which could hamper coordination
- ◇ Possibility of propagating errors across programmes
- ◇ Excessive centralization that may stifle creativity and responsiveness
- ◇ - Cost of managing cross programme arrangements

Anchorage of the systems on established institutional arrangements with clearly defined responsibilities and ensuring use of common administrative tools for effective cross-programme management will be critical. . The Forum will discuss key highlights of the achievement of Social Protection programmes and some challenges faced by MDAs.

This bi-annual meeting will be rotational with at least one meeting per year held in one Provincial Headquarter town to provide an opportunity for IAF members to visit and assess project sites, interact with beneficiaries and document lessons.

In recent past, as in several countries to make a case for Social Protection, Sierra Leone established the Social Protection Inter-Agency Forum (IAF) and its technical arm the Social Protection Secretariat with the strategic mandate for coordinating and providing technical support on social protection to implementing Ministries, departments and Agencies. The objective of the IAF is to share progress and challenges in a coordinated manner around Social Protection programming in the Country

The roles of the Secretariat, among others, is to provide technical support to the Social Protection Inter-Agency Forum, Supports the IAF on the day-to-day implementation of the National Social Protection Policy, facilitate/undertake fund raising and resource mobilization for Social Protection activities and capacity building. The body is also tasked to maintain and operate a Social Protection Integrated Beneficiary Registry, provide technical support to MDAs in areas related to social protecting programming. On that note, we kindly urge sector MDAs to support the SP Secretariat in achieving these important functions.

In summing our efforts, through the support of development partners, World Bank UNICEF, and a host of International Non-Government Organizations (INGOs) the Government is having its first Inter-Agency Forum (IAF) for 2019 here in Makeni.

To emphasize, ladies and gentlemen, going forward, and most importantly, our aim as a nation is to construct a single registry on all beneficiaries of Social Protection programmes in the country. We intend to maintain a comprehensive social protection programme based on firm principles of complementarity, coordination and avoidance of duplication. With this approach, we are certain that we will be able to be efficient in use of resources and to chart a clear trajectory to the path of graduating our people out of poverty thus contributing to a sustained pro poor economic growth in the country.

Ladies and gentlemen, to conclude; I want to acknowledge the relentless support provided by our local authorities and partners. I believe we can fight inequality by pursuing policies which aim at sustainable growth and at social inclusion at the same time. I believe that politically we are determined. It is a global commitment, to which we have subscribed as part of SDG goals as a country. The debate now is how best to put this in practice – and your contribution to this is much appreciated.

As a country, we must build upon our collective strengths if we are not only to recover from the present crisis but make social progress that will see us as Sierra Leoneans live wealthier, healthier, and longer lives in solidarity with each other. **Thank you very much!**



NaCSA CONCLUDES ONE DAY FIELD VISIT WITH CHIEF MINISTER



Chief Minister Prof. David Francis shaking hands of pupils of the Mange Community Primary school on his visit with NaCSA

It was a scene of celebration and admiration for both the Chief Minister and the work of NaCSA in Mange Bureh on Friday, July 19, 2019 when the people of Mange Town and its environs swarmed like ants falling from the woods to set eyes on the Chief Minister (for the very first time by many), Prof. David Francis and the nation's leading development agency (NaCSA), on a one day field monitoring visit of NaCSA interventions in that part of the country.

During the tour, stakeholders registered their profound admiration for the Chief Minister, whom they described as a result oriented, focused gentleman and a strong pillar of the New Direction. It was however disclosed that Mange Bureh shares deep history with the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) - as the Party symbol was buried there.

In his address, the Chief Minister reciprocated similar appreciations to the people of Mange, calling on them to be patriotic. "We don't have two Sierra Leone, neither Mende Sierra Leone nor Temne Sierra Leone. All we have is one Sierra Leone," he echoed. He further debunked rumour of the President's ill health and requested everyone to pray for the President, noting that leadership is not a simple task. The Chief Minister expressed his satisfaction over the activities of NaCSA and commended the current team of the NaCSA.

"The cordiality noticed between the Commissioner and his Deputy just within this short while is admirable, a clear demonstration of their commitment to raise NaCSA to its past glory," he acknowledged.

While introducing the Chief Minister and updating him on the Commission's work in the District, NaCSA Commissioner Abu Bockarie Kokofele revealed that NaCSA is implementing 3 projects in Port Loko. These he said include the Social Safety Net Programme which provides quarterly cash transfer to over one thousand vulnerable households; the Sierra Leone Community Driven Development Project, working to transform two chiefdoms in the District. He also spoke of the Government funded Reparations Programme aiming at paying the residual caseloads of war widows and sexual violence victims. These projects, Commissioner Kokofele noted have created great impact in the lives of people in the District. Forming climax of the one day visit of the Chief Minister were inspection of facilities constructed by the Commission within the District, which included a state-of-the-art Community Health Post (under construction), a 95% completed modern six class room building with accessories like library and staff quarters with possibility for solar generated power.

It is hoped that the Chief Minister upon his return to Freetown will update not only His Excellency the President but the entire cabinet on the work of NaCSA; thus serving as the Chief Ambassador of the Commission.



NaCSA COMMENCES CASH TRANSFER TO 28,538 VULNERABLE HOUSEHOLDS COUNTRYWIDE



The Managing Director of Rokel Commercial Bank, Dr. Wilton Ekundayo Gilpin and NaCSA Deputy Commissioner, Dr. Sao-Kpato Hannah Isata Max-Kyne performing the symbolic payment at the Grafton Police Barracks Pay Point

NaCSA through its Social Safety Net Programme has commenced the payment of Cash Transfer to 28,538 households headed by vulnerable women in 506 communities across the country.

With funding from the Government of Sierra Leone and the World Bank, payment commenced on Wednesday, 25th September 2019 in the Western Rural District, targeting 2,666 households with a total of 1.5 billion Leones.

Representing the Commissioner at the Amputee Camp in Grafton, the NaCSA Deputy Commissioner who doubles as the Head of Programmes in the Commission, Dr. Sao-Kpato Hannah Isata Max-Kyne registered her appreciation to the President, His Excellency Dr. Julius Maada Bio for his support to the programme as demonstrated in his engagement with the World Bank for additional funding early this year in Washington.

Dr. Max-Kyne reiterated the importance of the payment, noting that the event marks the payment of the final Cash Transfer to exiting beneficiary households while setting the stage for the re-targeting of new beneficiaries within the

communities or districts for the next phase of the programme. She congratulated the outgoing beneficiary households, whom she noted were able to utilize the support provided to them during their tenure in the programme.

Dr. Max-Kyne highlighted instances where some beneficiaries have used their monies to build dwelling houses and in other cases to startup businesses from petty trading 'falamakit' to well established ventures. While this payment marks the end for their direct benefit in the cash transfer programme, she assured them of other NaCSA programmes which if they find themselves eligible will coop them.

Representing the World Bank, the Co-Task Team Leader Dr. Abu Kargbo affirmed the goal of the Bank, which he noted is to reduce poverty in the world and to support government in promoting the wellbeing of its citizens. "It is the belief of the Bank that every citizen has the right to decent living. To ensure that no one goes to bed hungry, the Bank works with the government to provide these monies for vulnerable

households, which without these supports could not have been able to put food on their tables. These monies are meant to provide for food, basic healthcare services as well as to support in the education of the offspring”, he stressed.

The Rokel Commercial Sierra Leone Limited is the new Payment Service Provider charged with the responsibility to do the cash transfer exercise countrywide. Performing the symbolic payment in one of the pay points, the Managing Director of the Bank, Dr. Wilton Ekundayo Gilpin expressed delight over the trust bestowed upon his institution and assured all of his staff’s commitment in following the due process. He further emphasized the need for financial inclusion, which he noted could be of advantage to both the customers and the Bank. “As a bank, we do not only believe in receiving monies and keeping them, but to grow the capacity of our customers in order to expand their business horizon”, he assured.

Being the final payment means the money should be used for a remarkable purpose. Madam Fatu Mansaray, a grandma in her late sixties from Grafton Community in the Western Rural Areas has her own plan for this money. As one of the few beneficiaries who could now boast of a reasonable dwelling house and a petty business as a result of the programme, spending the final payment to add on her business as well as on the education of the grandchildren should not be considered wrong.



Left to Right: PM – SSN, Regina Sia Saffa, World Bank Co-task team leader Dr. Abu Kargbo and NaCSA Deputy Commissioner, Dr. Sao-Kpato Hannah Isata Max-Kyne at the Grafton Police Barracks pay Point



One of the SSN Beneficiaries collecting her payment at the Grafton Police Barracks Pay Point

“I am very grateful to NaCSA for their support so far. This has been my only source of getting money, as no family member could afford to help. Although I am exiting the programme today, I am not leaving without something to point at. For instance, the first One Million Leones I got from this programme was used to change the roof of my house from tarpaulin to iron sheets. Not only that, I started a petty business which I have managed. So with this final cash of One Million Leones as you could see in my hands, I am going to use part of it on my business while the remaining will go to the education of the grandchildren”, she explained. Like grandma Fatu, every beneficiary has his/her own individual plan for this money.

I am not leaving without something to point at.

The Social Safety Net Programme is one of the biggest projects in NaCSA, aiming at providing

unconditional cash transfer to the extreme poor. The Programme, which has already provided unconditional cash transfer to 28,538 beneficiary households in ten districts is expected with the additional funding of USD30, 000,000 (Thirty Million United States Dollars) from the World Bank, to extend to the other outstanding five districts and will target an additional 35,000 new households; making it over 70,000 beneficiary households in the entire country by the end of the Programme



DEPUTY NaCSA COMMISSIONER ATTENDS TWO-WEEK TRAINING ON SOCIAL PROTECTION IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

By: Augustine Kickugame Koroma



NaCSA Deputy Commissioner, Dr Sao-Kpato Hannah Isata Max-Kyne

The Deputy Commissioner of NaCSA, Dr Hannah Max-Kyne was in Washington DC, United States of America from October 28 and November 8, 2019 to participate in a two-week training on Social Protection. The training was organized by the World Bank and it attracted experts and executors of Social Protection Programmes from all over the world.

Dr Max-Kyne leads programme activities at the National Commission for Social Action and her participation in such a training enhanced her expertise, deepen her insight, broaden her horizon and increased her knowledge in respect of social protection programmes.

It could be recalled that the World Bank had dished out some additional funding of \$30 million to NaCSA to expand the Social Safety Net Programme for the most vulnerable households in the entire country. This additional funding was received after President Bio's visit to the US, during which time he persuasively articulated his plans to the Bank in line with his New Direction policies.

Dr Max-Kyne during the session interfaced with other participants and shared experiences from best practices in the implementation of Social Protection programmes.

The training eventually culminated in the Bank and its partners proffering innovative ways

in the delivery of Social Protection Initiatives.

Dr Max-Kyne, with her level of experience and expertise contributed tremendously during the training. This was no surprise, as she was one of two consultants that coordinated the development of the first Social Protection Strategy and Framework for Sierra Leone. Dr. Max-Kyne also happens to be supervising all programmes, including the Social Protection Project at NaCSA.

The Deputy Commissioner undoubtedly returned home with renewed energy and optimism to unleash the knowledge and experience gained from the training with a view to helping the government.

At this moment, Sierra Leoneans have every reason to relish the prospects of brighter days ahead with Dr. Max-Kyne at the helm of Social Protection programmes. She has promised not to rest until her dreams and by extension those of the New Direction.



NaCSA PAYS ANOTHER 2,250 WOMEN WAR VICTIMS -NATIONWIDE



One of beneficiaries of the Residual caseload of Reparation Programme collecting her grants at the Sierra Leone Commercial Bank

You cannot eat a rat and get stock at its tail. This is exactly why NaCSA, the principal agency charged by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to handle the country's Reparations programme, is taking the War Widows and Victims of Sexual Violence to the end of the road in drawing down the curtain of the nation's sad chapter of war.

Almost a year after serving a total of 7,957 out of the recorded 8045 caseload of War Widows and Victims of Sexual Violence, the Government of Sierra Leone through NaCSA has again commenced the payment of additional two thousand two hundred and fifty (2,250) women being residual caseload to benefit from the rehabilitation grants.

Princess Fornah (age 30) lives at Kissy in Freetown. She is a survivor as well as a war-wounded. She was at age seven (7) when she encountered her agony. Now, she is a single mother of two. Because of her history, she has been abandoned by her spouse. She is having trouble with accommodation as well as with the intermittent pains from the old wounds.

In fact, Princess could not make it during the first phase of payment last year owing to

poor health precipitated by her wounds. She has almost lost hope of getting this money. The news of the payment was broken to her by a relative. Princess cannot afford to make the same mistake twice. She was among the first batch of women to reach NaCSA headquarters at Charlotte Street in Freetown where she presented her Blue Slip in return for the payment slip which she took to the nearest Sierra Leone Commercial Bank outlet to collect her rehabilitation grant of one million two hundred thousand Leones (Le 1,200,000.00).

While commending the Government of Sierra Leone through NaCSA for standing by their words in ensuring that every War Widow and Victim of Sexual Violence is paid', she pleaded with NaCSA to include her in other safety net programmes.

She has almost lost hope of getting this money. The news of the payment was broken to her by a relative. Princess cannot afford to make the same mistake twice.

The money, she noted could have been used to start up petty business but continual humiliation from her land lord has forced her to use all the cash in settling her rent. So for Princess, accommodation is of dire need to her and her kids.

Gramma Dora Kamara (approximately 70) who lives with her grand children at Wellington, Freetown has different use for her grant. Receiving this money while she is still alive has always being her dream. "Now that I have got my money, I will 'open table' (start up petty business) so that the money will not get finished. From this, I could be able to meet the needs of my grand children", she explained.

It is not only Gramma Dora that wants to use her money to start a business. Balu Kamara (age 38) from Kissy Freetown and who currently works in one of the security firms in the country is considering to start her own petty business using the one million two hundred thousand Leones (Le 1,200,000.00) paid to her as an alternative livelihood. "This cash will surely help me. Despite what I earn from my security job, the business will serve as a fall-back in time of challenges", Balu revealed.

Like these women in Freetown, their counterparts in the provinces are all set with their own plans for the money, which will definitely form the end of the road of the country's long walk to close the sad chapter of its ugly war history.

A total of 3.5 billion Leones has been provided by the Government of Sierra Leone to NaCSA to undertake the entire payment process across the 16 political districts in the country. The process started in Freetown was cascaded in the provinces from 10th – 28th September 2019. It was preceded by Income Generation and Financial Literacy trainings for recipients; hence, bringing the Sierra Leone Reparations programme to close.

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Cross section of beneficiaries of the Residual caseload of Reparation Programme collecting her grants at the Sierra Leone Commercial Bank Head quarters in Freetown



NaCSA CAPACITATE FIELD STAFF AND BENEFICIARY COMMUNITIES ON INCOME GENERATING FACILITIES



Cross section of NaCSA staff at the Kabala Training

The National Commission for Social Action (NaCSA) through its Pro-Poor Growth for Peace Consolidation (GPCII) has brought together field staff from the sixteen districts across the country for a week long training of trainers (ToT) workshop in Kabala town Koinadugu District.

The objectives of the workshop was to enhance the capacity of NaCSA staff and beneficiary communities on operating and maintaining built income generating infrastructures (grain stores and its ancillary facilities, water wells, milling machines, drying floors, solar recharging component etc).

It also brought together community members know as Facility Management Committees (FMCs), who are managing these facilities from Koinadugu district who are currently benefitting from the programme.

The modular objective of the workshop was to help both NaCSA staff and FMCs acquire skills ranging from community facilitation, formation and role of FMCs in operational areas, skills in maintaining income generating facilities for sustainability.

The workshop also geared towards cascading the training to facility management committee (FMC) in the 4 GPC districts of Kono, Kailahun, Koinadugu and Falaba respectively.

Declaring the training workshop open on behalf of the Commissioner, NaCSA Senior Director of the Support Service Division, Koffi Addai echoed management's position in hoping that the skills acquired in the training would be cascaded to the beneficiaries and their communities.

He expressed delight to be part of the workshop and commended the Pro-poor Growth for Peace Consolidation (GPC II) programme for organizing it.

Mr. Addai thanked the German Government for extending the programme to its third phase of implementation (GPCIII) which he noted, will commence in July 2019 to 2023.

NaCSA, the Senior Director acknowledged has successfully raised over Euro 12.3 million from the German development Bank (KfW) to further deepens the peace consolidation process and promote employment and income generation for youths and women. He reflected on how the GPC II programme over the years has provided direct short term employment to over 6,053 youths in Kono, Kailahun, Koinadugu and Falaba districts in the area of spot improvements, rehabilitation of approximately 583 kilometers of feeder Roads including bridges and culverts, to name but few.

The GPC Programme Manager, Salifu Mansaray noted that the GPC Project is a pro-poor programme that helps rural communities expand on their already existing local opportunities for local economic development, while emphasizing that that the goal of the programme is to "Contribute to Peace Consolidation" through employment promotion and income generation for youths in rural communities.

Consultant facilitator from Eco Gitec Consults in Germany, Bjoern Scheuler, while presenting the facilitation handbook for the training said, the hand book was developed by the German Technical Cooperation and expressed hope that NaCSA Staff's would make good use of this opportunity given to them and in turn help their various communities to grasp the stages and methodology in facilitation skills.

The Pro-Poor Growth for Peace Consolidation (GPCII) Programme is funded through a German Financial Co-operation Agreement between the Government of Sierra Leone and the German Ministry of Cooperation and Development (BMZ) through the German Development Bank (KfW)



NaCSA CONCLUDES TRAINING FOR THIRTY-FOUR (34) YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS



Cross section of NaCSA staff and F4I beneficiaries after the Kenema Training

In a bid to reduce the youth unemployment rate in the country, the National Commission for Social Action (NaCSA) with support from GIZ under the Employment Promotional Programme (EPP III) has organized a two-day capacity development training for thirty-four (34) beneficiaries of the Facility for Innovation (F4I) project from Kailahun, Kenema and Kono districts.

The primary goal of this project is to reduce the high rate of youth unemployment in the country. The Programme is also designed to support employment opportunities for young people with innovative business ideas, with the view of improving on their skills, capabilities and businesses. Beneficiaries from Kailahun and Kenema were trained in the Kenema District Council Hall in Kenema District whilst beneficiaries from Kono were trained in the Kono District Council Hall in Kono district.

Delivering the keynote address at the Kenema District Council Hall in Kenema District on Saturday, 21st September 2019, NaCSA Senior Director of Programmes, Mr. Mohamed Rashid Bah described the participants as 'unique' and emphasized that they were selected based on their special and proven skills in their respective fields. He implored them to recognize their uniqueness and channel their energies towards establishing big businesses in the country. Mr. Bah maintained that NaCSA and GIZ will continue to support them with a view that they would become outstanding suppliers in the future.

**NaCSA and GIZ
will continue to support
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suppliers in the future.**



NaCSA Senior Director of Programmes Development and Quality Assurance, Dr. Susan Robert delivering the keynote address at the Basic Management Training for F4I beneficiaries in Koidu City

In a similar session while delivering the keynote address in the Kono District Council Hall, the Senior Director of Programme Development and Quality Assurance, Dr. Susan Robert congratulated the beneficiaries for being selected among thousands. She implored them to strive towards becoming employers rather than employees. She underscored that the project is in line with the President's Vision of improving on the Human Development Index of the country. She advised them to be diligent in their respective businesses and be very sensitive to the changing business environment.

**the project is in line
with the President's Vision
of improving on the Human
Development Index of the
country**

In his address to the beneficiaries, the NaCSA Programme Manager for the GIZ funded Employment Promotional Programme (EPP III), Mr. Leonard Moseray registered his delight over the competence of the young people selected for the programme. He admonished the beneficiaries to maintain the passion they have and disclosed that start-up capital for the beneficiaries have been provided by GIZ but would be managed by NaCSA. The package he said includes procurement of the needed equipments and raw materials to actualize their dreams. He also said that the objective of the project is to improve on the private sector through youth employment with innovative ideas and encouraged the beneficiaries to treat this opportunity with the utmost seriousness it deserves. The program was climaxed with the presentation of the training manual on 'Basic Business Management'.



NaCSA ISSUES OUT RESIDENT PERMIT AND CASH GRANT TO LOCALLY INTEGRATED REFUGEES



Resident Minister South performing the symbolic presentation of Resident permits to locally integrated Refugees

The history of refugees being hosted by Sierra Leone goes way back to the 1990s with funding from the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) as the UN agency responsible for the management of refugees. During the peak of the rebel war, refugees were given three durable options with regards settlements which were: (1) a third country resettlement; (2) voluntary repatriation to home country; and (3) local integration into host communities. Based on current situation, regarding the end of the war and the development in terms of the democratic process, the first durable option is no longer available but for the second and third.

The ceremony for the symbolic issuance of resident permit and the disbursement of local integration cash grant took place at the Bo District Council Hall, Falaba Section in Bo City on Friday, the 31st May, 2019.

The ceremony was chaired by the Deputy Chairman of Bo District Council displaying the collaboration between NaCSA and the district council while the presentations were done by the Resident Minister South as the representative of the president. In each of their addresses, they lauded the effort of UNHCR and NaCSA whilst encouraging the remaining refugees to think fast and come up with an option.

The keynote address was delivered by the District Coordinator, Md. Fatmata Fataba Babawo who stepped in the shoes of the Deputy Commissioner who was unavoidably absent. In her address, she commended the actions of the 9 households for the bold step taken. She went further to reiterate the effort so far made by

NaCSA to engage refugees on available programs (like the MEGs which have already started absorbing those who have opted into) that they could fit into one if they opt for local integration.

Statements by the host Paramount Chiefs of Tikonko and Baoma Chiefdoms, a representative of the Southern Regional Director of Immigration, Civil Society were all geared towards choosing the option to integrate locally and the opportunities available once the decision is taken.

Other refugees/liaison representatives present made statements on how they are becoming curious to know what could be included in the package as a sign of viewing this whole issue of local integration with a positive lence.

In her vote of thanks, one of the beneficiaries thanked both the UNHCR and the government of Sierra Leone and requested for a top up to the cash grant to enable them acquire very essential assets for a complete settlement.

The programme was climaxed with the symbolic presentation/issuance of resident permits and cash grants to 7 household beneficiaries (the 2 to round up the number to 9 failed to submit photos for the resident permit which is a criterion for approval).

The programme was rated as very timely and unique thus giving an opportunity to all refugees to get a rethink for any of these durable solutions.

Prior to this ceremony, NaCSA had a memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Immigrations Department for the preparation of resident permit for refugees who have opted as a legal document for their integration which forms a key part of the package

In another development, NaCSA has also signed another MOU with the Ministry of Labour for the issuance of Work permit to refugees who have and will opt for local integration to enable them compete/apply for any job he/she is qualified for.



NaCSA AND ACC SIGN MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING



NaCSA's Abu Bockarie Kokofele and ACC's Francis Ben Keifala exchanging the signed MoUs

The National Commission for Social Action (NaCSA) and the Anti-corruption Commission (ACC) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the implementation of the Grievance Redress component to beneficiaries of the Social Safety Net Project (SSN project).

The event which took place on the 3rd May 2019, at the NaCSA Head Office, 14-16 Charlotte Street, Freetown, sets forth the understandings and intentions of the Parties with regard to shared and complementary goals of the Social Safety Net Project. They entered into the MOU with the commitment to maintain their own separate and unique missions and mandates.

In his welcome address the Commissioner of NaCSA, Mr. Abu Bockarie Kokofele gave a brief background of NaCSA, pointing out that the institution is a semi-autonomous institution set up by the Government of Sierra Leone (GoSL) in 2001 with a mandate under statutory law to promote community-based, demand-driven and sustainable development activities; mobilize funds to implement programmes for the social protection of extremely poor and vulnerable households:

social and economic opportunities, humanitarian assistance and building capacity of local governance leading to the alleviation of poverty and improvement in the speed, quality and impact of development initiatives.

These, he noted, are done in cooperation with Non-Governmental Organizations, relevant MDAs, private sector partners and other interested parties including the ACC. The Social Safety Net (SSN) Project is NaCSA's biggest project, for which it has received a grant from the World Bank with counterpart funding from the Government of Sierra Leone and UNICEF to implement through Additional Financing to provide cash transfers to extreme poor households.

Commissioner Kokofele further outlined the roles and responsibilities of his Commission in relation to the implementation of the SSN Project as recognized and agreed in the MoU. These, he stated include: reviewing and approving the budget for ACC's GRM activities on behalf of the World Bank; incorporating the approved budget for the ACC's GRM activities in the AWPB for clearance by the World Bank; providing annual payment to the ACC account on behalf of the World Bank as well as to provide additional information and/or clarifications with regard to the submitted reports for the agreed deliverables, outputs or results.

In his response, Commissioner of the Anti-Corruption Commission, Mr. Francis Ben Keifala disclosed that the 2000 Anti-Corruption Act established the ACC as an independent Commission to investigate corruption and fraud in Sierra Leone. ACC, he noted is headed by a Commissioner, who provides the lead in the fight against corruption in public and private institutions in Sierra Leone and partners with other key institutions to prevent, eradicate and/or suppress corruption and corrupt practices. It has a three-pronged approach – Prevention, Education and Prosecution – in the fight against corruption.

Forming the highpoint of the ceremony was the symbolic signing and exchange of documents of the Memorandum documents.



NaCSA ENGAGES FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS ON ISLAMIC MICROFINANCE SCHEME



Inclusive Resources Management Limited Consultants Dr. Mohamed Khalid Osman and Dr. Adnan Aziz live on the NaCSA Hour Radio

With the intention to enable rural individuals and households to generate income and build their livelihoods in a more sustainable manner and in readiness for the implementation of the Sierra Leone Community Driven Development Project-Phase II (GIETRENK) Islamic Microfinance Programme, the National Commission for Social Action (NaCSA) has undertaken a capacity building training of all its relevant stakeholders.

The training which was held at the Occasion Enterprise, Lakka Western Rural from 11th – 15th November, 2019 was divided into three segments, targeting the various institutions - Apex Bank and its Rural Financial Institutions (Community Banks and Financial Services Associations), Staff of NaCSA, the Bank of Sierra Leone and other key stakeholders (Ministry of Finance, MPU and other consultants).

According to the Project design, Component Two of the SLCDD II calls for support to Livelihood and Micro/Small Enterprises

Development that gears at complementing the rural infrastructure scheme through the provision of access to business development services, microfinance and capacity building to beneficiary communities in order to fully exploit the infrastructure provided. Key in this component is to provide microfinance facilities based on 'Sharia' principles. The Islamic Microfinance (IMF) is to be extended to target beneficiaries through Rural Financial Institutions (RFIs) comprising the Community Banks (CBs) and the Financial Services Associations (FSAs) - operating under the supervision of Apex Bank (SL) Limited (AB). This is in alignment with the community driven model of the project and couple with the fact that these RFIs are also licensed and regulated by the Bank of Sierra Leone (BoSL) like the other commercial banks.

this component is to provide microfinance facilities based on 'Sharia' principles.



Cross section of NaCSA staff and other stakeholders at the Islamic Micro Finance Scheme training of trainers Workshop at Lakka

Declaring the workshop open, NaCSA Commissioner Abu Bockarie Kokofele described the event as a soft approach that is meant to encourage community people, strengthen them, and at the same time support them to grow to a higher height. The training, he noted, will prepare the relevant authorities to successfully design structures and system for the successful implementation of the Islamic Microfinance scheme. Commissioner Kokofele further revealed that NaCSA will not only give out monies to people and leave them on their own but rather, will work alongside with them so that they can succeed in whatever they are doing. Speaking on the project terms and conditions, NaCSA Senior Director of Programmes, Mr. Mohamed Rashid Bah reiterated that the regulatory framework, capacity building and systems are conditions that must be in place before the commencement of the project. The Commission he said, wants to ensure readiness before the actual operation in the field. This training, he advanced would undoubtedly set the pace. The Director further emphasized the need for judicious handling of the scheme, noting that the money given by the Islamic Development Bank is not a grant but loan. The Programme Manager of the Sierra Leone Community Development Project – (SLCDD) Phase II GIETREN at NaCSA, Momoh Juanah disclosed that the total cost of the project is 51.9 Million United State Dollars.

Funded by the Islamic Development Bank and the Government of Sierra Leone, he said that the project is being implemented in selected communities in the country. The aim of the scheme, Mr. Juanah went on, is to alleviate poverty with a dual purpose - to provide access to affordable financing for beneficiaries in the growth poles in order to enable them to scale up their operations; and to promote community managed rural financing.

NaCSA, Programme Manager for the SLCDD II revealed, has received approval from the Bank of Sierra Leone to implement Islamic Microfinance Scheme through the Apex Bank and it's Rural Financial Institutions (Community Banks and Financial Services Associations) in seven rural growth pole chiefdoms in four selected districts. These selections, he noted were done based on the data provided from multiple sources like Statistics Sierra Leone, UNICEF, UNDP and other credible institutions.

Inclusive Resources Management Limited is a specialized Islamic Microfinance consultancy firm hired by NaCSA to help Apex Bank in developing the structure and to operate specifically the designed special Revolving Account / Fund. The training was facilitated by two consultants from Pakistan, Dr. Mohamed Khalid Osman and Dr. Adnan Aziz who confirmed to have met their expectations of the training while registering their satisfaction on the performance of participants during the sessions.

A clear road map for oversight/monitoring and supervision of the scheme by the relevant authorities including the Bank of Sierra Leone and the Ministry of Finance is what is now expected



NaCSA TO RESCUE 20,000 PERSONS LIVING WITH DISABILITY NATIONWIDE



Out of a total population of 7,076,119 people in the country, 93,129 have disability

National Commission for Social Action (NaCSA), which is now under the Office of the Vice President, through its One hundred per cent Government of Sierra Leone funded Social Protection Programme for Persons living With Disability (PWDs) is set to create livelihood opportunities for 20,000 PWDs across the country.

According to the Sierra Leone Population and Housing Census Thematic Report on Disability 2015, out of a total population of 7,076,119 people in the country, 93,129 have disability, representing 1.3 per cent of the country's total population. In line with the report, the Northern region has the highest number of persons with disabilities (32,849), which represents 35.3 per cent of all persons with disabilities in the country. The Eastern region has 25,577 persons with disabilities (27.5 per cent of the total), and the Southern region has 22,770 (24.4 per cent of the total).

At district level, the majority of persons with disabilities are from Kailahun (9,666, or 10.4 per cent of the total), Bo (9,335, or 10 per cent), Port Loko (9,050, or 9.7 per cent) and Bombali (8,797, or 9.8 per cent).

The remaining districts represent less than 9 per cent of the total. While there are more males than females with disabilities: 50,319 (or 54 per cent of the total) male and 42,810 (46 per cent) female, the residential analysis reveals that there are more persons with disabilities in the rural areas of the country: 62,380 (or 67 per cent of the total) than those living in the urban areas: 30,749 (33 per cent).

Conscious of this statistics, the Government of H.E the President, Rtd. Brig. Julius Maada Bio in fulfillment of his campaign promises enshrined in Paragraph 3, subsection 3 Part 3 of the New Direction Manifesto, vowed to revisit the administration and implementation of the Social Safety Nets Programme in order to provide livelihood support to persons living with disability for economic empowerment. Charged with the responsibility to mobilize funds to implement programmes for the extremely poor and vulnerable sects of the society with the aim of alleviating poverty among these persons, NaCSA with funding from the Government of Sierra Leone (100 %) has been given the executing power to create productive opportunities for some Twenty Thousand (20,000) men, women, children and families living with disability nationwide. This disclosure was made to the various Councils and stakeholders during a two-week nationwide Visibility Campaign on NaCSA activities in the country undertaken by the NaCSA Programme Managers for the Social Safety Net Programme and Information, Education and Communication, Madam Regina Sia Saffa and Mr. George Nyambe Williams respectively.

Madam Regina Sia Saffa while making a courtesy call on Chairman and staff of the Port Loko District Council on Tuesday, 2nd July, 2019, as the first stop on the campaign, gave a background of the Social Safety Nets Programme interventions in Port Loko District, where she revealed that the project has been in operation in the district since 2015 and has provided cash transfer to about One Thousand (1,000) households in that district.

According to the Programme Design, beneficiary households are expected to benefit from a quarterly unconditional cash transfer of an equivalent of forty-five United States dollars in Leones (US\$45) over a period not exceeding three years. This, the Programme Manager noted has been overdue for the current beneficiary households in Port Loko District. She further stated that in line with the spirit of equal opportunity for all, the current caseloads would be exiting in December 2019 to make way for the new entrants of whom majority will be persons with disabilities. “This does not mean that the SSN Programme is pulling out of Port Loko District, instead we are intensifying our operations but with a redirection of our activities to other unserved chiefdoms and communities in the district,” Md. Saffa assured the Council Chairman.

She further spoke about the additional funding which the Government of Sierra Leone and the World Bank have provided, pointing out that, it would be used to extend the programme to other districts and categories of persons who before this time were not captured or targeted. This Thirty-Three Million United State Dollars, she reiterated would be used to service additional Thirty Five Thousand households countrywide. She disclosed that it will cater for persons with disabilities in the rural settings and will additionally provide them with Assistive devices.

**the SSN
Programme is not pulling out
instead we are intensifying
our operations**

Madam Regina Saffa and Mayor Sunkarie Kabba Kamara

The next project, she affirmed is funded solely by the Government of Sierra Leone exclusively for persons with disability residing in the urban settings and will target Twenty Thousand persons with disability county-wide. The components of this project, Md Saffa highlighted will include Micro grant for business startups for persons with disabilities and shall give priority to women. Under this component, the target beneficiaries will be grouped, trained on business skills and provided with the grant. Seventy per cent (70%) of who should be women.

The second component will be Skills training on productive value chains. Here, she stated beneficiaries would be trained, placed on apprenticeship and grouped into Micro enterprises. Throughout the training and apprenticeship period (two years) each beneficiary shall receive monthly stipends of Two Hundred and Fifty Thousand Leones (SLL250,000).

In Bombali, the team held a fruitful discussion with the Mayor of the Makeni Municipality, Madam Sunkarie Kabba Kamara, who described the news as a relief to the council, who has always been searching for partners to target this group of persons in the Municipality. “It is not only welcoming news for us but a great relief to me as a person”, she said. “We are ready to work with NaCSA and its partners, whoever it may be, all in the interest of my people, not to mention the group of persons the project intends to target – the persons living with disability”, she affirmed.

In Koinadugu District, the Deputy Council Chairman, Momorie G.P Marah was short of words after detailed description of the project and others NaCSA continues to implement in his district. He commended the President of Sierra Leone through NaCSA for addressing issues of development in his district as well as the new sister district – Falaba.

In Tonkolili District, the District Council Chairperson, Madam Yabom Sesay while commending NaCSA for its intensification of projects and programmes in her district reiterated the strategic location of Tonkolili in the country. "NaCSA is not by any mistakes concentrating its activities in Tonkolili", she said. "Tonkolili is not only one of the biggest districts in the country, but one sharing borders with seven other districts. So any intervention in Tonkolili district will have ripple effect on all the others. For me, politics is over and my people are in a hurry for development", she asserted.



NaCSA Team updating the Chairperson, Tonkolili District

In Kenema, the District Council Chairman, Mohamed O. Level Sesay described the news as timely and registered his council's continuous support to NaCSA, noting that, it's time for his district, including persons living with disability to realize that their votes were not wasted.

In Pujehun District like neighbouring Bonthe, the District Council Chairman Swaibu Sowa commended the new NaCSA management for considering his district, lamenting the long deprivation his district suffered in the past decade. He further pledged his council's commitment in working with the NaCSA District office in ensuring that desired results are gained and right beneficiaries are targeted.



Pujehun District Council Chairman Swaibu Sowa receiving the NaCSA Team

According to the Project document, the entire project will last for three years with possibility of extension based on funding. It will be implemented by specialized NGOs with proven record in concert with the National Commission for Persons Living with Disability, the Sierra Leone Union of Disability, the respective District Councils and Disable groups; while NaCSA shall serve as the lead executing body.

NaCSA is set to create livelihood opportunities for 20,000 PWDs across the country



NaCSA SOAKS THE GROUND FOR YOUTH IN KONO, KAILAHUN AND FALABA DISTRICTS



One of the EPP youth contractors receiving payment

Almost two week from Eid and four months to Christmas, youths in Kono, Kailahun and Falaba districts were still celebrating Eid belated and Christmas in advance – thanks to the Government of Sierra Leone, through the National Commission for Social Action (NaCSA) Employment Promotion Programme (EPP III) Cash for Work Project with funding from GIZ for soaking the ground for these youths.

Poised with the belief that stimulating job creation requires a holistic approach, and in the spirit of the New Direction, which emphasizes that youth problem would not only be received with topmost priority, but will also be viewed as a human development and security issue, NaCSA, the Government's lead development agency has commenced payment of five hundred and thirty three thousand Leone (SLL 533,000.00) cash for work to 3,200 youth in Kono, Kailahun and Falaba districts.

Peter Ngauja lives with his mother in Kokwiema Camp. He was at his family farm working for his mother when NaCSA rolled-out its cash for work project in his community. He quickly joined the scheme and had concluded his 23 working days phase of the project. He has presented his chits and they are correct and valid.

He is next in the line to collect his cash for work. For Peter, who is still in school, the money has come at no better time like now, when schools are about to reopen.

He has made up his mind to give all his SLL 533,000.00 to his mother who is engaged in petty trading. He hopes his mother will add it to her business and in turn help boost the livelihood of their family.

Next to Peter in the queue is Kumba Alpha, a female youth engaged in garbage collection. She has been working around the Gbense Market in Central Koidu. Unlike Peter, Kumba does not go to school. Before her employment in the scheme, Kumba has spent all her life staying at home doing nothing but providing help in house chores. With her SLL 533,000.00, Kumba is hopeful that life will never be the same. She hopes to start a petty business with the cash she has earned. For Kumba, the sweetness must not only end with her but should be extended to others. Her wish is for NaCSA to extend the cash for work to other youths, especially young girls like her who for diverse reasons have been deprived over the years.

Peter and Kumba are part of the 9,100 rural and peri-urban youth engaged by NaCSA to implement three components – Tree Crop Rehabilitation, Inland Valley Swamp Cultivation and Garbage Collection and Disposal in Falaba, Kailahun and Kono Districts respectively.

Sierra Leone's population is mostly youthful. Youth (persons 15-35 years) accounts for about 33% of the country's population and represent about 63% of the economically active population. The rural youth who are mostly farmers, face serious challenges ranging from inputs, financing and technology as well as the lack of capital and employment opportunities. NaCSA recognizes the issue of overcoming youth unemployment as the centre of its fight against poverty.

The Cash for work payment started on Wednesday, 22nd August in Kono District and continued in the other project districts (Falaba and Kailahun) till the end of the month.



EPP youth contractors at work



WORLD BANK MOVES AGAINST POVERTY IN SIERRA LEONE



Beneficiaries of the Ep Fet Po counting their monies after payment

The Social Protection Secretariat provides support to social protection activities (or sector) in the country. The Social Safety Net (SSN) programme implemented by the National Commission for Social Action (NaCSA) is one of them.

Housed in NaCSA, the Secretariat provides NaCSA with the building blocks for a seamless implementation process of the Social Safety Net programme in the country.

In providing this support, the Secretariat develops the system, which comprises of a good and objective Targeting System, a Grievance Redress Mechanism, which is coordinated by the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) and a Monitoring and Evaluation system for reporting of the Social Safety Nets programmes.

The Social Safety Net project uses a three-tier Targeting System comprising Geographical, Community and Households through a Proxy Means Test system. The Geographical targeting is supported by the data from National Census and Sierra Leone Integrated Household Surveys to determine the poorest districts and chiefdoms. At the community level, the councils and community leaders including the chiefs, Village Development Committees (VDCs) and Community Identification Committees (CICs) provide support in identifying the poorest sections. At the household levels, a team comprising NaCSA, ACC, Statistics Sierra Leone, Civil Society Rep and CICs conduct a PMT on the poorest households in the communities. After the Targeting, the secretariat enrolls the beneficiaries into a Management Information System (MIS) with the entire data contained in an Integrated Registry known as the Social Protection

Registry for Integrated National Targeting (SPRINT) kept at NaCSA.

The ACC coordinates the Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM). The GRM records reports or complaints received through a toll free line for redress by either NaCSA or the ACC depending on the nature of the complaint. The System provides an opportunity for a community to have a stake in the implementation of the Social Safety Net project.

Currently, the Social Safety Net project is in 9 districts. The Government of Sierra Leone has just concluded negotiation for additional funding of \$30 million for the expansion of the Social Safety Net project nationwide. Also, first in the history of this country, the World Bank has provided part of the additional finance for disaster response.

As always the case, the support that is provided by the World Bank carries a component on system development to enhance the roles of the Secretariat in extending technical support to every MDAs implementing social protection in the country. Besides its coordinating function, the Secretariat has been providing technical support in targeting systems to agencies implementing social safety nets programmes. These bring about the importance of the Inter Agency Forum (IAF), which is chaired by the Vice President of the Republic of Sierra Leone and attended by Ministries, Department and Agencies (MDAs) implementing social protection programmes in the country.

As part of its structure, as well, the Social Protection Secretariat brings together technical directors of MDAs in a body referred to as the National Technical Steering Committee (NTSC).

The mandate of the Social Protection Secretariat is well elaborated in the National Social Protection Policy of 2011 reviewed in 2018, which provides the institutional arrangement for social protection programmes in the country and the essence of coordination for efficient delivery systems.

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NACSA SSN PROGRAMME TO REACH 70,000 VULNERABLE HOUSE-



NaCSA Commissioner Abu Bockarie Kokofele receiving the Safety net report from World Bank Task Team Leader, Sara Cocblack

The Commissioner of the National Commission for Social Action (NaCSA), Abu Bockarie Kokofele has said that his Commission through the World Bank funded Social Safety Net Programme will reach over Seventy thousand vulnerable households countrywide. He made this statement during the World Bank Mission wrap-up meeting on Tuesday, 2nd April, 2019 held at the Ministry of Development and Planning Conference Hall, Tower Hill, Freetown.

The Social Safety Net Programme, Commissioner Abu Bockarie Kokofele revealed, is one of the biggest projects in his Commission, aiming at providing unconditional cash transfer to the extreme poor. The Programme, the Commissioner noted has provided unconditional cash transfer to 28,500 beneficiaries households in ten districts. With the additional funding of Thirty Million United States Dollars from the World Bank, he confirmed that the programme will now be extended to the other unserved districts. This, he affirmed will target about 35,000 new entry households; thus making for over 70,000 beneficiary households in the entire country by the end of the programme. Commissioner Kokofele further outlined the impact of the project on the lives of the beneficiaries especially in relations to education, health, agriculture, to name a few. These, he noted have been significant.

The National Coordinator of the Sierra Leone Association of Non-Governmental Organizations (SLANGO), Shellac Davies registered her satisfaction over the Social Safety Net Programme and that of the National Social Protection Secretariat for being able to address most of the challenges and issues of concern in the programme implementation. Madam Shellac Davies described the Social Safety Net Programme as “a positive peace building tool that generates peace in the communities”. Noting that the Project outcomes are connected to peace including economic diversifications and equality as well as in the building of a healthier economic envi-

These, she noted are qualities that are linked to sustainable development.

Representing the donor community, the UNICEF Country Representative, Mariam Abdu spoke of her involvement in Safety Net Programme far back in 2013 before her current assignment with UNICEF. She commended the Programme for being able to continue its service without any major alarm. The Programme Grievance Redress Mechanism and the involvement of the Anti-Corruption Commission in all payment process, she noted has added value and credence to the process. She pledged UNICEF’s continuing commitment in working with the Social Safety Net Programme to ensure that none is left behind.

Findings of the Mission were presented by the World Bank Task Team Leader, Sarra Cocblack, while contributions from stakeholders including the Minister of Basic and Senior Secondary Schools, Alpha Timbo and the Deputy Minister of Health and Sanitation, Dr. Sandi among others formed part of the meeting.

It is but worthy to note that NaCSA's Social Protection Programme is one of the approaches use to address vulnerabilities and shocks of poverty that affect people. It started in 2011 against the backdrop of several episodes of unfortunate events ranging from the 11-year civil conflict, and recently to the outbreak of the deadly Ebola epidemic and the natural disasters of flooding that led to widespread devastation, loss of many lives, and by extension increased levels of poverty in the country.



Former Minister of Basic and Senior Secondary Schools and the Deputy Minister of Health and Sanitation at the World Bank Mission Wrap-up meeting at Ministry of Development and planning, Tower Hills



NACSA ENGAGES NEWLY RECRUITED FIELD STAFF



Cross section of stakeholders forming the high table during the MYRADA Training in Kenema

With the aim to jointly review the performance and status of selected old and new Self Help-Affinity Groups (SAG), field test the simplified tool as well as to build the capacity of newly recruited field staff on the formation and strengthening of SAGs, the National Commission for Social Action (NaCSA) through its Sierra Leone Community Driven Development (SLCDD II) Project, codename GIETRENK, has concluded a ten-day training of trainers workshop for its newly recruited field staff - Regional Coordinators, District Coordinators, Hub Base Specialists and Community Base Specialists from across the country in Kenema City.

The SLCDD II (GIETRENK) Project which is funded by the Islamic Development Bank and the Government of Sierra Leone is implemented in seven chiefdoms, (BKM, Mange, Konike, Kolifa Magbang, Ribbi, Bagruwa and Lower Bambara in four districts (Port Loko, Tonkolili, Moyamba and Kenema).

In his key note address, the Senior Director of Programmes at NaCSA, Mr. Mohamed Rashid Bah reiterated the importance of NaCSA existence which is to reduce poverty among the rural poor in the country. He admonished participants to take the ten day training seriously, noting that they would be expected to cascade it to the various SAGs in their respective communities.

The Senior Director further revealed that after such investment, it is the expectation of the Commission to see towns and villages in the seven growth poles being transformed into modern cities when the project would have been fully implemented and completed.

The workshop, he noted was conducted to empower the SAG Members and because of this, he encouraged the field staff to be considerate in their dealings with especially those who are lagging behind so that they can catch up with the speed of the other excelling ones across the country. Senior Director Bah ended by describing poverty 'as very dynamic and complex' purporting that different people would interpret it in their own ways, depending on their environments and circumstances. Poverty, he said is not just the lack of money but goes beyond that.

Welcoming participants to the training, the Host Paramount chief of Nongowa Chiefdom who doubles as NaCSA Board member, PC Sidique Kapuwa on behalf of his colleague paramount chiefs in Kenema district, expressed delight to host the team which includes the MYRADA consultants from India and the participating NaCSA staff, whom he noted were drawn from across the country.

He commended the works of NaCSA in the country and called on government to continue its support to NaCSA so that the ordinary man in the hard to reach areas will continue to feel the presence of government.

On behalf of the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs, the Assistant Director representing the Ministry in Kenema, Md. Alice Koroma, commended NaCSA for its collaboration with her ministry in the implementation of its sub projects. The effort of NaCSA in addressing poverty among the poorest of the poor, she said makes NaCSA unique and very relevant.

In her response, and on behalf of her colleagues consultants, the MYRADA Chief Finance Officer, Chandra Singh thanked the government of Sierra Leone through NaCSA for accepting the concept of Self Help-Affinity (SAG), which she noted will help raise the poorest of the poor from their present conditions to a better state within the nearest future as long as they follow the prescribed rules and guidelines of the SAG concept.

The Self-Help Affinity Group (SAG) is a concept borrowed from India which brings together about 18 to 20 community women of like minds sharing the same interest. These women are mostly petty traders or small scale farmers that meet regularly (mostly once in every week) and contribute towards their personal savings in every meeting. However, as part of the capacity-building component in the project's deliverable, it is highly recommended that financial management training be conducted on a routine basis, especially for Book Writers, which would guide them on their daily routines.

The training which was held at the Kenema Youth Centre, started from Thursday, 24th October continued till Friday, 1st November 2019 and is expected to enable NaCSA District staff to provide further coaching and supervision of the work of book writers.

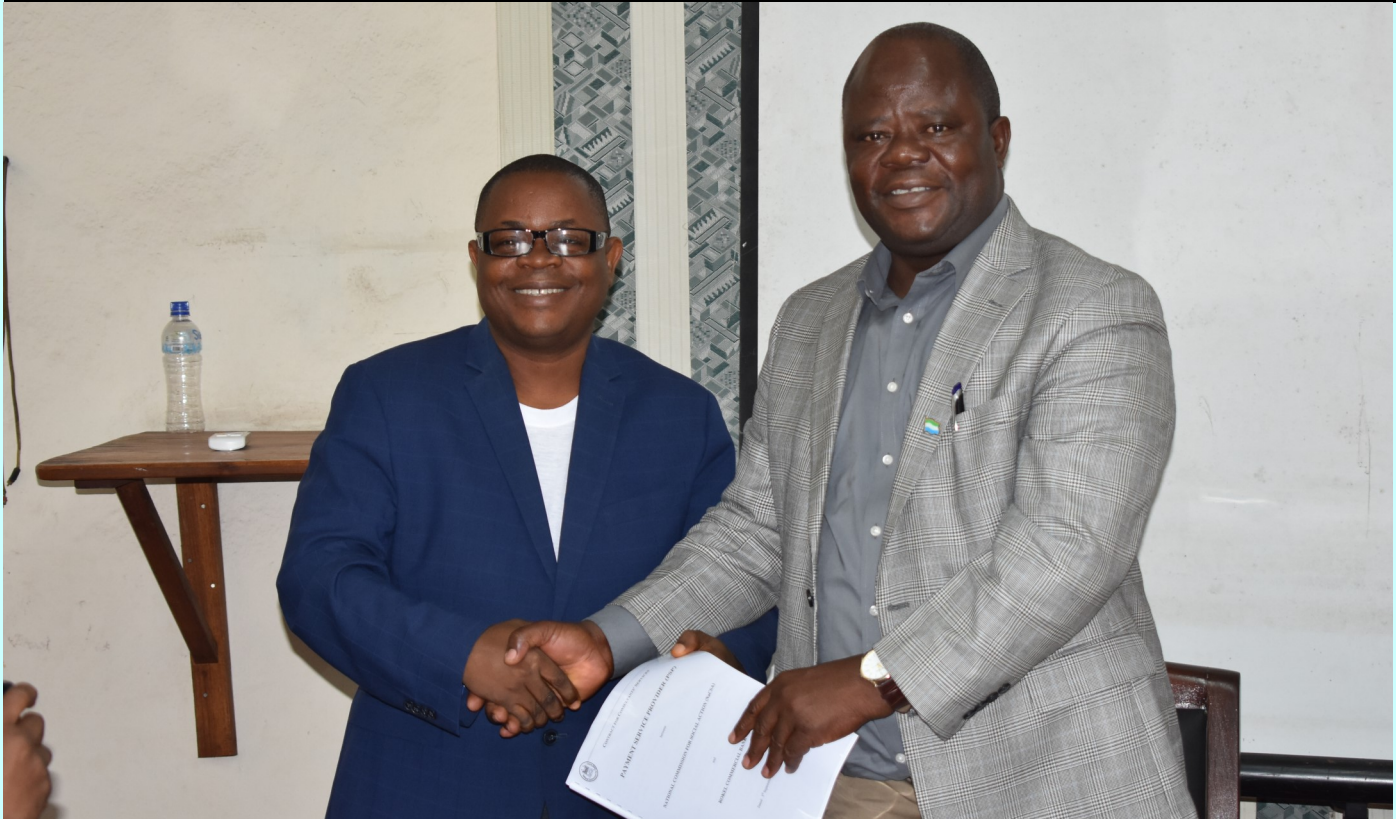
“they would be expected to cascade it to the various SAGs in their respective communities”.



Cross section of NaCSA newly recruited field staff serving as trainees during the MYRADA Training in Kenema



NACSA ENGAGES ROKEL COMMERCIAL BANK AS PAYMENT SERVICE



NaCSA Commissioner Abu Bockarie Kokofele congratulating the Deputy Managing Director of Rokel Commercial Bank Mr. Emmanuel Borbor

As the implementing agency responsible for delivering development related initiatives and programmes nationwide, the National Commissioner for Social Action, NaCSA and the Rokel Commercial Bank, one of the leading banks in the country have entered into an agreement to provide support in the implementation of the Social Safety Net Programme in the payment of cash to beneficiaries of the programme during its usual quarterly payments.

In a brief statement to commence the signing ceremony, the Deputy Commissioner of NaCSA Dr. Hannah Isata Max- Kyne said, amongst the three competing institutions, Rokel Commercial Bank rose to be the most responsive bidders, thereby making it the selected service provider. This, she said will serve as test run, noting that it is the first time NaCSA is working with the bank to deliver such exercise. Dr. Hannah Isata Max- Kyne further described it as an opportunity for the bank to prove to the commission that they made the right choice. “The successful performance of this first assignment will go a long way to determine the Commission’s relationship with your institution. Whether we should continue to work with you or not on this or other programs”, she encouraged the bank while commending them for their outstanding performance in the past years.

The Commissioner of NaCSA Abu Bockarie Kokofele in delivering his statement said, NaCSA has a five year financing agreement period with the World Bank which runs on to 2023 to deliver Social Safety Net to the poorest of the poor in rural deprived areas across the country. Commissioner Kokofele continued to say that the five year project has not yet started but will commence soon as the commission is able to close the last cash transfer project with the upcoming payment which Rokel Commercial Bank is about to undertake. He urged the bank to be more effective and efficient in discharging their duties.

Commissioner Kokofele assured the team from Rokel Commercial Bank that once this process is done in a manner in which all the players are satisfied,



Rokel Commercial Bank Headquarters at Siaka Stevens Street in Freetown

then it will be needless to search for another service provider for the next phase of the project. Commissioner Abu Backarie Kokofele stressed the need for diligence in delivering on this contract, which he noted is very important to both parties. He assured them of his support pointing out that his doors are ever opened to receive their inputs and they should feel free to knock on his doors at any given time should there be anything to address.

Representing The World Bank, Andrea Martin encouraged the team from Rokel Commercial Bank for a quick, timely delivery and precise payment to all the beneficiaries, noting their delight as a team with the whole process while calling on NaCSA to continue its good working relationship with the World Bank.

On behalf of the Bank, the Deputy Managing Director of Rokel Commercial Bank Emmanuel Borbor expressed gratitude to NaCSA and the World Bank for

bestowing upon them with the opportunity and privilege to serve as service provider for the Social Safety Net Project. Mr. Borbor assured NaCSA and the World Bank of their strength in cash transfers. He disclosed that Rokel Commercial Bank has come a long way and they will not gamble their integrity for any other thing. He promised that the Bank will prove to NaCSA that, it has made no mistake to choose them in delivering a good and quality service to the beneficiaries.

Rokel Commercial Bank (formerly Barclays Bank) was established in 1917 and was incorporated locally and renamed Barclays Bank of Sierra Leone Limited in 1971 with 25% shares owned by Sierra Leoneans and 75% Barclays Bank International. It was renamed Rokel Commercial Bank (Sierra Leone) Limited by Government of Sierra Leone on the 17th September 1999.

“Rokel” is the name of the longest river in Sierra Leone and empties into the Atlantic Ocean, depicting the greatness of the Bank as a gateway to Banking in Sierra Leone.



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