



GOVERNMENT OF SIERRA LEONE  
**NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SOCIAL ACTION**  
(NaCSA)



# REPORT ON IEC ACTIVITIES FOR THE FIRST PAYMENT OF COVID-19 EP FET PO/SSN BENEFICIARIES

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1.0 Introduction



On the 17<sup>th</sup> February, 2021, the National Commission for Social Action (NaCSA) officially announced the commencement of the first payment of the Covid-19 Ep Fet Po/Social Safety Net beneficiaries in Kailahun, Kono, Kenema and the Western Area (Urban and Rural). This follows months after the completion targeting and enrollment of beneficiaries across the sixteen (16) districts in Sierra Leone.

Considering the importance of adhering to all Covid-19 Precautionary measures, the beneficiaries in the Western Area were clustered into points of payments. Each point of payment should be ready to accommodate more than two Hundred beneficiaries with strict adherence to social distancing, use of face mask and washing of the hands. Whilst the western Rural maintains the traditional method of payment<sup>1</sup>. Seven (7)<sup>2</sup> points of payment were established, each with designated officer (s) from NaCSA, the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), Rokel Commercial

<sup>1</sup> Beneficiaries were paid at places where they were targeting and enrolled.

<sup>2</sup> National stadium, Wellington Community Centre, Maffa Field-Lumley, Attouga Mini stadium, Calaba Town Police station, Targrin and Approved School.

Bank and representatives from National Commission for Persons with Disability and Sierra Leone Union on Disability Issues.

As its traditional role, the Information, Education and Communication Unit took the lead in information dissemination, beneficiary engagement on processes and procedures, leading and facilitating the dissemination of behavioral change messages and recordings of feedback and documentary evidence.

The IEC activities cover three stages:

- Pre- (Before payment)
- During and
- Post (After payment)

At each of these stages, all activities were relevant to achieving the IEC objectives. There were conscious and careful efforts from the team<sup>3</sup>

## 1.1 Overall Objective of IEC Activities

The overall objective of IEC activities during the first payment is to provide accurate, timely and convincing information on processes and procedures of payments, Points of Payment, categories of beneficiaries, coverage areas, point of payment, and corruption messages. whilst ensuring that the key messages on Behavioral Change are communicated at all point of payments, the IEC coordinate information flow between NaCSA and partners<sup>4</sup> and ensure relationships are built and maintained with focus on increasing public knowledge and brand identity of the Covid-19 Ep Fet Po/SSN Program.

## 2.0 Activities/Accomplishments

### 2.1 IEC Methodologies before Commencement of Payment

There were calculated and well-organized activities before the commencement of payment in various district. These activities were selected to prevent grievances and inform beneficiaries and the public on payment commencement, their responsibilities, corruption messages and other relevant communications. The following were carried out before the commencement of payment:

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<sup>3</sup> Idris Turay, Director NSPS, PM SSN – Joseph Kpakiwa, GRM Officer, Abraham G, Kaillie, M and E officer – Harold Koroma, system Specialist, Community Development Specialists and all District Coordinators and Staff.

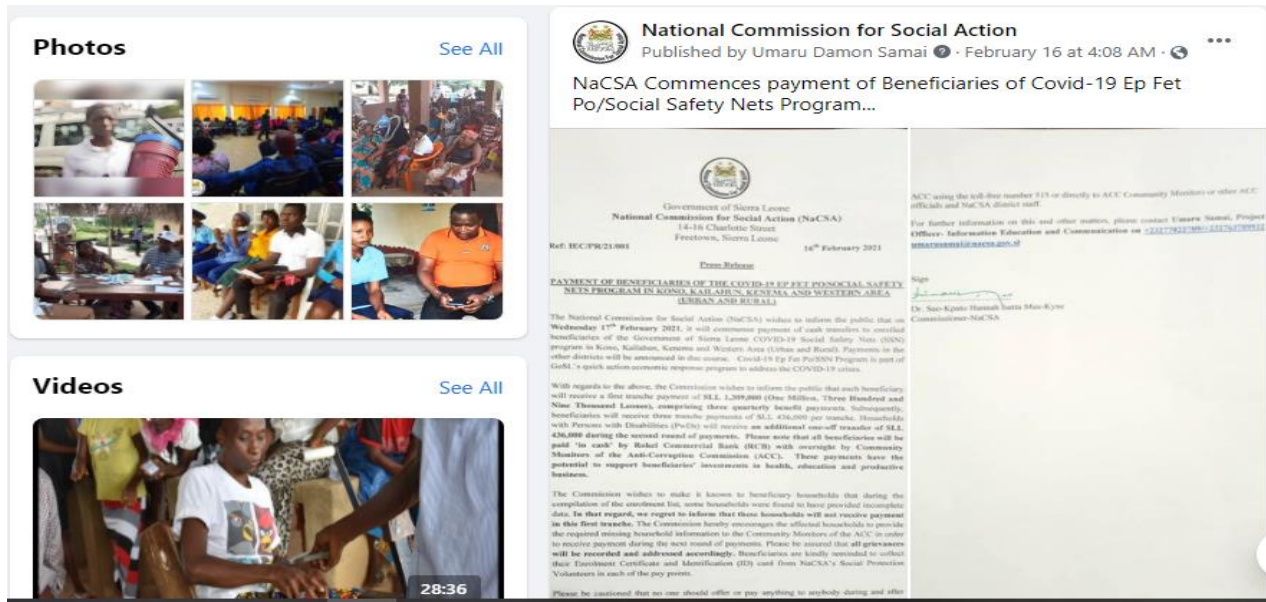
<sup>4</sup> ACC, SLUDi, NCPD, CICs Etc.

a. **Develop and share key messages on Covid-19 Ep Fet Po/SSN:** During the community Validation, Targeting and Enrollment, key messages were developed to target beneficiaries and beneficiaries' communities. These messages were reviewed to target the first payment of beneficiaries. It was share Regional Coordinators to be shared with District Coordinators.

(<file:///C:/Users/Dell/Desktop/NaCSA%202021/KEY%20MESSAGES%20ON%20COVID-19%20EP%20FET%20POSSN%201st%20Payment.pdf>) [KEY MESSAGES ON COVID-19](#)

The image displays four informational posters related to COVID-19 relief payments. The first poster, titled 'KEY MESSAGES TO COVID-19 EP FET PO/SSN BENEFICIARIES DURING PAYMENTS', provides instructions on how to receive payments and offers communication tips. The second poster, 'IDENTIFICATION AND SELECTION PROCESS', details the steps from identification to payment, including a section on 'PAYMENT PROCESS AND PROCEDURES' and 'BENEFIT SIZE'. The third poster, 'COMPLAINT HANDLING', includes a 'BEHAVIORAL CHANGE MESSAGES' section with a banner that reads 'WAE AR TAKE MI EP FET PO' MONI' and lists COVID-19 key messages. The fourth poster, 'PROTECT YOURSELF AND OTHERS FROM CORONAVIRUS', features illustrations of people practicing hygiene and lists signs and symptoms of coronavirus: Fever, Tiredness, and Cough.

[EP FET POSSN 1st Payment.pdf](#)

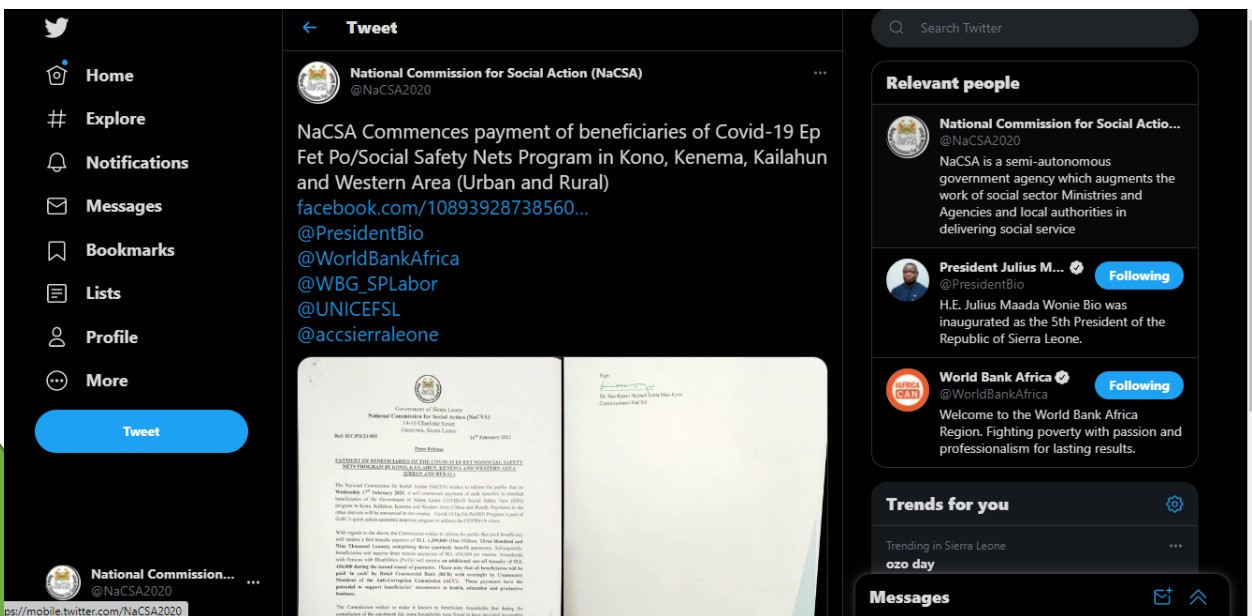
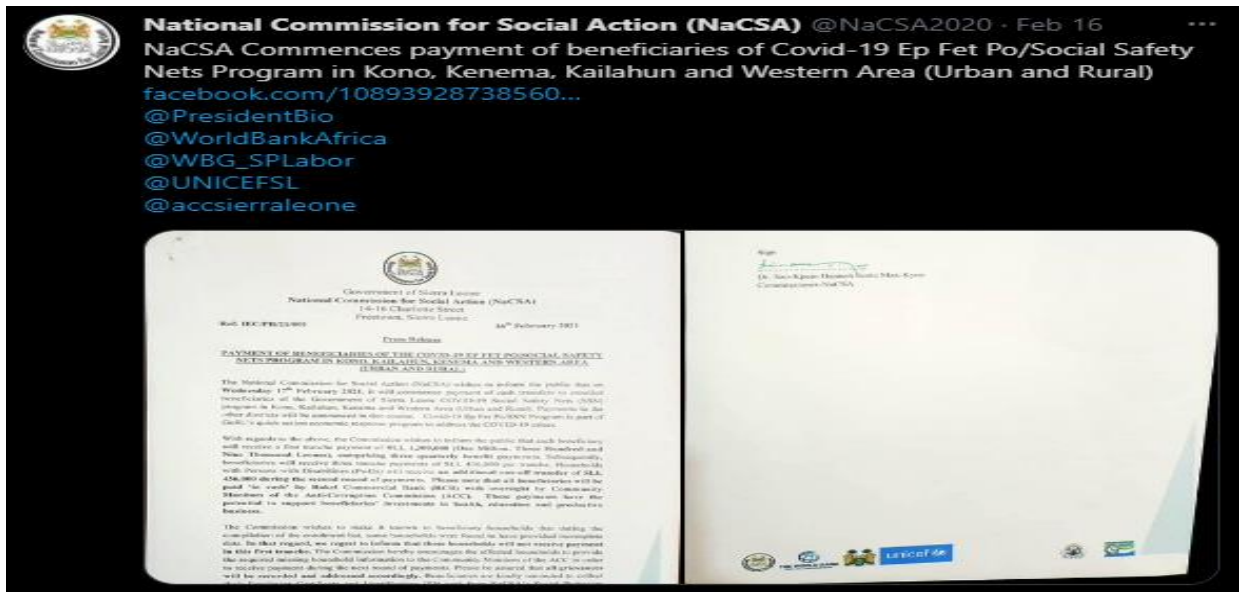


- b. **Engagement with Partners:** Before the announcement of date for payment, with support from the Director- NSPS and PM SSN, the IEC and Western Area District Coordinator held a meeting with the National Commission for Persons with Disability (NCPD)<sup>5</sup> and the Sierra Leone Union on Disability Issues (SLUDI)<sup>6</sup>. The main purpose of the meeting was to map out key areas of intervention and to get tips from NCPD and SLUDI relating communicating with PWDs. Both NCPD and SLUDI demonstrated commitment in ensuring that information reaches their various constituents. There was also another meeting between NaCSA, RCB and ACC to access the readiness of the team for payment. In this meeting the display of the behavioral change poster at each point of payments was emphasized to partners.
- c. **Publication of a Press Release:** As part of it pre -payment activities, the IEC unit drafted a press release announcing the commencement of payments. This PR received inputs from the World Bank team and NaCSA/NSPS. It was later approved by the Commissioner and shared widely across all district offices in the targeted areas and on social media platforms<sup>7</sup>. This increases public knowledge on payment and hence a massive turn out at payment of payment.

<sup>5</sup> The National Commission for Persons with Disability (NCPD) was established in 2012 as provided for in Section (2) of the Persons with Disability Act 2011.

<sup>6</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Facebook, twitter, WhatsApp and LinkedIn



d. **Radio and Television Discussions:** Upon publication of the Press Release, the IEC unit received five invites from five different radio stations<sup>8</sup>. These invites were granted on the 16<sup>th</sup> of February 2021, this is because it is only after the publication of the PR, the IEC activated level 2<sup>9</sup> of its engagement strategy. These discussions were not paid airtime session.

<sup>8</sup> Radio mount areole 107.3, sky radio, Freedom radio 90.1, radio democracy 98.1 and Justice FM 95.3

<sup>9</sup> The commencement of official external communication with the media, partners and other institutions

- e. **Media relations:** The importance of an effective media relations in increasing public knowledge cannot be overemphasized. Been conscious of the obvious, the IEC unit engaged journalists from major radio stations in the Western Area. The objective was to provide more information to the journalists and make clarification on certain matters. Seven journalists were in attendance and we received a satisfactory coverage on payment day.
- f. **Newspaper Publication:** There were ten newspaper publication on the commencement of the Covid-19 Ep Fet Po/SSN including Office of the President.

## 2.2 Activities and Accomplishment During payment



*One of the beneficiaries counting her benefits*

- a. **Radio Discussions:** During payments in Kenema, Kono, Kailahun and Western Area (Rural and Urban), the IEC unit used an inclusive approach in information dissemination. The Programme Manager- SSN was in Kono, the Programme Manager-IEC was also in Kenema and Kailahun whilst PO-IEC was in Western Area, each of the personnel worked with the Regional, District Coordinators and other district staff to host radio discussions and community engagement on payment processes and procedures and “how to use the benefit positively” Eighteen (18) paid radio discussions were held in Kenema, Kono, Kailahun and Western Area (Urban and Rural). Recordings of these discussions have been archived in appropriate formats submitted to NaCSA’s resource center for reference.



- b. Behavioral Change Messages:** Through the Regional Coordinators, posters on behavioral change messages were disseminated across the targeted districts.

No of Printed Posters	Districts/Region	Total No of Payment Locations	Total No of payment locations with BC posters presented/walked through	No of Team
1,100	Western Area (Rural)	7	7	5
	Western Area (Urban)	13	13	5
	Kono District	27	27	4
	Kailahun District	42	42	4
	Kenema District	51	51	7

Poster Distribution			
Name	Designation	Quantity	Contact
Mohamed Abdulai	CBF Bo Office	A3 – 75	078662908
Moses M. Bassie	Regional Coordinator- South	A3- 250	078420296
Moriba Foday	Regional Coordinator – Northwest	A3- 400	076640523
Tejan Kokofele	Received on Behalf of Regional Coordinator East	A3- 250	
Moriba Foday	Regional Coordinator – Northwest	A3-50 for Western Area	076640523

Poster Available At Headquarter			
Name	Designation	Quantity	Contact
Umaru Samai	PO-IEC	75	077022709

No	Name	Type	Qty	Phone	Sign
1	Richard Akulu	A3	75	078 410296	[Signature]
2	Nancy M. Pooze	A3	250	078 410296	[Signature]
3	Monika Fodoy	A3	400 (N/A)	078 410296	[Signature]
4	Aminata	Shawl	50 (N/A)	078 410296	[Signature]
5	Monika Fodoy	A3			[Signature]

## WAE AR TAKE MI 'EP FET PO' MONI



**AR GO: DU GUD BIZNES**



**SOPOT MI DISABUL FAMBUL**



**KER MI OR MI PIKIN NA  
OSPITAL WAE WI SIK**



**BAI GUD EAT FO DI FAMBUL DEM**



**SOPOT MI PIKIN  
DEM SKUL BIZNES**



**KIP SOM MONI FO  
TUMARA BAMBAL**



**NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SOCIAL ACTION (NaCSA)**

**COVID-19 EP FET PO - SOCIAL SAFETY NET PROJECT (SSN)**

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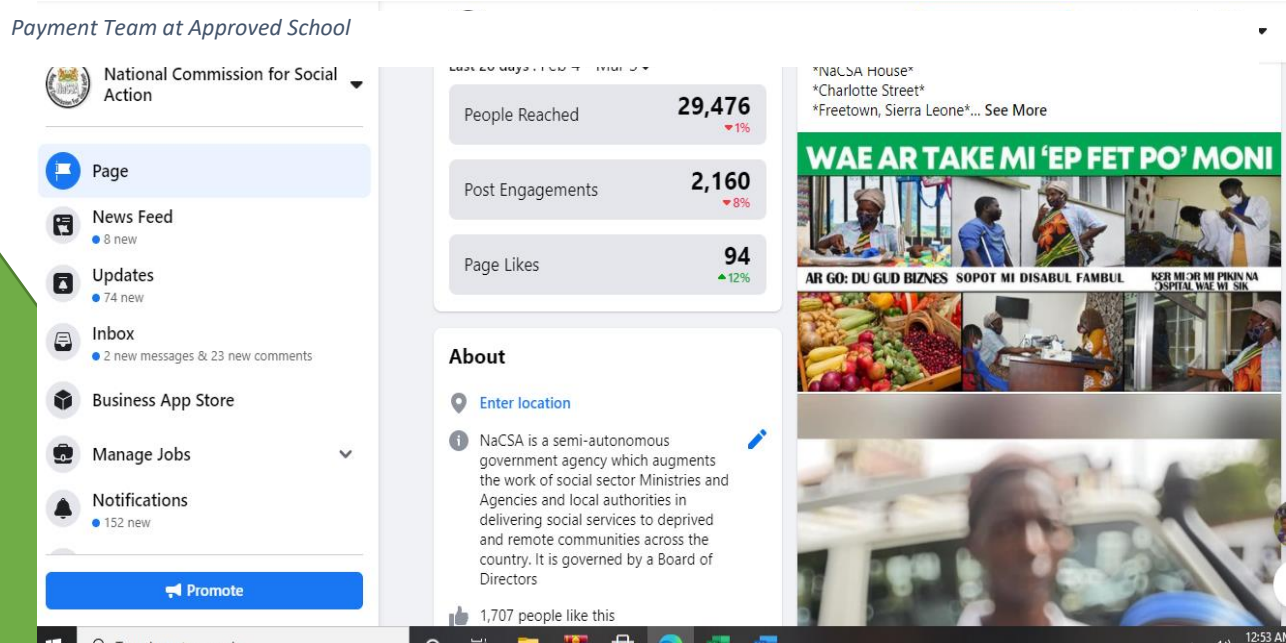
FOR COMPLAINTS ON CORRUPTION, OR OTHER MATTERS,  
PLEASE CONTACT NaCSA DISTRICT STAFF,  
ACC COMMUNITY MONITORS OR CALL ACC TOLL FREE AT

**515**



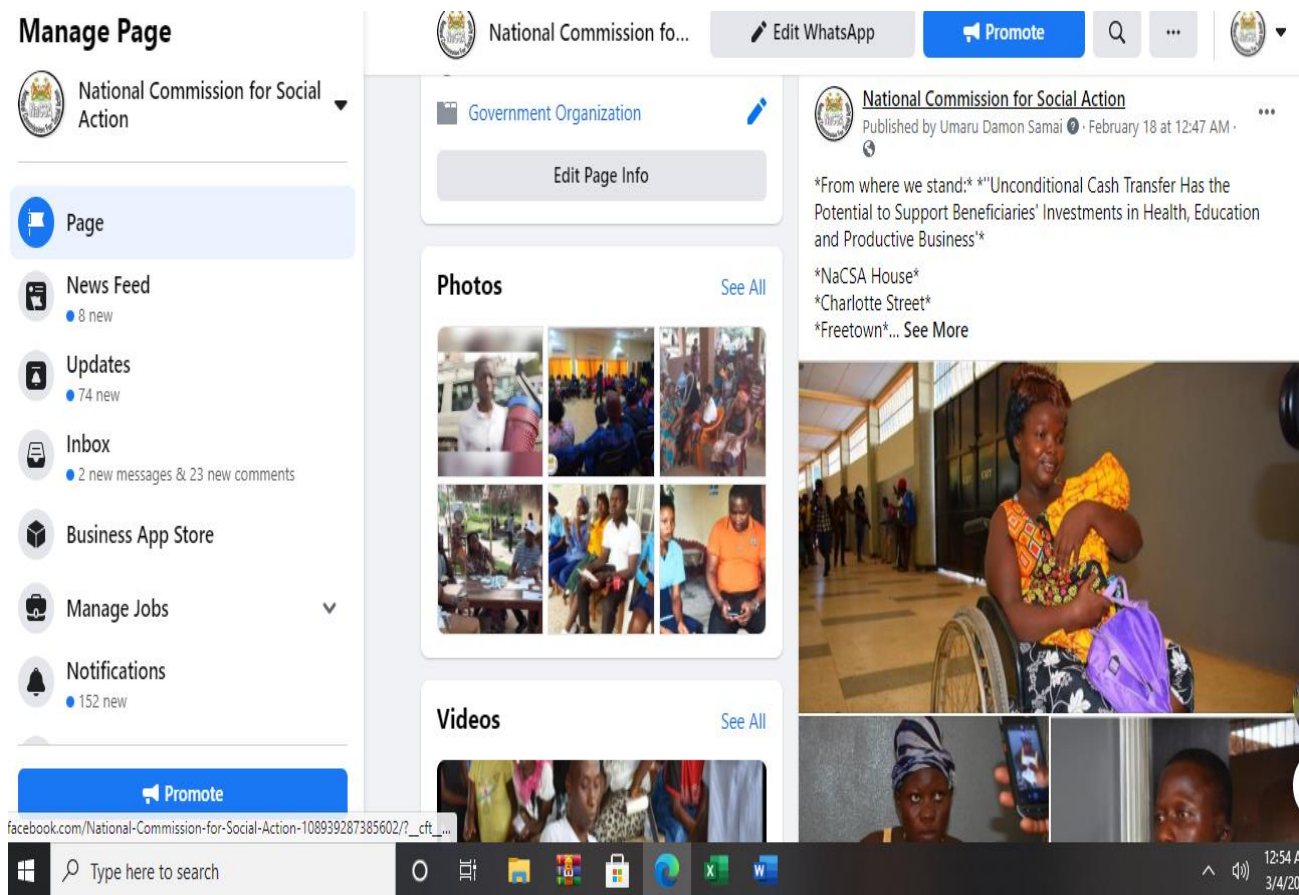
**Direct Communication using mega Phones and other available means:** Though the strategy did not highlight the use of Meg phones, but the IEC unit visited all Points of Payment (PoPs) using mega-phones to amplify key messages on payment processes. This was particularly successful in the Western Area.

- c. **Coordination of Journalists:** In all districts, ten journalists were mobilized to provide coverage on the payment. These efforts were supported by the Directorate of Communications at Office of the President, the Press Secretary and Presidential Spokesman and the Government’s Ministry of Information and Communications, who conducted interviews with beneficiaries and NaCSA staff.
- d. **Publication of News Article and Human-Interest Stories<sup>10</sup>:** The unit drafted and published news story on the payments and Human-Interest story. These stories were published on all social media platforms and major newspapers. <sup>11</sup> There are still other human-interest stories that have not been published.



<sup>10</sup> [\(6\) National Commission for Social Action | Facebook](#)

<sup>11</sup> [Sierra Leone gives thousands more Covid19 relief package | Politico SL](#)



- e. **Conduct Interviews and take photos:** In each of the PoPs, IEC in collaboration with the Ministry of Information and Communications conducted interviews of beneficiaries and passer-by. Photos of payment sessions have been archived accordingly.

### 3.0 Activities and Accomplishments After Payment

3.1 **Radio Discussions:** There were radio discussions after payment to target beneficiaries, the media and other public. Information dissemination on activities goes beyond targeting beneficiaries to documentary footages, interviews, testimonies and feedback from beneficiary communities. In each of the districts, at least one radio station was targeted with repeat broadcast in each of the district. The unit has carefully recorded the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) as attached in Annex A. The beneficiaries and members of the public contributed through phone-in and text messages. Responses were recorded and clarifications on key issues were done.

3.2 **Beneficiary Interviews:** Beneficiaries were interviewed on what they make up of the payment and areas that need improvements. These beneficiaries were very optimistic

that the benefit will help increase their businesses and positioned them to respond to family needs were possible.

**3.3 Meeting with Aggrieved Persons with Disability:** After the payment in the Western Area (Urban and Rural), there were some PwDs who were not satisfied with payments and matched to NaCSA's premise demonstrating. With the help of the Deputy Commissioner – Jimmy Batilo Songa, the Director- National Social Protection Secretariate – Idris Turay and other staff including the team in Western Area district office. The aggrieved parties were addressed and a clear message on payment and possible extension of targeting beneficiaries. The situation was settled and appropriate actions were taken.



*Deputy Commissioner -Jimmy Batilo Songa  
Addressing the aggrieved party*



*Idris Turay -  
Director - NSPS*



#### 4.0 Observation

1. There was huge turnout of beneficiaries to collect their benefits.
2. The Behavioral change posters were displayed and communicated before payment. This was same across all point of payments.
3. Some Potential beneficiaries of the Emergency Cash Transfer (ECT II) were also at the Points of Payment in the Western Area thinking that they were among the target groups.
4. Feedback from beneficiaries during the radio discussions and interviews show that there is an understanding of the project processes and procedures among the public including corruption messages.
5. Some people are still sending SMS to members of the public seeking for money on the claim that they will be beneficiaries of the Cash transfer.
6. The dissemination of key messages and the Behavioral change messages were well communicated
7. The direct involvement of National Commission for Persons with Disability (NCPD) and the Sierra Leone Union on Disability Issues (SLUDi) makes it easy to contact and communicate with PwDS.
8. There were individuals who were not targeted but were at the points of payments claiming to have been targeted and enrolled.
9. There were lack of security presence at some Points of Payments
10. Though not all beneficiaries have access to radio, radio have significant impact in information dissemination. Every constituent within the beneficiary circle have at least one opinion leader who is familiar with radio and update accordingly.
11. For external public and for recording the successes of the project, Television discussions provides a trusted platform. In sierra Leone, most of the radio, especially community radio stations do not broadcast online, though there

#### 5.0 Lessons Learnt

- Earlier sensitization increases public and beneficiary's knowledge and understanding of payment processes and procedures, Point of Payments, targeting procedures and point of contact from NaCSA in instances of enquiries relating to procedures.

- The Inclusion of partners, (SLUDI, NCPD) and NaCSA staff (NSPS, RCs, DCs and other district Staff) in the implementation of the IEC strategy helped in the quick spread of a well-coordinated information across the board.
- In the Western Area, the use of Mega-phone and PA systems have been proven to be effective and efficient in delivery messages especially when there is quick change in procedures.



#### 6.0 Challenges

- The number of approved radio slots makes it difficult to reach more people and communities.



## 7.0 Photo Gallery







## 7.1 Frequently Asked Questions

### **Frequently Asked Questions during Media Discussion and Community Engagement**

**Introduction** the Project Officer – Information, Education and Communications (PO-IEC) has engaged various media (radio, TV and social media) to share information and gather feedback from the beneficiaries and beneficiaries’ communities of the Covid-19 Ep Fet Po/SSN. Media Discussion and Community engagement have been some of the IEC methodologies. During these discussions, the following questions were frequently asked:

1. What is Covid-19 Ep Fet Po/SSN?
  - With finance from the Government of Sierra Leone and the World Bank; Covid-19 Ep Fet Po is a poverty alleviation programme that provides income support to extremely poor households and vulnerable people including Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) in all 16 districts of the country. Beneficiaries are enrolled in the program for about a year before exiting.
  - An Extremely poor household is one that cannot afford basic needs such as daily and nutritious food, shelter, healthcare and educational services.
  - Kindly note that the Covid-19 Ep Fet Po/SSN is different from the Covid-19 Emergency Cash Transfer (Covid-19 ECT). The Covid-19 ECT focuses on vulnerable households with informal sector workers that have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The COVID-19 ECT provides a one-time payment to 29,000 vulnerable households with informal sector workers. The pilot project covers the five-regional headquarters of Freetown, Bo, Kenema, Makeni, and Port Loko.
  
2. I am a Sierra Leonean; how can I be a beneficiary of the Covid-19 Ep Fet Po/SSN?

NaCSA and its partners are consciously using the following agreed identification and selection process to reach the right people

  - Statistics Sierra Leone data to select locations within each district where poverty is highest,
  - Community consultation to determine the poorest among the poor within each community.
  - Interview of potential beneficiaries from the prelists to assess vulnerability with a vulnerability score.
  
3. In your selection of beneficiaries, what are the criteria?
  - ✓ Extremely poor households
  - ✓ Sierra Leonean nationality with minimum one-year residency within the community;
  - ✓ Refugee with minimum one-year residency within the community
  - ✓ Ep Fet Po gives priority to extremely poor households with PWD
  - ✓ In urban areas prelists of PWDs are obtained from the National Commission for Persons with Disability.
  - ✓ The most responsible female head of the household shall be the principal recipient receiving the benefits on behalf of the household. This is because she is usually the person

responsible for household spending and making decisions related to children's health and education.

What is the size of the benefit?

The first payment will be a transfer of Le 1,309,000. After that there will be 3 payments of Le 436,000 which will be provide quarterly (about every 3 months)

5. After receiving this money, are we going to pay back and what are we to do with it?

The money you will be receiving should ideally be used for the following: household feeding with healthy and good quality food, healthcare for the family especially PWDs, Support the education of the children, Small-scale business. You are not expected to pay back. This is unconditional Cash Transfer. In addition to the cash transfers, beneficiaries will also receive behavioural change messages on health and nutrition, financial literacy, early childhood development and sexual and gender-based violence through radio and television discussions and distributed posters as well as other channels. These behavioural change messages are to further develop human capital within communities.

6. What happens if I am not around to collect my benefit?

During registration, we encourage all beneficiary household heads to nominate a member of their households as an alternate beneficiary. The Alternate beneficiary will serve as a substitute in the unfortunate instances of death or severe sickness causing the main beneficiary to be absent at payment day.

Please be cautioned not to pay bribe and for complaint either for corruption or other matters, kindly contact ACC toll free line 515 or ACC Community monitors.

## 7.2 FAQs On the First Payments of Covid-19 Ep Fet Po/Social Safety Net Program in Kono, Kenema, Kailahun and Western Area (Urban and Rural)

1. How were the beneficiaries selected? In July 2020, NaCSA and its partners have identified, verified and enrolled 35,000 (Thirty-five Thousand) beneficiaries across the sixteen districts in the country. The process was highly transparent, participatory and monitored by various Community Identification Committees.
  - I. First, we used national statistics data to select locations where poverty is highest,
  - II. second is going to those selected locations to consult on who the communities believe to be the poorest households

- III. Finally, an interview using objective questions and formula to check the level of poverty of the household identified by the community, this is called the proxy-means testing (PMT).
  - IV. Kindly note that only persons who were targeted and enrolled will receive the benefit.
2. What should the beneficiaries do with the money? The messages on the posters were communicated to beneficiaries as described in the poster below.

# WAE AR TAKE MI 'EP FET PO' MONI



**AR GO: DU GUD BIZNES**



**SOPOT MI DISABUL FAMBUL**



**KER MI OR MI PIKIN NA  
OSPITAL WAE WI SIK**



**BAI GUD EAT FO DI FAMBUL DEM**



**SOPOT MI PIKIN  
DEM SKUL BIZNES**



**KIP SOM MONI FO  
TUMARA BAMBAL**

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**COVID-19 EP FET PO -SOCIAL SAFETY NET PROJECT (SSN)**

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FOR COMPLAINTS ON CORRUPTION OR OTHER MATTERS,  
PLEASE CONTACT NaCSA DISTRICT STAFF,  
ACC COMMUNITY MONITORS OR CALL ACC TOLL FREE AT **515**

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



- 3. When will payments in the next districts commence? Date for the next payments in other district will be announced very soon and we ask all beneficiaries and beneficiaries community to be patient as planning are ongoing to start payment in the other districts.
- 4. How many districts are you covering: the Covid-19 Ep Fet Po/SSN program covers the sixteen districts in Sierra Leone.

4. What is Covid-19 Ep Fet Po/SSN?

- With finance from the Government of Sierra Leone and the World Bank; Covid-19 Ep Fet Po is a poverty alleviation programme that provides income support to extremely poor households and vulnerable people including Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) in all 16 districts of the country. Beneficiaries are enrolled in the program for about a year before exiting.
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5. Some of us with slip were not paid, why? Those with slip are potential beneficiaries of the Covid-19 Emergency Cash Transfers (ECT II) a project funded by the government of Sierra Leone and the European Union. Potential beneficiaries have been verified in the only the capital of Sierra Leone. A total of 36,000 potential beneficiaries were verified and targeting, enrolment will be done later. The present payments only target the covid-19 ep fet po/SSN beneficiaries. The first payment will be a transfer of Le 1,309,000. After that there will be 3 payments of Le 436,000 which will be provide quarterly (about every 3 months)

Persons Contacted

Aminata Sheriff	RC East
Aminata Vandi	DC Kailahun
Sahr Kailie	DC Kono
Kotto Lansana	DC Kenema
Kaililu Foday	Head Production – Moa Radio
Sidikie Fofanah	Deputy Manager – Radio Mount Aureole
Chernor Bah	Head of Programs – Justice FM
Mohamed Yahyah	Stations Manager – Voice of Kono
Abdul CD Kamara	Station Manager- Radio Njaluhun

