



THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

Combining growth with equity for the poor

*Revised Version
December, 2017*

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ACRONYMS

Agenda for Prosperity	A4P
African Union	AU
Civil Society Organizations	CSO
Chief of Staff	COS
Community-Based Targeting	CBT
Chieftdom Social Protection Technical Committees	CSPTC
Community Based Organizations	CBO
District Councils	DC
Development Partners	DP
District Social Protection Technical Committee	DSPTC
Government of Sierra Leone	GoSL
Information Education & Communication	IEC
Information and communication technology	ICT
International Labor Organization	ILO
Ministries, Departments and Agencies	MDA
Millennium Development Goals	MDG
Ministry of Social Welfare Gender and Children Affairs	MSWGCA
Ministry of Labor and Social Security	MLSS
Monitoring & Evaluation	M&E
Ministry of Finance and Economic Development	MoFED
National Social Protection Secretariat	NSPS
National Social Protection Authority	NSPA
National Commission for Social Action	NaCSA
National Social Protection Board	NSPB
National Social Protection Technical Committee	NSPTC
National Social Security Insurance Trust	NASSIT
National Registration Commission	NRC
Non-governmental Organization	NGO
National Social Protection Policy	NSPP
People Living With Aids	PLWA
Public Works Programme	PWP
Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper	PRSP
Public Expenditure Tracking Survey	PETS
Social Safety Nets Project	SSNP
Standard Operating Procedures	SOP
Sustainable Development Goals	SDG
Social Protection	SP
Social Protection Registry for Integrated National Targeting	SPRINT
Statistics Sierra Leone	SSL
Technical Assistance	TA
United Nations	UN
United Kingdom	UK
United Nations Social Protection Floor	UN-SPF

Village Development SP Technical Committee
Village Development Committee

VDSPTC
VDC

FOREWORD BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

In the last few years, our country has embarked on remarkable economic growth and progress in the areas of health, education, infrastructure, food production and social safety nets. 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 the 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 social stability.

As a people, Sierra Leoneans have demonstrated resilience in the face of these challenges and emergencies. Government has designated social protection as one of its disaster response strategies to mitigate emergencies & disasters. It is our responsibility to put in place policies and strategies that are robust and responsive to new emergencies so that fewer Sierra Leoneans suffer from similar challenges in the future. It is also our hope to foster resilience to emergencies and a more inclusive development pathway for the country. This prompted the revision of the National Social Protection Policy

The National Social Protection Policy is consistent with our national aspirations of becoming a middle-income economy by the year 2035. It provides a framework for promoting social justice, equity and inclusive growth. It is a transformative tool for addressing poverty, unemployment, social and economic vulnerabilities, inequality and exclusion and other threats to sustainable development. While population growth will continue to be a determining factor for our economic, social and political progress, this Policy will harness available resources into investments in people, our most assets, to optimize our human capital potentials

In keeping with the aspiration of our people to graduate out of poverty, we will toil, remain steadfast, march in serried lines to strengthen coordination and implementation systems and implement the policy measures based on prioritization and progressive realization

I congratulate the Social Protection Inter-Agency Forum under the leadership of my chief of staff, the National Technical Steering committee for this initiative and revising the 2011 Social Protection Policy. There is no better legacy for my government than policies that bring hope and prosperity to the socially and

economically at risk group in our country. I also acknowledge the technical and financial support provided by our partners; the World Bank, UNICEF, USAID, DFID, IMF, UNDP and Concern Worldwide in the formulation and revision of the 2011 Social Protection Policy. This continues to strengthen our partnership in addressing risks and vulnerabilities. I therefore urge all MDAs to align their social protection initiatives and programmes with this policy

I am pleased to present the National Social Protection Policy to the people of Sierra Leone. I believe in every Sierra Leonean thirst for a better future that guarantees a life of dignity. The National Social Protection Policy provides the framework for empowering those that are constrained to quench their thirsts.

H.E. Dr. Ernest Bai Koroma
President of the Republic of Sierra Leone

PREFACE

The National Social Protection policy of Sierra Leone is an umbrella policy framework that embodies social and economic development agenda with the aim of reducing poverty and providing a life of dignity for our citizens. It articulates the policy priorities of government for the poor, vulnerable and at risk groups in our society

Social Protection is a multi- sectoral and multi-disciplinary strategy to poverty reduction that requires an agency for successful implementation. It is in this context that the Social Protection Steering Committee and later the Inter-Agency Forum; the coordinating agency for all social protection programmes and initiatives was mandated to formulate and revise the National Social Protection Policy with active participation and contribution of all stakeholders in both the public and private sectors at national, district and community levels. This policy is therefore conceived from national consultation and consensus

As Sierra Leone's population increases, so has the poverty gap by extension, which has necessitated government's concern for actions to address poverty issues in the country. The policy seeks to pursue enhanced reduction of inequality and inequity as well as provision of social services/incentives. This is important to promote human-centered approach to development to enhance investment in human and social capital. Development that focuses on provision of adequate health, education, nutrition and good governance among others is needed to promote inclusive growth, equality, security and a life of dignity.

In preparing this policy, nationwide consultations were conducted to cross pollinate and harvest ideas of all stakeholders through national and district workshops, focused group discussions at the community level, radio and television discussions. This approach enlisted assistance of a people centered policy with commitment of both the executive and legislative.

There are ongoing efforts, interventions supported by government, development partners and agencies in the social protection sector with the aim to cushion the effects of poverty on the poor and vulnerable constituents and put them on positive trajectory. These efforts while yielding results remained fragmented and not properly coordinated leading to duplication and waste of resources. More

achievements are possible with more deliberate, systematic, concerted and programmatic actions guided by an umbrella policy.

The policy sets the road map of social protection initiatives and complementary activities focus on helping the poor and households graduate out of poverty and building resilience to existing and emerging shocks, risks and vulnerabilities. It outlines Government efforts to tackle poverty and inequality across Sierra Leone. It builds on existing institutional and programmatic efforts of all organs of government and hopes to consolidate and harmonize on-going approaches, strategies systems and initiatives that will enhance tracking of performance indicators and targets. It focuses on enabling the country to achieve its commitments set in the Constitution and the poverty reduction strategies.

Government will continue to count on the support of all partners in the implementation of this policy. We hope to reverse the pervasive and persistent poverty and improve the living standards of our poor constituents. All levels of government with active participation of the private sector have the primary responsibility for the implementation of this policy. Thus, the policy invites government agencies, the private sector, Civil Society organizations and development partners to provide their fullest support within the context of the national development goals.

The policy revision benefitted largely from the guidance and technical expertise of the Inter-Agency Forum and the Technical Steering Committee. The financial and technical assistance provided by the World Bank and UNICEF is duly acknowledged

Hon. Dr. Mathew Teambo

Minister of Labor and Social Security

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The National Social Protection policy is prepared to demonstrate the commitment of the country to the effective mobilisation and efficient use of National Resources to improve the quality of life of Sierra Leonean citizens. It contains the background, rationale, definition, objectives, guiding principles, policy measures, coordination and implementation mechanisms to constitute social protection system. The policy has been developed using a participatory bottom-up approach. It is informed by insights from wide consultations with stakeholders and experts.

The policy draws its legitimacy from the 1991 constitution of Sierra Leone, which under the fundamental principles of state policy chapter 2 (sections 8 and 9) provides the basis for social protection in Sierra Leone and therefore domesticates the application of International agreement ratified by Sierra Leone. These include: The Universal Declaration of Human Rights which enshrines right to social security (1948); The African Charter on Human and People's Rights, Convention of the Rights of the Child and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child which advance social protection with the human rights approach (1981); UN and ILO conventions and vision 2035 which envisages 80% of people above the poverty line and equitable society in which social protection will be a great contributor.

For this policy, social protection is defined as:

All actions; public and private, taken in response to levels of vulnerability, risks and deprivation deemed by the state to be socially and economically unacceptable.

The goal of the policy is to establish a gender-sensitive and age-appropriate framework for protection of the most poor and vulnerable and to minimize risks of others sliding into poverty through a minimum social protection floor for all Sierra Leoneans citizens for a life of dignity

Policy objectives

To achieve this goal, the state shall pursue the following specific objectives:

- I. Stronger state-citizens' relationship
- II. Enhanced human capital development
- III. Effective management of risks and vulnerability
- IV. Empowerment and livelihood development
- V. Sustained social cohesion and nation-building

VI. Inclusive macro-economic policy

The policy is based on the principles of universal basic needs; political economy, Redistribution, Citizenship, Human Rights, Social control and social inclusiveness. Government shall implement a transformative social protection framework that takes into consideration, economic and social forms of risks and vulnerabilities that promotes social equity and inclusive growth. The framework includes four levels of social protection provision: protective, preventive, transformative and promotional.

The State shall ensure that no citizen falls below the minimum of social and economic wellbeing, security and dignity enshrined in a well-defined Social Protection Floor. The policy will be implemented based on prioritisation and progressive realisation of policy measures in the short, medium and long term to achieve the principle of universality.

The policy adopts a lifecycle approach (*‘Cradle to the Grave’*) that government shall pursue through three main systems of Social Protection including Social Insurance, Social Assistance and Traditional Social Protection to reduce risks, vulnerability, exclusion, discrimination and hunger for the chronically poor, the economically at risk and the socially vulnerable. It is expected that the provisions of this policy will enable the poor and vulnerable lift themselves out of poverty.

Government and partners shall remain committed to sustainable funding through appropriate and predictable funding mechanisms to social protection programmes and initiatives.

The policy measures that shall be pursued are classified into 11 categories as follows:

Education and health services

- Provide free education, school subventions and school meals in public primary schools
- Provide scholarships to children from poor households in the public secondary and tertiary institutions
- Provide payment of fees for public examinations in Basics and Senior Secondary school.
- Provide free health care for pregnant women, children under 5 years old, persons with disabilities, HIV and AIDS, minors sexually abused and the

aged (people above 65 years)

Expansion of social assistance and strengthen implementation systems

- Scale-up of cash transfer to all extremely poor households and the aged
- Establish productive and adaptive Social Safety Net programming
- Institutionalise a legal framework for coordination and implementation of social protection systems
- Ensure all Social protection projects and programmes are integrated into MDAs' development plans
- Establish predictable funding mechanisms for social protection programmes
- Establish a social safety net systems for emergency preparedness and response

Traditional family and community support for the vulnerable

- Strengthen good traditional social protection practices
- Link Social Protection measures, especially social transfers, to enhance the dignity of the vulnerable and excluded members of the society.
- Examine traditional systems to assess areas in which they may be discriminatory towards specific or excluded groups or individuals by ethnicity, gender, age, identity etc.
- Raise awareness about social protection and develop solutions that promote equity at intra household and inter community levels.
- Improve agricultural productivity and food security at the household level so that families and communities are less likely to cast out or consider the care of some members burdensome.
- In urban areas focus on skills training for the unemployed and underemployed urban migrants to value rural livelihood options.

Insurance schemes

- Identification of the potential for extending compulsory insurance coverage to informal sector employees.
- Advocate with NASSIT and other pension and insurance providers on the extension of such schemes to provide cover for the poorest self-

employed who are unable to afford contributions through Government subsidies.

- Maintain a framework of regular review of pensions for retired people to protect older retirees from falling below the poverty line.
- Adopt and disseminate a national social transfer emergency preparedness and response plan
- Train a cadre of emergency response volunteer and Village Development committees at district level.
- Establish Prepositioned buffer stock at disaster prone centers in the country.
- Establish the structures and systems for emergency preparedness, response and resilience at the national and district levels.

Transfers for utilisation of social services

- Ensure acost effective means of delivering transfers to the most vulnerable population.
- Lobby legislatures, development partners Donors and private sector to make long-term commitments for financing social protection initiatives.
- Establish a dialogue and planning mechanism on food security with relevant agencies to ensure that evidence generated on the vulnerability of households to food and nutrition deficits are utilized to develop appropriate interventions.
- Establish a framework for increased utilization of health, education and other social services **Homes/ shelter for vulnerable groups**
- Establish a legal framework for the provision of homes/shelter for vulnerable groups such as the homeless within the context of community care.
- Establish a functional database of shelters and homes for the most vulnerable across all Districts with a plan to scale up to meet current and predicted demand
- Advocate for the establishment of low cost and social housing schemes.
- Institutional care for vulnerable groups as an absolute last resort when all

other means of care within the community fails.

- Develop a database and promote reunion of street children with their families and re-integration into their communities.

Gender equality and women's empowerment

- Commitments to implementation of international agreements towards the Advancement of Women, Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women.
- , Ensure that vulnerable women are supported in the realisation of their rights to property and land.
- Monitor, review and evaluate progress towards the achievement of equal rights and the rate at which the SDGs and other targets concerned with gender, health and sexual and reproductive rights are being fulfilled for the most vulnerable groups.

Livelihood and employment support

- Provide support for sustainable livelihoods for the poorest through skills training, access to land, inputs for smallholder farmers, and affirmative action for youth and women's empowerment.
- Increase state spending on skills development for youth and women.
- Target employment schemes for youth, women and others at the most vulnerable of these groups.
- Enact legislation for employers to employ quotas of vulnerable groups, e.g. those with disabilities, ensuring training needs and accessibility areas are addressed.
- Create links to youth and general employment promotion, on the job training and placement schemes. Ensure these schemes are inclusive of marginalized individuals and groups and target the poorest.

Small and medium size enterprise development

- Promote the development of small and medium size enterprises through business training, micro finance and support for additional value.

- Lobby microfinance service providers to introduce affordable loan schemes for poorer people including farmers, with safeguards against terms and conditions that increase risk to the vulnerable.
- Facilitate training of poor people in micro-enterprise activities - preparation of business plans, basic bookkeeping, pricing, etc.
- Setup a fund for financing micro-enterprise initiatives by the poor.

Physically challenged people-friendly infrastructure

- Adapt entrances to existing and new public buildings to ease access by wheel chair users and difficulty in movement.
- Adapt existing streets (where applicable) and new ones to facilitate mobility of wheel chairs and other assistive devices.
- Maintain functioning elevators in public buildings with more than two stories.
- Engage attendants in public buildings with more than one floor to assist the physically challenged and the aged.

Legislation and Regulation

- Promote minimum and equal pay legislation.
- Promote establishment of maternity and paternity leave and benefits.
- Remove discriminatory legislation or policies affecting service provision/access or employment.
- Enforce the implementation of labor regulations and laws.
- Enact legislations to include disability considerations in all project constructions, supplies and contracts.

Targeting and Registration

- The provision of social protection can be an expensive undertaking and for a country like Sierra Leone whose economy may continue to be fragile in the foreseeable future, a progressive and bottom-up approach would be the most feasible and appropriate coverage strategy to adopt. A combination of geographical, Community-Based Targeting (CBT),

assessment mechanisms (proxy means testing), household vulnerability analysis and self-targeting mechanisms with specific emphasis on transparency and downward accountability, among others, could be adopted. This approach is pragmatic and will ensure citizens' participation.

- A functional database system shall be developed to manage programme beneficiaries and track their participation in other social services. The Social Protection Registry for Integrated National Targeting (SPRINT) will be critical to collect standardised information on beneficiaries. The services of the National Civil Registration Authority (NCRA) and Statistics Sierra Leone (SSL) are highly required in this regard.

Graduation and Exit

The NSPS shall employ a beneficiary or intervention level exit strategy for graduating beneficiaries from the programmes or continuing support depending on the category of the beneficiary. It is therefore, expected that terminal beneficiaries with productive capacity will participate in other programmes for a period to develop and sustain their basic livelihoods, and during the latter stages, beneficiaries will be linked up with other complementary programmes to further enhance their social and economic capacities.

Effectiveness, Efficiency and Sustainability of Policy Programmes

The Policy shall include transformative and productive elements that will empower people to improve their lives and to graduate out of poverty. In view of the limited financial and implementation capacities, there shall be prioritisation of options for social protection programmes to ensure efficiency. The Policy shall be linked to budgetary processes to ensure sustainability and legitimacy of social protection funding. Government shall continuously assess and plan cost and overall cost-effectiveness of specific programmes to strengthen coordination and reduce corruption while building sufficient capacity and ownership for the financial sustainability of social protection programmes.

Coordination and Integration

The programmes and initiatives shall be delivered in a well-coordinated manner ensuring all stakeholders are involved with distinct mandates. To achieve effective

coordination, Government shall establish an institutional framework made up of national and non-state actors. All actors shall commit to adhere to standard operations procedures in the sector.

An Act of Parliament will set the National Social Protection Authority to oversee strategic direction of the policy. Social Protection Secretariat supported by Technical Working Groups as Think Tank will be established to design and monitor the implementation of social protection programmes. The Social Protection Secretariat will ensure effective coordination and harmonization of programmes in the sector

Financing and budgeting

The Government shall ensure sustained social protection delivery through adequate budgetary allocation financed from public resources. There shall be adequate provision for social protection in the national budget from the consolidated fund.

Social protection planning and budgeting shall be integrated into the annual budgeting and performance management frameworks. Government shall also employ other innovative financing mechanisms through social partners from the private sector, development partners and other non – state actors.

Social and financial accountability

To ensure accountability and transparency, the existing grievance mechanism with participation of Civil Society established under the social safety nets programme shall be used and enforced as a standard accountability mechanism in all programme interventions. The grievance mechanism will help to enlighten beneficiaries on their entitlements and responsibilities, serve as a central point for whistle blowers and deal with disputes and complaints from beneficiaries and the public relating to infringement on the entitlements of beneficiaries. In the case of fraud, the matter will be forwarded to the Anti-Corruption Commission for appropriate action. Grievance handling mechanisms and standards shall be widely publicised and active employment of social accountability strategies shall be encouraged. The conduct of social protection shall be in accordance with the laws of Sierra Leone including the Public Financial Management, Internal Audit and Public Procurement legislations. Expenditure on social protection shall be subjected to the Sierra Leone Public Expenditure Tracking Survey mechanism. MDAs' shall be required to provide annual financial management reports and projections on programme basis. There shall be audits as required by the financial management protocols of Sierra Leone

including mandatory audits under the auspices of the Auditor General's Department. Social protection expenditure shall be subject to scrutiny by the Parliamentary Public Accounts Committee.

Monitoring and Evaluation, Performance Measurement & Reviews

Effective Monitoring and Evaluation systems shall be put in place to provide evidence on the impact of projects and programmes. Evaluation shall be part of the strategy for the implementation of the policy. A Logical Framework shall be developed as part of the implementation process for the Policy so progress can be tracked, and reviewed against performance targets and indicators, to enable learning, adjustments and re-planning when necessary. Scorecards shall be generated on the policy evidence of performance. The policy shall be reviewed every 5 years to ensure it is responsive to emerging issues and remains relevant.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1.1 Background

Social Protection has become an important instrument in the development agenda of Sierra Leone. The Government of Sierra Leone (GoSL) has embarked on an agenda for growth but recognises the need for combining such growth with equity for those segments of the population that are not able on their own to directly personalise the benefits of development. This means that Government acknowledges the existence of the many challenges in meeting its obligations. Therefore, Government has prioritised spending on social sectors and introduced social protection programs in its development agenda. The *2012-2018 Agenda for Prosperity* devoted pillar 6 to social protection and the revised 1991 constitution has stressed the realisation of universal social protection for Sierra Leoneans. There have been interventions across the country aiming at addressing the issues of poverty, unemployment, natural disasters and social instability. However, these programs are limited in scope, implemented on ad-hoc basis and lack the coordination and continuity due mainly to lack of a policy framework to guide the implementation of social protection in Sierra Leone. Consequently, the Government in 2011 tasked the National Social Protection Steering Committee to research and develop a National Social Protection Policy (NSPP). However, the effort to develop a legislative framework for the policy was inconclusive so the Social Protection Inter-Agency Forum was tasked to review the 2011 Social protection to reflect new emergencies and vulnerabilities and to also redefine the institutional arrangements. The NSPP has been developed using a bottom-up approach and has benefited from the insights of a wide consultation with stakeholders and experts to maximize social protection benefits for Sierra Leoneans.

1.2. Legal Frameworks and Social protection

Over the past two decades, Sierra Leone enacted several policies and legislations to address social protection and other inalienable rights of her citizens:

- The revised labor policy 2016 regulates labor activities and supports the aged through social protection;
- The National Social Security Insurance Trust (NASSIT) Act 2001 ensures

end of term benefit for contributing pensioners; the minimum wage guarantees a fair minimum wage for both private and public sector employees;

- Disability Act 2012 ensures all disable persons and groups are integrated into national development;
- The Child Rights Act 2012 promotes the rights of children;
- The Three Gender Acts ensures the rights of women are protected;
- Devolution of Estates Act ensures legal process is followed in transfer of property;
- Customary Marriage and Divorce Act 2007 ensures the rights of married women are protected;
- Domestic Violence Act 2007 reduces domestic violence in homes and communities;
- Education Act 2004 ensures proper education for students;
- Adoption Act 1989; ensures appropriate measures are followed in the adoption of persons;
- Legal Aid Act 2012 promotes legal representation in court for persons who cannot afford;
- Anti-Human Trafficking Act 2005 reduces illegal human trafficking and
- National Drugs Control Act 2008 prevents the abuse of illegal drugs.

The 1991 constitution of Sierra Leone (currently under review) under the fundamental principles of state policy chapter 2 (sections 8 and 9) provides the basis for social protection in Sierra Leone.

The basic principles include the State's obligations to:

- (a) Ensure every citizen has the opportunity for securing adequate means of livelihood as well as adequate opportunities to secure suitable employment;
- (b) Ensure adequate medical and health facilities for all persons, having due regard to the resources of the State;
- (c) Ensure equal pay for equal work without discrimination because sex, and that adequate and satisfactory remuneration is paid to all persons in employment;

- (d) Ensure the care and welfare of the aged, young and disabled shall be actively promoted and safeguarded;
- (e) Safeguarding the rights of vulnerable groups, such as children, women and the disabled in securing educational facilities;
- (f) Free compulsory basic education at primary and junior secondary school levels; and
- (g) Ensure every citizen can be educated to the best of their ability, aptitude and inclination by providing educational facilities at all levels and aspects of education such as primary, secondary, vocational, technical, college and university.

1.3 Sierra Leone Poverty Reduction Strategy

Government's initial development roadmap - The Agenda for Prosperity (A4P) 2012-2018 which builds on the successes of the Agenda for Change poverty reduction strategy 11, lays the foundation for the country's journey to achieving sustainable future for all Sierra Leoneans. In that development roadmap, government expresses its unflinching commitment to the provision of a social safety net for the vulnerable population; promote good governance; ensure that the public sector is capacitated to deliver; empower our women and ensure equal opportunities for both men and women. The A4P stresses implementation of the National Social Protection Policy 2011, to complement the effects of economic growth in building resilience and developing social protection policies, institutions and programmes, building capacity of relevant agencies and their staff; extending social insurance interventions; providing basic social protection packages for the vulnerable; strengthening support for nutrition, health care, education and housing. The Social Protection Policy goals are aligned with the national development aspirations whereby expenditure on social protection is a necessary investment in people. The Policy provides the framework not only to understand the vulnerabilities and risks faced by the poor, but also as a measure to mobilise the assets and capabilities of individuals, households and communities for a sustainable human development.

1.4. International Agreements and Social Protection

The policy draws inspiration from International Agreements and Conventions to which Sierra Leone is a signatory and has direct bearings on social protection, notably:

- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights which enshrines right to social security (1948);
- The African Charter on Human and People's Rights and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child which advance social protection with the human rights approach (1981);
- The Convention on the Rights of the Child specifically emphasizes children's rights to social protection (1989);
- The United Nations (UN) Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women (1995);
- The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) with its commitment to poverty reduction (2000);
- The African Union (AU) Livingstone Transformative Agenda (2006) which incorporates the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; and
- International Labor Organization (ILO) Conference on Social Protection Floor Recommendation, 2012 (No.202) recommended that member States establish and maintain social protection floors as a fundamental element of their national social security system.

The Policy considers social protection as both a right and an empowerment instrument and therefore provides the framework for all the stakeholders to work together to fulfill the fundamental rights of citizens as endorsed nationally and globally.

1.5. Definition of Social Protection

In the context of this policy, social protection shall mean;

all actions, public and private, taken in response to levels of vulnerability, risk and deprivation deemed by the state to be socially and economically unacceptable.

1.6. The rationale for social protection as part of the development agenda

The Government of Sierra Leone notes the increasing relevance of social protection in engendering citizens' rights to a life of dignity and promoting human and

economic development. In the last decade, social protection has emerged among developing countries as a viable policy framework employed globally to address poverty, social and economic vulnerabilities, inequality and exclusion, and other threats to sustainable development. Recognizing that economic growth alone is insufficient to bring about the transformation needed in the country, Government seeks to adopt a balanced framework that promotes inclusive growth, equality and security as well as ensure a life of dignity through the following:

- A. National Economic Growth:** Existing strides towards macro-economic development in Sierra Leone are geared towards stimulating economic growth. The components of social protection—social assistance (food and cash transfers, free or subsidized access to services etc) and social insurance will contribute to such national growth and economic development alongside meeting the responsibilities of the state to support the poor and vulnerable
- B Human Capital:** Social Protection contributes to a strong human capital base that ensures sustained economic growth and poverty reduction. For example, education enhances employability for individuals and families, thereby enabling them to provide their basic needs whilst creating the national labor base that powers growth. A healthy person is better placed to embark on productive activities for sustainable livelihood
- C. Breaking the Intergenerational Cycle of Poverty:** Social protection can be an effective mechanism to address childhood poverty and breaking the intergenerational cycle of poverty within families. Social protection packages such as cash transfers in the form of child benefit or a pension, or in-kind benefits such as food aid and waivers from fees for health care and education, or livelihood support to families will help reduce vulnerability and poverty among children and increase their chances of growing into productive adults.
- D. Reducing Inequality:** Despite the gains in achieving some equality of opportunities for women, there are still massive differences in girls' access to schooling. Health care for women and their children are well below standards. Social protection interventions will help bridge the gap between marginalized, deprived and poor people and the rest of society. Social protection sets a minimum standard of social and economic security that protects citizens against vulnerability and deprivation, with the Government playing the mediating role in redistribution from the rich to the poor.

E. Improving Living Standards: Social protection interventions will enhance people's quality of life by developing human potential, increasing stability, advancing social justice and equity, and promoting economic dynamism. With these in place, poor people will become less vulnerable and can live a meaningful, productive and dignified lives.

1.7. People who need social protection in Sierra Leone

Mapping and other consultations¹ reveal three major categories of vulnerable people who are in dire need of social protection as follows:

i. The Chronically Poor

These people are described as the '*popolipo*', meaning the 'poorest of the poor' and comprise the destitute, beggars, physically challenged, mentally challenged, war wounded, the chronically sick, people living with Aids (PLWA) and others. They have absolutely no assets, no means of sustenance and survive mostly on the good will of people in their communities.

ii. The Economically at Risk

These are people who fail to engage in economically viable activities that can support their livelihoods, or are unemployable because they lack the education/skills and assets that can capacitate them to engage in meaningful work. A high percentage of the youth population falls within this group, especially those without education/ skill and employment.

Others in this category include the aged, unemployed adults (over 35), unsuccessful returnee migrants, subsistence farmers, outsiders and others who are not given access to land. These people find it very difficult to access basic needs like education, health and regular food for themselves and their families.

iii. The Socially Vulnerable

The social dictates and prejudices of society prevent some community members from enjoying rights that can add value to their lives, thereby making them vulnerable. Among the socially vulnerable are widows; single mothers; sex workers; children (orphans, disabled, abandoned children, street children, under-

¹See Mapping Matrix of SP responses identified Social Protection Framework, Part 2 Max-Kyne S and Platt A.2008. Recent consultations conducted by government with support from World Bank & UNICEF confirmed the categories, 2017.

fives, juvenile delinquents, care givers of disabled children of poor families, etc.); teenage mothers; migrants and families left unsupported by migrants; those, often female, accused of witchcraft or sorcery, barren women; survivors of health epidemics; and others. Usually with no assets and limited access to rights, this category of people can barely sustain themselves and their families and dependents. There are far more females than males in this group.

iv. Prioritization

Within the constraints of limited resources and great need, it is important to see which broad categories of the community people consider to include the most vulnerable. Averaged nationally, people consulted prioritised children of poor families, followed by the disabled and sick, older people, females and the youth as in Figure 1 below. These groups are further sub-categorised locally in Districts by identification of specific vulnerabilities, for example child miners, riverine communities, war victims²

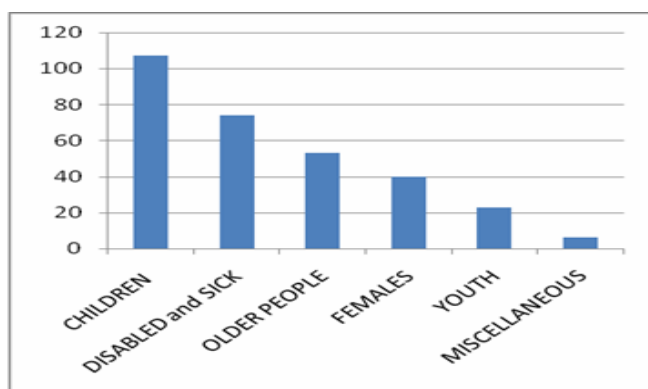


Figure1. Prioritized vulnerable groups

1.8. Goal and Objectives

Goal: The goal of the policy is;

to establish a gender-sensitive and age-appropriate framework for protection of the most poor and vulnerable and to minimise the risks of others sliding into poverty through a minimum social protection floor for a life of dignity for all Sierra Leoneans citizens.

²(2009)Report of District Consultations on Social Protection, for National Steering Committee

Specific Objectives

To achieve this goal, the state shall pursue the following specific objectives:

- Stronger state-citizens' relationship
- Enhanced human capital development
- Effective management of risks and vulnerability
- Empowerment and livelihood development
- Sustained social cohesion and nation-building
- Inclusive macro-economic policy

1.9. Approach to Social Protection

The Social Protection policy adopts a lifecycle approach. This approach has the following major features:

- All individuals pass through a life cycle with different stages of life defined by age brackets, as follows: 0-5, 6-14, 15-24, 25-64 and above 65 years;
- Social protection interventions are age-appropriate and recognise the need to arrest the build-up of risks and vulnerabilities throughout the life cycle. Therefore, the interventions systematically target all stages of life such that the socioeconomic situation in one phase does not transmit to the next phase and cumulative benefits are achieved across generations;
- Social protection interventions address multidimensional and crosscutting issues as well as temporary and structural deprivations, shocks and vulnerabilities; and
- The guiding principles for social protection include prohibition of discrimination and unfair treatment of citizens due to their age.

1.10. Social Protection systems to meet needs of vulnerable citizens

Given the status of Social Protection in Sierra Leone vis-à-vis the country's poverty profile, Government shall build on existing efforts and broaden the prospects for reducing risks, vulnerability, exclusion, discrimination and hunger for those who are unable to provide for themselves; seek to prevent households from being devastated by shocks, and increasing opportunities for vulnerable groups to lift themselves out of poverty. Government will pursue three main systems of Social Protection as follows:

1 Social Insurance

There is already a social insurance system in the form of the National Social Security Insurance Trust (NASSIT). Membership is compulsory for all formally employed workers. Government shall encourage NASSIT to facilitate the extension of the benefits of the scheme to a greater number of self-employed workers to increase the number of people and families protected from the consequences of loss of employment through death, injury or business failure.

2 Social Assistance

Government shall work with non-state actors in strengthening the already existing social assistance schemes to increase coverage and outcomes. In this regard, Government shall be flexible in terms of conditional and un-conditional social assistance and seek to promote human capital development.

3 Traditional Social Protection

For Sierra Leone, as elsewhere in Africa, local level social protection schemes in the form of cash contribution groups such as *osusu*³, labor exchange and extended family reciprocity are common and for many cases provide the main form of safety net against hard times. Government efforts will guard against undermining these systems. For those ‘*osusu*’ schemes, Government shall encourage a linkage of such schemes with formal banking, savings and other programmes.

1.11 Principles in formulating the social protection policy

The political economy of social protection: Social protection is a component of Political economy; thus, the policy has been developed within established principles acceptable to Government and these include:

The Principle of Redistribution

The State redistributes resources progressively to reduce gaps in inequality using important means of resource redistribution and provision of non-market services and opportunities to ensure social order and stability. This principle commits to redistribution of resources and the GoSL shall reduce poverty among adults and children in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through social transfers, social insurance and provision of social support services.

³Susu Economics: The History of Pan-African (Black) - Trade, Commerce, Money and Truth Part 1 (History of Pan-African Trade, Commerce, Money). 7

The Principle of Universal Basic Needs

All humans have fundamental universal rights for successful and critical participation in social life. Human needs are the universal preconditions for participation in social life. The Government therefore affirms the right of every Sierra Leonean to the satisfaction of the basic needs of all, especially, in the areas of education, health, food security, housing and employment.

The Principle of Citizenship

The principle stipulates that the purpose of the state is for the good of the citizens. All citizens without discrepancy of status, class, gender or orientation shall be offered some minimum standard of living in relation to an agreed range of services. GoSL shall, through its relevant agencies, carry out relevant citizenship related activities to ensure effective delivery of services to the populace.

The Principle of Human Rights

The principles of Human Rights are built on the fact that all human beings are born equal in dignity and rights. Therefore, social and economic rights guarantee the right to life. Social protection rights are valued as much as other human rights. The GoSL shall reverse any tendency suggesting more attention being given to other human rights than social protection rights.

The Principle of Social Control

The role of social control in maintaining social stability and cohesion, which are necessary for the wellbeing of the individual and groups in each society cannot be overemphasized. GoSL shall consciously use appropriate social welfare and social protection mechanisms to discourage actions that could lead to social dislocation, problems and conflict.

Principle of Social Inclusiveness

Social Inclusiveness demands that increasing provision be made for economic, social, political and cultural opportunities for citizens' participation in the normal activities of their society without stigma or discrimination. GoSL accepts this view & shall take necessary measures to widen access and increase participation by all.

Other principles taken also into consideration in the policy include:

- Responsiveness to the needs, realities and conditions of livelihood of those who the policy measures are intended to benefit;

- Affordability in the context of short and medium term budget planning for the public budget and in terms not placing unreasonable burdens on households and communities;
- Sustainability both financially and politically, with a requirement on GoSL to ensure that the state's role in social protection reflects an adequate level of public support for interventions to assist the poorest;
- SP Mainstreamed institutionally within sustainable structures of government and implementation within state structures;
- SP built on a principle of utilizing the capabilities of individuals, households and communities and avoiding creation of dependency and stigma;
- Flexible and capable of responding to changing scenarios and emergence of new challenges (e.g. impact of Ebola, landslide, floods).

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF EXISTING SOCIAL PROTECTION PROGRAMMES

2.1. Introduction

The Social Protection Policy adopts a life cycle approach and gender sensitive recognizing both economic and social risks including job discrimination and harmful traditional practices and presents a social protection response organized around seven main areas: social assistance, social insurance, child protection, traditional social protection, labor market, health, and micro-finance.

2.2. Current Social Protection programs

A mapping of the current social protection landscape in the country indicates that several players including government, donor agencies, international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) and civil society organizations are involved in the funding and implementation of SP programmes. There are many on-going interventions in the form of social protection but the lack of an overarching framework limits the implementation of programmes at both the national and community levels. These programmes have taken the form of ad hoc and small-scale with little inter-sectoral linkages and coordination.

Social protection programmes cover a range of broad interventions, which are implemented by government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) and Non-governmental organisations. Funding is largely donor supported. The programmes include:

1. Social Assistance
2. Social Insurance
3. Traditional Social Protection
4. Labor Market
5. Child Protection
6. Health
7. Education
8. Micro-Finance

Social Assistance: Refers to programmes designed to provide support to extremely poor households and disaster-affected persons with the objective of reducing chronic or shock-induced poverty. These include the Cash/In-kind Transfers and Welfare programmes targeted at the disabled, elderly, the extremely poor households, those affected by disasters and other beneficiaries.

Social Insurance: This includes programmes that cover the risks associated with unemployment, sickness, disability, employment injury and old age e.g contributory pension scheme implemented by NASSIT⁴.

Traditional Social Protection: Includes schemes in the form of cash contribution group such as ‘*Osusu*’, labor exchange and extended family reciprocity are common and in many cases, provide the main form of safety net against hard-times. Government shall encourage a linkage of such schemes with formal financial institutions offering savings and other financial services.

Labor Market Programmes: These programmes generate direct employment e.g. microenterprises, public works, labor exchanges, employment services, skills development and training targeted at intended beneficiaries.

- **The Public Works Programme (PWP):** PWPs are intended to create employment opportunities for youth through labor-intensive public works implementations. PWP involves the regular payment of money (or in some cases in-kind benefits) by government or non-governmental organizations to individuals in exchange for labor provided for public work. The objective is to reduce chronic or shock-induced poverty, provide social protection, address social risk or reduce economic vulnerability. PWPs are particularly appropriate for addressing transient poverty, and can be productive, with the potential to create valuable assets that further reduce poverty or otherwise contribute to programme cost-effectiveness
- **Skills Development and Training Programmes:** These are programmes that aim to build youth capacity and skills acquisition for self-employment and

⁴Contributory pension in Sierra Leone are aimed almost exclusively at the formal sector which per the statistics cover 220,000 people in 2016

poverty reduction

Agricultural Input Support Programmes: These programmes provide agricultural inputs and support to smallholder farmers including seeds, fertilizers, improved planting materials, irrigation facilities and breeding stock. It also supports other range of activities, namely: beekeeping, poultry and snail rearing, food processing, storage, marketing and training.

Child Protection: This form of social protection covers a wide range of child-focused interventions such as Child Rights and advocacy/awareness; early child development activities; educational assistance (school feeding, scholarships, fee waivers); health assistance (health cost reduced fees/ subsidized medicines for intended beneficiaries; street children/child worker/orphan initiatives. Also, supplementary feeding programmes of strategic importance in view of the high prevalence of malnutrition among infants, pregnant and lactating mother and its long-term effect on improving human capital are implemented.

Health Programmes: The Ministry of Health and Sanitation implements a variety of health programmes designed to reduce health-related shocks. These include: free health care programme, which provides free primary health care for children under five and primary and secondary care for pregnant women up to six weeks after childbirth; safe motherhood programme; prevention of Mother-to-Child Transmission of HIV; and immunization.

Education Programmes: The Ministry of Education Science and Technology implements several programmes designed to provide children from poor households with access to education. These include: fee waivers, grant in aids, school feeding, supply of learning materials to children attending public schools, free education for primary school going children etc.

Micro-Finance Schemes: Micro-finance schemes provide loans to petty traders. They are intended to empower low-income earners, reduce poverty, and generate employment, among others. The importance of microfinance in eradicating poverty cannot be over emphasized but there is no framework to guide the operationalisation of micro-finance in the country.

2.3. Reform Measures for Social Protection Programmes

Mainstreaming gender

Progress on gender equality is recognized as a critical factor in achieving the SDGs. The social protection agenda has generally been presented in terms of categories of poor and excluded social groups, differentiated per age, health status and relationship to formal labor markets. Social protection measures will be designed to respond to different gender-specific categories of risk, which include:

- health risks (e.g. maternal and infant mortality, disease);
- life-cycle risks (e.g. childbearing, divorce, widowhood);
- household economic risks (e.g. increased expenditure for social obligations such as marriage and funerals); and
- social risks (e.g. exclusion, domestic violence, crime).

It is against this backdrop that the government of Sierra Leone has committed to pursue several overarching objectives to make social protection interventions more inclusive, responsive and productive. Gender shall be mainstreamed into all aspects of policy and programme designed for social protection, including targeting, linkages with complementary services, institutional arrangements, awareness raising, monitoring and evaluation. Issues that enhance the livelihoods and life of dignity in reproductive rights of men and women shall be prioritised. Women specific initiative and interventions would be encouraged.

Mainstreaming Disability

Physical or mental disability has significant impact on livelihoods of those affected as well as on their families. As per a recent World Bank study on disability in Sierra Leone, the number of people with disabilities in the country may be significantly high. Sierra Leone ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities in October 2010 and became a signatory of the Convention's

Optional Protocol, which ratification is still pending.⁵The convention adopts a broad categorization of persons with disabilities and reaffirms that all persons with all types of disabilities must enjoy all human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Faced with this challenge, the Government is in the process of drafting a National Disability Act to ensure the protection and provision of services to the socially marginalized and disadvantaged groups and individuals. These include but not limited to the disabled, women and children facing difficult family circumstances or families in crisis. The Ministry of Social Welfare Gender and children Affairs (MSWGCA) has a disabled persons' programmes to support disabled persons' organisations

Multi-Sectoral Approach

The social sector priorities are inter-related. Population growth affects the demand for education and health services. Education enhances appreciation for health and population programmes, healthy pupils are likely to learn more. Successful implementation of social sector programmes depends on development in other sectors such as infrastructure and agriculture. The underlying causes of malnutrition are household food insecurity, poor access to health services, sanitation and inadequate caring practices. Good governance is needed to bring together all these sectors and identify their different roles, priorities and institutional requirements. The increase in the communication link between personnel in these sectors will facilitate a multi sectoral approach to development. Government will ensure that Sierra Leoneans participate in a stable and growing economy, with an improved delivery of social services that is realistic, resources based and consistent with the National Development plans and aspirations.

⁵United Nations Enable <http://www.un.org/disabilities/countries.asp?navid=12&pid=166#S>

CHAPTER 3

POLICY MEASURES AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

3.1. Minimum Package of Protection

Government is aware that different outcomes will be achieved depending on the potential of social protection benefits recipients to build on and sustain the support provided. In this regard, Government shall implement a transformative social protection framework, which takes into consideration of economic and social forms of risks and vulnerabilities. This will be based on a framework whereby social protection will promote social equity and inclusive growth. The framework includes four levels of social protection provision:

- Protective: includes protecting households' income and consumption, which includes social assistance programmes such as cash transfers, in-kind transfers, fee waivers to support access to basic and social services;
- Preventive: includes preventing households from falling into or further into poverty, including, for instance, health insurance programmes, subsidized risk pooling mechanisms;
- Promotive: includes promoting household's ability to engage in productive activities and increase incomes, for example through public works employment schemes, agricultural inputs transfers or subsidies; and
- Transformative: includes addressing social inequalities and discrimination, which include, for example, core social protection programmes which tackle gender inequality and promote child rights and linkages to awareness-raising programmes or tackling discrimination.

Government shall ensure that no citizen falls below the minimum level of social and economic wellbeing, security and dignity enshrined in a Social Protection Floor. Based on constitutional provisions and international benchmarks, this Social Protection Floor for Sierra Leone shall be a minimum essential level of social rights, services and facilities that all citizens shall enjoy.

3.2 Prioritisation and Progressive Realisation of Policy Measures

As there are constraints of resources, it may become necessary to identify specific categories of intended beneficiaries for prioritization in the short term. This shall be done within a context of progressive realization of the principle of universality. Specific intended beneficiaries may be identified for each policy intervention for temporary targeting, until the goal of universal coverage can be reached (within a horizon of no more than 30 years). The intended beneficiaries will be identified for each policy intervention.

The purpose of the social protection system envisaged in this Policy shall be oriented towards a long-term vision, with a perspective of thirty years, drawing on evidence from international and regional experiences which show that comprehensive and sustainable social protection systems cannot be built in the short term. To achieve medium and long-term objectives of the NSPP will take time and substantial resources. Against this backdrop, the policy actions and plans will be rolled out in three overlapping phases: short, medium and long terms. In the short and medium terms, the Policy shall develop institutional frameworks and temporary relief interventions. Some of these interventions would be scaled up or expanded in the long run to engender universal coverage within context of state priority interventions.

In the long run, the NSPP shall establish minimum standards of coverage for all Sierra Leoneans to be progressively realized. This Policy embraces and supports other Government initiatives on pensions and social insurance.

3.3. Short to medium term measures

Area of Focus 1: Minimum Package of Protection

Policy Measure: Establish and provide a Basic Minimum Social Protection package as defined by the constitution of Sierra Leone. This therefore guarantees a universal minimum package that adopts a life-cycle approach to social protection. It consists of the following elements: access to education and essential health services; guarantee income security through family or child benefits; unemployment benefit; and income security in old age (non-contributory pension).

Policy Objectives

- Poor and vulnerable citizens have access to essential healthcare benefits including maternity benefits, for which the State accepts the general responsibility for ensuring the adequacy of the delivery system and financing of the benefits;
- Children of poor and vulnerable families enjoy income security at least above the poverty line: through family/child transfers aimed at facilitating access to nutrition, education and healthcare;
- Targeted income support for the poor and unemployed inactive age groups especially through cash-for-work and other labor intensive programmes;
- Residents in old age and disability enjoy income security through pensions and transfers granted at least at the poverty-line level.

Strategies

- ❖ The Agendas for Change Prosperity (PRSP11&111) commit the GoSL to “...*bringing service delivery closer to the people, by pushing forward our policy of decentralisation and devolution of service delivery to local councils*”⁶. Thus, the NSPP role is to coordinate relevant government MDAs to include and prioritise the vulnerable in gaining access to basic services.
- ❖ Government shall specify the kind of support to be provided for children to achieve security of income, access to nutrition, education and care, the can be provided.
- ❖ Through links to youth and general employment promotion schemes, the Social Protection strategy shall ensure these schemes target the poorest including marginalized groups and individuals.
- ❖ Currently, income security for extremely poor, the aged and those with disabilities is provided mainly through traditional family or community support, as well as ‘cash transfer’ projects of the Government and civil

⁶The Agenda for Change & Prosperity, My Governments Policies for Sierra Leone’s Poverty Reduction Strategies, H.E. President DrErnest BaiKoroma, 2008 & 2012

society organizations. Family responsibilities and practices are increasingly eroded as communities deal with the consequences of war and loss of able-bodied members (especially in farming areas), disposable incomes fall as food prices rise. Government will extend these schemes to the whole country to target all those in need of support, based on agreed targeting criteria and administrative systems for registration and payments.

Longer-term measures

Inarguably, operationalisation of the National Policy does not guarantee instant progress in on all areas of social protection provision; not only because resources are limited, but also because the approaches adopted by government require testing and review within the specific context of the different areas of the country.

In the long term, it is expected that Government and partners shall commit to sustainable funding; using appropriate mechanisms that provide predictable and institutionalised funding to social protection. To achieve the objectives of the NSPP, Sierra Leone shall put some policy measures, policy objectives, and strategies in place. Thus, the following Action Plan describes the minimum interventions that provide a social protection floor to all Sierra Leoneans:

- ❖ Review of existing mandates of Government departments to provide free services, fee waivers etc. to specific groups and measures to ensure that they operate in practice—including education, health and social services to specific groups.
- ❖ Review of assistance provided by non-Government agencies and institutions to assess the irresponsiveness to meeting needs of the most vulnerable and the potential to extend and align their services to District plans and higher levels of government.
- ❖ Encouragement and support to informal schemes—e.g. ‘*osusu*’ and other community savings and insurance schemes with welfare provision elements.
- ❖ Extension of existing social insurance schemes to cover the informal and private sector –NASSIT.
 - ❖ The introduction of subsidies, extension of coverage and membership to those unable to contribute to formal insurance schemes.
- ❖ Encouragement and support to occupation based insurance schemes.
- ❖ Strengthening the provision of social welfare services to the poorest and

most vulnerable.

- ❖ Employment guarantee schemes for the poorest families such as the 100 days per year of employment per family India programme.
- ❖ Provision of safety nets and conditional transfers to those who remain unsupported and unemployed.

The Government shall lead in promoting the political will required for successful implementation of the action plan whilst maintaining dialogue with affected communities and their representative civil society organisations (CSO). Details for each strategy area of the Policy are provided in reports and studies.⁷ In addition to dialogue with people in all sixteen (16) Districts of Sierra Leone⁸, the Government shall implement its Social Protection Policy strategy in phases:

Area of focus1: Education and health services

***Polycymeasure1:** Maintain scholarship awards and Health user fee waiver targeting*

***Policy Objective:** All eligible vulnerable groups have access to scholarship awards and health care user fee waivers for children under-five, pregnant and lactating mothers including minors sexually abused.*

Strategies:

- ❖ Identify and maintain an inventory of Government, donor and CSO programmes, which support free access to health services and education through waiving of user fees, school costs and scholarships for further education.
- ❖ Set national targets and report regularly on the accomplishment of such targets.
- ❖ Establish mechanisms with these providers for tracking adherence to their obligations for channeling benefits to agreed vulnerable groups.

72008.FrameworkforNationalPolicyandStrategyforSocialProtectioninSierraLeonePart2Annexes, Documentationlist.

⁷2009 & 2017 District Consultations reports

- ❖ Lobby Government and donor policymakers and other players to recognise their obligations to respect conventions that specify the rights of all to healthcare and education.
- ❖ Regulate, monitor, review and evaluate operations.

Policy measure 2: Provide education and physical rehabilitation for people with special needs:

Policy Objective: All children and adults with special needs have free access to full healthcare, education and other basic needs.

Strategies:

- ❖ Map existing services and ensure that these are gradually and progressively decentralised to Districts together with adequate resources—funding and trained staff.
- ❖ Identify resources to support existing services.
- ❖ Regulate, monitor, review and evaluate.

Area of focus 2: Expansion and strengthening of Social Protection programmes and implementation systems

Policy Measure: Government and ‘non-state actors’ to jointly assess and document pilot Social Protection interventions and establish a framework for expansion

Policy Objective: Joint learning by Government and non-state actors from existing pilot projects and scaling up of those that are viable and likely to be most equitably and nationally successful.

Strategies:

- ❖ Include non-state actors in governance, coordination and management bodies mandated by the NSPP for its implementation⁹.
- ❖ Review the range of pilot initiatives relevant to the needs of the vulnerable groups prioritised in the NSPP and Social Protection (SP) strategy.
- ❖ Ensure coordination between Government and non-state actors at local and central levels to identify Social Protection measures and their

⁹See Institutional Framework for implementation section. ¹⁷

application in a fair and equitable manner.

- ❖ Ensure all projects and programmes are integrated into District development plans.

Area of focus 3: Traditional family and community support for the vulnerable

Policy measure: Encourage and build on family and community-based support mechanisms for the vulnerable

Policy Objective: Strengthening community resources and assets for support and care of the vulnerable within families and communities

Strategies:

- ❖ Dialogue with vulnerable groups and their communities to assess needs for support at community level so that traditional responsibilities of care are maintained.
- ❖ Link SP measures, especially social transfers, to the building of respect for the vulnerable and excluded so that they see and be seen as valued and contributing members of society.
- ❖ Examine traditional systems to expose and address areas in which they may be discriminatory towards specific or excluded groups or individuals by ethnicity, gender, youth, strangers, etc.
- ❖ Raise awareness and develop solutions to improve equity in social protection at intra – household and inter – community levels.
- ❖ Focus especially on improving agricultural productivity and food security at both household and community levels. That way, communities are less likely to cast out or neglect the burden of some individual members.
- ❖ In urban areas, focus on skill training for the unemployed as well as encourage unsuccessful urban migrants to value rural livelihood options.

Area of focus 4: Insurance schemes

Policy measure 1: Sustain improvement on compulsory insurance, pensions, health schemes etc. for formal sector employees and encourage extension to informal and private sector employees

Policy Objective: Extension of compulsory insurance schemes to employees of the informal sector including the self-employed.

Strategies:

- ❖ Explore the potential for extending compulsory insurance coverage to informal sector employees.
- ❖ Dialogue with NASSIT and other pension and insurance providers on the extension of such schemes to provide cover for the poorest and/or self-employed that cannot afford contributions through Government subsidies.
- ❖ Maintain a framework of regular review of pensions for retired people to protect older retirees from falling below the poverty line.

Policy measure 2: Promote Voluntary insurance, pensions, health schemes etc.

Policy Objective: Create space for private sector involvement in pensions and insurance provision schemes for the self-employed who can afford them.

Strategies:

Through the Ministry of Labor and Social Security and the Ministry of Trade, Government shall create the enabling environment for private sector to take the lead in providing insurance coverage for the self-employed.

Explore the potentials of establishing community based health insurance schemes at the district to enhance access and risk pooling mechanisms for community members.

Policy measure 3: Establish a mechanism to respond to shocks from natural and/or man-made disasters.

Policy Objective: Protection of vulnerable households and communities from risks of devastation due to floods, storms, fires, land/mudslides and epidemics.

Strategies

- ❖ Adopt and disseminate a national social cash emergency preparedness and response plan
- ❖ Train a cadre of emergency response volunteer and Village Development Committee at district level
- ❖ Establish buffer stock centers at regional level
- ❖ Strengthen the structures for emergency response

Area of focus 5: Transfers for utilization of social services

Policy measure 1: Establish a framework for and institute unconditional cash and in-kind safety net transfers especially for the aged and vulnerable children over five years of age.

Policy Objective: Increased discretionary utilisation of social services by vulnerable groups including the aged and children older than five years.

Strategies

- ❖ Conduct rigorous assessment of the programmes by the Ministry of Labor and Social Security (MLSS) and other schemes of government and CSOs for cost effectiveness and affordability.
- ❖ Consider especially cost effective means of delivering transfers to the most vulnerable, even if this requires universal payments.
- ❖ Lobby decision makers and donors to make long-term commitments for funding.
- ❖ Contribute to advocacy and planning on food security with relevant agencies to develop data systems to assess vulnerability to food and nutrition deficits
- ❖ Introduce agreed schemes including monitoring framework in phases
- ❖ Regulate, monitor, review and evaluate against agreed targets

Policy measure 2: Conditional Transfer through cash for work and food for work

Policy Objective: Coordinated and equitable range of conditional transfers for social assistance through cash-for-work and food-for-work for the young and active.

Strategies

- ❖ Gradual scale up existing cash-for-work and food-for-work programmes.
- ❖ Document information and lessons learnt from existing small and medium scale conditional cash, food and kind transfer projects to improve effectiveness.
- ❖ Train implementing agencies at relevant levels.
- ❖ Regulate, monitor, review and evaluate.

Policy Measure 3: Establish a framework for and Institute conditional transfers for outpatient, school attendance etc.

Policy Objective: Increased potential for achievement of the SDGs and the Agenda for Change in health and education

Strategies:

- ❖ Increase access to and utilisation of healthcare services and education facilities by vulnerable groups, especially women and children.
- ❖ Compile a register of the programmes of Ministry of Health and Sanitation, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and other service providers that support the access of vulnerable women, infants and children to health and education.
- ❖ Recognize and promote the transparent and effective implementation of these programmes.
- ❖ Regulate and monitor programmes implemented by MDAs and CSOs for uniformity across all districts based targeting the most vulnerable.
- ❖ Regulate, monitor, review and evaluate.

Area of focus 6: Homes/shelter for vulnerable groups—orphans, physically and mentally challenged, aged, and abused children

Policy measure: Establish a framework for the provision of homes/shelter for vulnerable groups within the context of community care.

Policy Objective: Orphans, abused children, the physically and mentally challenged, the aged and victims of trafficking receive adequate standards of care and support, especially access to shelter and homes within communities.

Strategies

- ❖ Develop functional database of the current availability of shelters and homes for the most vulnerable across all Districts and develop a plan to extend the number to meet current and projected demand.
- ❖ Develop minimum standards for such provisions and assess the standard and quality of existing and new provisions.
- ❖ Identify resources at central and District levels for MSWGCA and appropriate NGOs to support these critical services without which homelessness, vagrancy and begging will continue to be the only recourse for these groups.
- ❖ Avoid institutionalising vulnerable groups wherever possible—treat institutional cares as an absolute last resort when all other means of providing care within the community fail.
- ❖ Regulate, monitor, review and evaluate.

Area of focus 7: Gender equality and women's empowerment.

Policy measure: Enhance gender equality and women's empowerment.

Policy Objective: Ensure that the strategic and practical needs of women and men, girls and boys, are differentiated and addressed accordingly in all Social Protection programme.

Strategies

- ❖ Adherence to International Instruments including: *1994 Dakar Platform of Action and the 1999 African Plan of Action to accelerate the Implementation of the Dakar and Beijing Platforms for Action for the Advancement of Women, the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women, ICPD Plan of Action, Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights of Woman in Africa* etc (Africa SPF 2008).
- ❖ As improvements in policy and legislation on women's property and land rights are put in place, ensure that vulnerable women are supported in exercising these rights
- ❖ Institute women specific empowerment initiative to support equity
- ❖ Monitor, review and evaluate progress with the achievement of equal

rights and the rate at which the SDGs and other targets concerned with gender, health and sexual and reproductive rights are being met for the most vulnerable groups.

Area of focus 8: Livelihood and employment support

Policy measure: *Provide support for sustainable livelihoods for the poorest through skills training, access to land, inputs for smallholder farmers and affirmative action for youth and women's employment.*

Policy Objective: *Increased earning capacity and acquisition of assets by the poorest.*

Strategies

- ❖ Assess the support needs of poorer farmers and institute mechanisms by which they are targeted in agricultural programmes across relevant MDAs and CSOs (provision of inputs, processing /value addition facilities and market linkages and disaster preparedness)
- ❖ Encourage District and Chiefdom level authorities and leaders to provide access to land and other natural resources for use by poor and vulnerable groups
- ❖ Encourage contractors to employ available local labor
- ❖ Increase state spending on skills development for youths and women
- ❖ Target employment schemes for youth, women and others at the most vulnerable of these groups.
- ❖ Develop and pass legislation for employers to employ quotas of women and vulnerable groups, e.g. those with disabilities, ensuring training needs and accessibility areas are addressed
- ❖ Regulate, monitor, review and evaluate

Area of focus 9: Small and medium size enterprise development

Policy measure: *Promote the development of small and medium size enterprises through business training, micro finance and support for value addition.*

Policy Objective: *Create opportunities for the growth of Small and medium size entrepreneurs amongst the poor*

Strategies

- ❖ Lobby providers of micro finance to introduce affordable loan schemes for poorer people including farmers, with safeguards against terms and conditions which increase risk to the vulnerable
- ❖ Facilitate training for the poor and vulnerable people on micro-enterprise activities-preparation of business plans, basic book keeping, pricing, etc
- ❖ Set up a fund for financing micro-enterprise initiatives by the poor
- ❖ Regulate, monitor, review and evaluate.

Area of focus 10: Physically challenged people-friendly infrastructure

Policy measure: Adapting physical infrastructure to the needs of the physically challenged

Policy Objective: Increased access and utilisation of physical infrastructure by the aged, blind, polio victims, amputees, wheelchair users, etc.

Strategies

- ❖ Adapt entrances to existing and new public buildings to ease access by wheel chair users and difficulty in movement
- ❖ Adapt existing streets (where applicable) and new ones to facilitate mobility of wheel chairs and other assistive devices
- ❖ Maintain functioning elevators in public buildings with more than two stories
- ❖ Engage attendants in public buildings with more than one floor to assist the physically challenged and the aged
- ❖ Enact legislations to include disability considerations in all constructions, supplies and contracts projects
- ❖ Regulate, monitor, review and evaluate

Area of Focus 11: Legislation and Regulation

Policy Measure: Provide a legal framework that specifically protects intended beneficiaries including children through inheritance rights, birth registration, child care services and breast-feeding.

Policy Objective: Strengthen existing legal framework to protect and promote the welfare of women and children.

Strategies

- ❖ Integrate birth registration and breastfeeding into social protection initiatives
- ❖ Promote awareness of the inheritance right of persons irrespective of sex and age
- ❖ Promote minimum, labor and equal pay legislation
- ❖ Promote establishment of maternity and paternity leave and benefits
- ❖ Remove discriminatory legislation or policies affecting service provision/access or employment
- ❖ Ensure Inheritance rights for women.

3.4. Targeting and Registration

Targeting: Sierra Leone 's economy is currently fragile and may be so for the foreseeable future, progressive and bottom-up approach would be the most feasible and appropriate coverage strategy to adopt. A combination of geographical, Community-Based Targeting (CBT), assessment mechanisms (proxy means testing), broad categorical eligibility (e.g. geographic targeting), targeting by category and life cycle (e.g. the elderly, under 5 children), household vulnerability analysis and self-targeting mechanisms with specific emphasis on transparency and downward accountability, among others, could be adopted. This approach is pragmatic and will ensure citizen participation and empowerment as well as strengthen local ownership of protection programmes. However, the country will strive to attain universal coverage at the appropriate time when the economy becomes much more resilient. However, to ensure universality, some individuals, families, and groups may need to receive special attention (e.g. scholarships for children from poor families, cash transfers to extremely poor households).

The bottom-up approach involves the following process: collecting data on specific individuals and households through visits and interviews using pre-designed questionnaires; populating collected data and information into a unified household registry; comparing household characteristics with pre-established eligibility criteria; and establishing programme-specific beneficiary list.

Single register/ harmonized Registration: For the NSPP and programmes to be effective, a regular and reliable registration and tracking system shall be put in place. A database system will be developed to manage programme beneficiaries and track their participation in other social services. The Social Protection Registry for Integrated National Targeting (SPRINT) shall be used to collect standardized information on beneficiaries. The services of the National Registration Commission (NRC) and Statistics Sierra Leone (SSL) will be required in this regard.

Functions of the SPRINT: The NSPP will include a data management system that provides comprehensive information on all intended beneficiaries of social protection programmes. The SPRINT, when fully functional, will eventually provide a national database to identify and monitor the progress of extremely poor individuals and households who benefit from social intervention programmes. For the social protection programmes to be effective, a regular and reliable registration and tracking system would be put in place. The SPRINT will specifically perform the following functions:

-  Register all beneficiaries of social protection programmes;
-  Provide registered persons with identity Cards
-  Establish the eligibility criteria for accessing benefits of the social protection interventions;
-  Support management of complementary benefits to strengthen inter-sectoral linkages between programmes for maximum impact;
-  Provide a baseline for monitoring and evaluating performance of the programmes; and
-  Record monthly transfers to beneficiaries.

Population of the SPRINT: The SPRINT will be populated at the community and district levels with data generated at these levels. The SPRINT will shall be the starting point for selecting the beneficiaries. Data will be generated on expected beneficiaries using the combination of targeting mechanisms explained above.

Location of the SPRINT: The SPRINT will be maintained at the National Social Protection Secretariat (NSPS). The NSPS will document information on all intended beneficiaries into the SPRINT. When the system is fully developed, it will be an automated system with data entry points at the district levels

3.5. Graduation and Exit

The SPRINT will be updated periodically to ensure the reliability of the data. The database will provide the necessary information for ensuring that resources go to the intended beneficiaries, and progress in their conditions monitored to make sure that the intended beneficiaries do not become continually dependent nor miss out on receiving the needed supported. It will also ensure sustainability

A key goal of the NSPP is to ensure a minimum standard of living and a life of dignity for all Sierra Leoneans. This means that some policies and interventions will be maintained as long as they remain relevant to specific beneficiaries' needs (e.g. a disability benefit for the disabled, a pension for the elderly will be maintained throughout their old age). Nevertheless, the NSPP also includes policies and interventions intended to lift individuals and families out of poverty, encourage them to find employment and engage in productive activities to earn their own livelihoods. For these interventions and policies, intended beneficiaries will be given access to social assistance and other complementary forms of support. This support would include financial services, training and asset transfers. The beneficiaries will be encouraged to save. The NSPP will develop clear and consistent definitions, indicators and operational mechanisms for determining graduation and set realistic expectations about the speed, level and sustainability of graduation from the social protection programmes. This will consider individuals' and households' future potential when they exit the social protection programmes.

The NSPP will employ a beneficiary or intervention level exit strategy for graduating beneficiaries from the programmes or continuing support depending on the category of the beneficiary. It is therefore, expected that terminal beneficiaries with productive capacity will participate in other programmes for a period to develop and sustain their basic livelihoods. Beneficiaries will then be linked up with other complementary programmes to further enhance their social and economic capacities.

3.6. Effectiveness, Efficiency and Sustainability of Policy programmes

While current social protection interventions have targeted and benefited the 'active poor' or the 'working poor', it has made little impact on many and perhaps growing number) of the poor population. The impact of having 'un-reached' excluded and intended beneficiaries is such that, these groups will forever be trapped in the inter-

generational cycle of poverty which would jeopardize the achievements of national poverty reduction and development goals. Therefore, social protection initiatives to improve and enhance access to basic social services would be highly dependent on the effectiveness of the achievement of sectoral policies.

The Policy shall include transformative and productive elements, which empower people to improve their lives and to graduate out of poverty. For sustainability, there is need for legislative backing for this Policy. In view of limited financial and implementation capacities, there shall be prioritization of options for social protection programmes to ensure efficiency. The Policy shall be linked to budgetary processes to ensure the sustainability and legitimacy of social protection funding. Government will continuously assess and plan cost and overall cost-effectiveness of specific programmes to strengthen coordination and reduce corruption. Government shall build sufficient capacity and ownership for the financial sustainability of social protection programmes.

CHAPTER 4

INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK AND IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENT

4.1. Coordination and Integration

Poor coordination of Social Protection interventions is a critical constraint to achieving efficient use of resources and meaningful impact on the lives of the poor and vulnerable.

The existing social protection delivery institutional framework was instituted in 2011 via a Presidential directive that established a National Social Protection Authority (NSPA) as the most superior body on social protection located in the Office of the President with oversight by the Chief of Staff. The NSPS is the technical arm responsible for facilitating the NSPA's oversight functions. The Authority is comprised of the following MDAs: the Ministries of finance and economic planning, labor and social security, social welfare, gender and children's affairs, health, education, and National Commission for Social Action (NaCSA). Non-state actors including Civil Society Organizations, private sector and development partners are also members of the Authority. The Authority's mandate is to oversee programs and specific elements of social protection.

An Institutional Assessment of the social protection delivery agencies including the NSPS identified weaknesses in the coordination of the social protection program and institutional arrangements of the Authority. The weaknesses led to slow adoption of SP systems by the sector agencies

The Institutional Set-up

The table below shows the institutional framework for the NSPA that shall be established by legislation.

Table 1: Social Protection institutional framework

Institution	Responsibility	Membership
Office of the President	Anchor and link to Cabinet; visioning and broader policy direction	Chief of Staff or any other designated person to perform the functions of the COS

Institution	Responsibility	Membership
National Social Protection Board (NSPB)	SP policy oversight, monitoring, evaluation and standards setting	Core members drawn from state actors and non-state actors with the Chief of Staff as chairman and the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MoFED) as co-chairman. Other state actors co-opted as and when necessary.
National Social Protection Secretariat	Day-to-day administration, coordination and facilitation and support of SP;	NSPS technical and other staff with support from National Social Protection Technical Committee and sub-committees;
National Social Protection Technical Committee (NSPTC).	Coordination and implementation of SP policy, strategy and programs; SP think tank;	Directorate level staff of sector ministries and agencies including non-state actors responsible for SP programs at national levels.
District SP Technical Committee,	Coordination and implementation of SP programs	District level sector, agencies and non-state actors technical staff overseeing and implementing SP activities

The institutional arrangements below (*Figure 2*) present the governance structure - the authority and policy, coordination and implementation platforms - proposed for the National Social Protection Authority that will articulate and implement the National Social Protection Policy and programme. The NSPA shall be established by an Act of Parliament and reporting to the Office of the President and Parliament. At its apex, shall be a National Social Protection Board chaired by the Chief of Staff (COS). The existing National Social Protection Secretariat shall be responsible for the day-to-day administration of the NSPA and provide coordination of the SP interventions as guided by the policy. NSPS will work together with National SP

Technical Committee comprising of the Directors of MDAs as well as well as with the decentralised government structures at Regional, District and Chiefdom levels in line with the provisions of Act of Parliament.

4.2. Key stakeholders and roles

The Role of Parliament

The Cabinet shall clear the Draft Bill on the NSPA once it is presented by the Minister of Labor and Social Security and sent to Parliament for ratification. Once the Act is passed, Parliamentary oversight will be exercised via a Parliamentary Sub-Committee on Labor and Social security. The Sub-Committee shall receive annual performance reports from the NSPA as it exercises its oversight function and report back to parliament.

National Social Protection Board

The National Social Protection Board shall provide strategic policy oversight monitoring and evaluation, and set standards for implementing the social protection policy. The Minister of Labor and Social Security will report to Government on the operations of the NSPB through a Cabinet Sub-Committee and to Parliament. The NSPB members shall have relevant technical expertise¹⁰ in respective aspects of social protection. The members shall be professionally and competitively selected from the government, international and national NGOS and CSOs, and the private sector. It would include representatives of quasi-state bodies such as NASSIT and Statistics Sierra Leone, and civil society umbrella platforms for social protection.

This body shall oversee the Government's response to social protection in Sierra Leone and shall be responsible for, among others, the following functions: policy oversight and advocacy, resource mobilisation, M&E and set and enforce standards and regulations.

¹⁰ Identify critical sectors and spell out how the experts are going to be selected. Ministers' input would be valued but objective criteria for Board membership are critical.

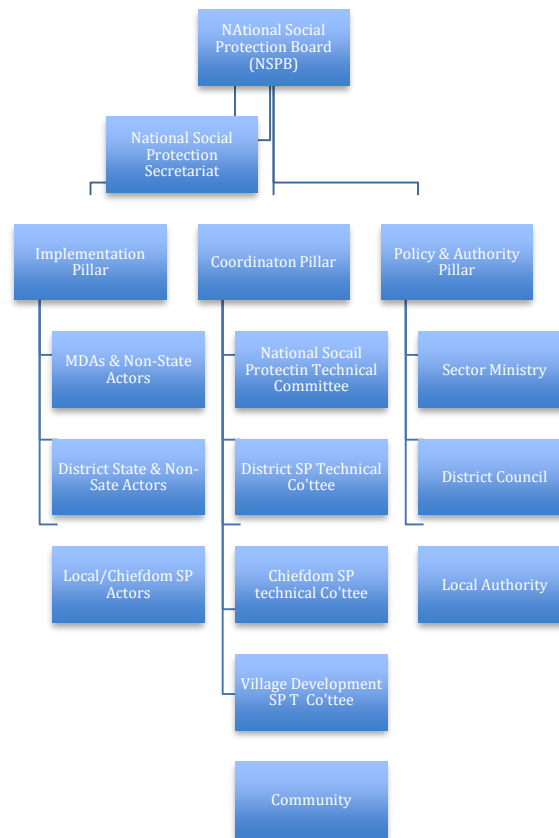


Figure 2: Institutional Arrangements

National Social Protection Secretariat

The Government shall establish, through legislation, the National Social Protection Secretariat as an integral part of the NSPA to coordinate the implementation of the Social Protection Policy. The NSPS shall be the administrative and technical arm of NSPB. The NSPS with support of key committees at national and local levels shall be responsible for coordination of and reporting on social protection policy implementation using the SPRINT platform, Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) and technical support to MDAs. The NSPS shall identify and appoint appropriate and competent technical staff in accordance with transparent procedures and processes.

Implementation Pillar

❖ *Ministries, Departments and Agencies, and Non-State Actors*

Ministries, Departments and Agencies shall carry out their respective mandates including development, implementation and monitoring of social protection programs as applicable. Sector ministries will maintain and implement their respective mandates including formulation and implementation of sectoral policies at the national level.

❖ *The District Technical Level MDAs and Non-State Actors*

District level SP technical staff from the MDAs and non-state actors shall be required to include in their mandates, responsibility for implementing social protection interventions across their areas in addition to mobilising and sensitising communities and households to participate in SP activities.

❖ *Local Authority Technical Level MDAs and Non-State Actors*

Community governance structures (Traditional Rulers & Community leaders) shall be involved in delivery of social protection services in communities to facilitate effective programme implementation and build community confidence through collective action. Priority will be given to the use of existing local structures where feasible. The traditional rulers/community leaders shall be required to take responsibility for community level social protection coordination.

Coordination Pillar

❖ *National Social Protection Technical Committee*

In addition to providing the technical, coordination and implementation leadership of the SP policy, the NSPTC shall serve as the ‘think tank’ for the Policy. Membership shall be drawn from relevant MDAs implementing social protection policy and representatives of CSOs and national and international NGOs. Representatives of the financial services sector shall be invited into the NSPTC given the central role of the sector in delivery of cash payments and wider financial services to the poor and intended beneficiaries. NSPTC shall ensure the adoption of the SPRINT integrated platform for targeting and reporting by all actors in SP. In addition, the NSPTC shall provide SP program information to the NSPB and

review the SP strategic and programmatic documents and recommend action form the Board.

❖ ***District Social Protection Technical Committee***

The District Social Protection Technical Committee (DSPTC) shall comprise SP technical representatives from District Councils/Municipalities, Anti-Corruption commission, civil society and ministries and agencies at the district level. DSPTC tasks shall include s support District Councils and Municipalities to include in their mandates, responsibility for providing oversight to and coordination of social protection programs under implementation and the maintenance of registries of SP programmes and beneficiaries in the district.

❖ ***Chieftdom Social Protection Technical Committees (CSPTC)***

The Chieftdom Councils (and the equivalent bodies in town councils and urban municipalities) shall oversee chieftdom SP activities and Village Development SP Technical Committees. The CSPTC would consist of the Paramount and section chiefs, representative of VDCs and CSOs. The committee would be responsible for coordination of chieftdom level SP initiatives to ensure that communities at VDC level and below to access their entitlement.

❖ ***Village Development SP Technical Committee (VDSPTC)***

The VDSPTC would support the coordination of the delivery of the social protection services at the community level. They shall support effective coordination of program implementation and build community confidence in collective actions. Besides supporting the identification and validation of beneficiaries they shall maintain and verify of a register of the validated beneficiaries, support individual beneficiaries in area of complaint/grievance redress; and participate in the monitoring and evaluation processes of the program. This would be the first line of registration of beneficiaries during emergencies and would be trained accordingly to take that role.

Policy and Authority

❖ ***Sector Ministries***

Sector ministries are responsible for development, planning, budgeting and execution of their own sector SP programs. In addition, they are the custodians of

their respective sector norms and standards that guide implementation and oversight of SP programs under their mandates.

❖ ***District Councils (DC)***

The District Council is the coordinator of SP authority and policy at the district level and below. In executing this role, the DCs shall provide information to raise awareness and lead advocacy for the SP program. In addition, DCs will create linkages to other existing interventions (complementarities to other services) that potentially benefit the same target groups.

❖ ***Local Councils***

The Chiefdom/Local Councils (and the equivalent bodies in urban municipalities) would take responsibility for social protection policy pronouncements and coordination. The Councils shall participate in identification and validation of beneficiaries, maintenance of a register of the validated beneficiaries which information shall be forwarded to the District Council; and management and maintenance of the monitoring and evaluation system.

❖ ***Village Development Committees and Community Level***

Established community level governance structures such as the Village Development Committee (VDC) are the responsible authorities and custodians of policy including SP policy at the community level. Membership of the VDC is elected and includes Chiefdoms.

❖ ***Civil Society Organizations and Community Based Organizations (CBOs)***

Civil Society Organizations including CBOs are central to the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Social Protection Policy and Strategy and eventually evaluating the successes and impact. These organizations are accountable to their constituents who are mostly the beneficiaries of social protection programmes so they are recognized by Government as partners to ensure that programs achieve the intended purposes. Their functions shall include but not limited to:

- Working through their respective local partners to ensure that programs achieve the intended objectives;
- Support transparency and accountability mechanisms on SP programs;

- Improve communication and information sharing to inform people about their rights and obligations;
- Play a vital role in ensuring linkages with complementary services including health, education and facilitate training aimed at strengthening service delivery;
- Support SP advocacy, fund raising and implementation activities; and
- Support policy and program development through evidence-based research.

❖ ***Development Partners (DPs)***

GoSL shall collaborate extensively with DPs in the implementation of the Sierra Leone Social Protection policy. The specific functions of DPs shall include:

- Support SP Policy and Strategy formulation, reviews and implementation;
- Provide technical support for SP policy analysis, planning, budgeting, implementation, monitoring and evaluation;
- Contribute to strengthening human resource and logistics capacity for implementation;
- Collaborate with NGOs and CSOs to support M&E initiatives;
- Facilitate access to best practice models in other countries and sharing information on best practice and lessons learnt from global experiences;
- Position national efforts in global practice of nations & dialogue forums;
- Align their financial support to the priorities of this policy; and
- Make predictable financial commitments and funding for effective implementation of social protection programmes.

❖ ***Private Sector***

The Private sector is a critical stakeholder in the implementation of Social Protection policy. In this regard, the private sector shall perform the following functions:

- Support social protection interventions through structured corporate social responsibility schemes and initiatives;
- Assist the state in providing apprenticeship and employment;
- Provide inputs and products for social assistance;
- Contribute in financing social protection programs and initiatives;
- Initiate social employment schemes for communities in which they operate and the country in general;

- Monitor the SP policy from the private sector perspectives and contribute to making a strong business case for SP;
- Support social infrastructural development to improve access of the poor and vulnerable;
- Engage in and promote decent work in their establishments;
- Provide in partnership with NRC, identity cards and biometric technology that will support the building of a registration system for individuals and households eligible for social protection; and
- Collaborate with financial service providers, including microfinance institutions in the provision of products appropriate for the needs of poor households, especially cash-based social protection programmes using competitive tender arrangements and Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs) governing service agreement.

❖ ***Non-Governmental Organization, Organized Labor and Civil Society Organizations***

The policy shall maximize opportunities offered by formal and informal social networks including NGOs, CSOs and labor movements. They shall be encouraged to build on their track record of traditional social protection practices and shall:

- Advocate for social protection legislations and provide feedback on emerging gaps in programmes;
- Communicate and sensitize their membership on SP policies, legislations and programmes;
- Mobilize resources and advocate increased funding for SP programmes;
- Implement traditional and non-state social interventions in operational areas;
- Initiate and pilot innovations in SP in response to local priorities and demands;
- Foster partnerships among themselves and with state institutions to reduce programme duplication and overlaps;
- Monitor public as well as non-state SP interventions; and
- Promote social accountability and the exercise of oversight roles.

❖ *Information Education & Communication (IEC): The Media - Communication and influencing strategy*

The Government acknowledges that the Social Protection concept is not widely understood by the public. There is therefore an urgent need for a comprehensive campaign to explain the subject, provisions of the policy and processes for implementation. The aim will be to raise awareness and engender ownership of the Policy and its implementation by the various stakeholders and implementing partners. The aims will be to:

- Provide information on Social Protection in a simplified, easy to understand manner; and
- Ensure flow of information to and from key stakeholders in a timely manner, including key Government ministries, development partners, communities and beneficiaries.

Given their strategic role in public information and education, the media (print, electronic and television) shall play pivotal role in the Communication and influencing strategy. The media will be encouraged to:

- a) Support public education on social protection;
- b) Keep public informed about SP priorities, lessons learnt and best practices from various parts of the country on different programmes;
- c) Undertake field outreach events, record and disseminate good practices and lessons learnt in SP;
- d) Highlight implementation challenges for concrete and responsive action of relevant stakeholders; and
- e) Host studio and on-the-spot field discussions and interactive forums to assist in testing policy preferences and options in SP programme delivery.

❖ *Universities, Research Institutions and Think-Tanks*

Government recognizes the need for a strong knowledge base, research, qualitative and quantitative information for evidence based decision-making, effective policy formulation, implementation and reforms. To this end, universities and policy research institutions shall be responsible for:

- a) Including social protection as core component in university curricula;
- b) Designing and delivering interactive, communicative & community user-friendly specialist courses in areas that build synergy with SP priorities and paradigm shifts; this includes improved targeting mechanisms, strategies to effectively graduate beneficiaries from poverty and exiting same from SP programmes;
- c) Policy research in key areas of social protection with the object of:
 - i. Identifying critical issues, constraints and opportunities
 - ii. Contributing to existing knowledge and literature on SP
 - iii. M&E, particularly identification of results, impacts and lessons
 - iv. Evidence-based advocacy
- d) Training personnel and implementing partners in SP-related techniques and capacities.

4.3. Institutional Development

Institutional development is critical to the achievement of the implementation of the Policy. Therefore, Government and partners will invest in developing the capacities of institutions for an enduring social protection at all levels of government and across MDAs. The first phase of the institutional development effort will prioritise support to the NSPS for strengthening the SP systems and oversight functions. The scope and nature of capacity building and institutional support shall be based on needs assessment of the capacity of all relevant institutions that will be involved in the administration and implementation of social protection interventions. Needs assessment will identify gaps in technical skills relating to financial management, information and communication technology (ICT), monitoring and evaluation, and targeting techniques, among others. Technical assistance (TA) for mentoring relevant staff of implementing agencies by development partners; and training modules and process manuals shall be developed for guidance on the administration of social protection programmes.

CHAPTER 5

FINANCING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

5.1. Financing and budgeting

The Government of Sierra Leone bears the principal responsibility for ensuring effective and sustained social protection delivery through adequate budgetary allocation financed from public resources. In respect, thereof, GoSL shall ensure adequate provision for social protection in the national budget from the consolidated fund. To this effect, social protection planning and budgeting will be integrated into the annual budgeting and performance management frameworks. This will be realized through the following actions:

- ❖ Inclusion of a summary social protection budget as part of the annual budget statement;
- ❖ Strengthening capacity in budget planning, implementation and expenditure tracking of social protection programmes;
- ❖ Review and update the objectives of social development indicated in the annual budget statement;
- ❖ Provision of inputs for annual budget reporting.

To facilitate the process, the NSPA in collaboration with stake holding ministries shall ensure the development of up-to-date business cases for social protection. In accordance with the national budget calendar and cycle:

- ❖ Sector MDAs through the respective social protection focal persons shall submit projected requirements to the NSPS to develop a work plan and summary of budgetary requirements;
- ❖ Budgetary proposals shall be reviewed by NSPA in collaboration with MoFED and the relevant parliamentary select committee;
- ❖ Based on the identified sp interventions, MoFED shall support NSPA to review and update short and medium term expenditure plans in the social development section of the national budget framework;
- ❖ MoFED shall defend the budget and work plans together with the requisite bodies including NSPA and sector MDAs;

- ❖ The NSPP priorities shall be aligned with national medium-term public expenditure projection; and
- ❖ Approved funds shall be administered through implementing sector MDAs.

5.2. Complimentary Funding Sources

While GoSL has the responsibility for ensuring consistent social protection financing, other innovative financing mechanisms by social partners from the private sector, other non-state actors and development partners are encouraged for the following reasons:

- ❖ Sierra Leone has a rich tradition of support for social protection from non-state sources including families, local authorities, religious bodies and mutual-help groups. GoSL shall ensure that good traditional social protection practices are supported and reinforced.
- ❖ In relation to the SDGs, partnership is recognized in “Financing for Development”. To this end, GoSL considers the importance of domestic sources with expectations of private sector and philanthropic sources;
- ❖ The country’s third generation Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) A4F dedicates importance of partnership in economic growth and poverty reduction. Based on these perspectives, the ensuing social protection law and NSPA shall prescribe some potential sources of funding for social protection including but not limited to the following:
 - Local councils shall raise complimentary funds for social protection through institutional and operational arrangements in their localities, locally generated revenues, royalties, donations and individual contributions from citizens, in conformity with provisions of Government Fiscal Policy;
 - NGOs and CSOs shall mobilise resources to initiate, expand and consolidate initiatives in social protection in response to local priorities and demands and in conformity with social protection policy provisions and local council development plans;
 - Faith-based organizations shall compliment the efforts of traditional society particularly in under-serviced areas. This will include to support mutual health

insurance schemes, providing relief, social assistance and promoting social, financial and productive inclusion;

- The media shall support public education on social protection priorities and best practices locally and from various parts of the country;
- The private sector shall support financially and in-kind social protection interventions through structured corporate social responsibility schemes and initiatives;
- Universities, Policy Research Institutions and ‘Think-Tanks’ shall support policy research in key areas of social protection with the object of contributing to existing knowledge and enhancing evidenced-based decision making
- Development partners shall align their financial support to the priorities of this policy

SOCIAL AND FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

5.3 Grievance Redress mechanisms

GoSL recognizes that public and private sector participation in social protection processes is critical. Their feedback on the implementation process, experiences with services and perspectives will facilitate trust, confidence and ownership. To facilitate a sequencing and progression of social protection efforts - including scaling up of social safety nets and existing programmes and introduction of health insurance and other innovative schemes – the policy requires better activation of the demand side.

The social protection sector has a strong opportunity in the wealth of practice, tools and processes developed under the systems building of the Sierra Leone Social Safety Nets Project (SSNP) and cash transfer programmes funded by the GoSL, World Bank, IMF, DFID, USAID, WFP, Irish Aid UNICEF, UNDP and other partners. The systems developed and tested by the SP Secretariat include evidence-based common targeting framework, integrated beneficiary registry/management information system, payment mechanism and a bottom-up Grievance Redress Mechanism anchored at the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) with limited user access to the Social Protection Secretariat and implementing partners. These and other good practices shall be reviewed and consolidated in a Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) manual for wider dissemination, training and adoption for the social protection sector.

Genuine concerns, grievances and redress processes at the local levels shall be implemented by the Village Development Committees, Chiefdom and District Social Protection Technical committees with oversight of ACC and partner CSOs. The local and district complaints committees shall provide immediate relief for aggrieved parties with timely reports to ACC. Unresolved complaints at local levels shall be promptly escalated to ACC.

To ensure accountability and transparency, the Social Protection Authority will strengthen the existing grievance mechanism with participation of Civil Society established under the social safety nets programme, and enforce the inclusion of such mechanism in any programme intervention. The grievance mechanism will help enlighten beneficiaries on their entitlements and responsibilities, serve as focal point for whistle blowers and deal with disputes and complaints from beneficiaries and the public relating to infringement of the entitlements of beneficiaries. In the case of fraud, the matter shall be forwarded to the ACC for appropriate action. Grievance handling mechanisms and standards shall be widely publicized and active employment of social accountability strategies shall be encouraged.

5.4. Financial Accountability Arrangements

The conduct of social protection shall be within the laws of Sierra Leone including the Public Financial Management, Internal Audit and Public Procurement legislations. Expenditure on social protection shall be subjected to the Sierra Leone Public Expenditure Tracking Survey (PETS) mechanism. NSPA and stakeholder social protection MDAs shall be required to provide annual financial management reports and projections on programme basis. There shall be audits as required by the financial management protocols of Sierra Leone including mandatory audits under the auspices of the Auditor General's Department. Social protection expenditure shall be subjected to the scrutiny of the Parliamentary Public Accounts Committee.

5.5. Monitoring and Evaluation

Effective Monitoring and Evaluation systems are important for providing evidence on the impact of projects and programmes. The results convey lessons that support long-term sustainability of programmes. Evaluation is part of the strategy for the implementation of the policy. Evaluation will assess the impact of policy implementation on the vulnerable within a specified timeframe and against measurable baselines. Government shall use evaluation reports for planning subsequent or follow-up programmes for the vulnerable. A Logical Framework or

similar planning and M&E approach will be developed as part of the implementation process for the National Policy and Strategy so progress can be tracked, and reviewed against performance targets and indicators, enabling learning, adjustments and re-planning when necessary.

M&E in social protection shall be in the national M&E arrangements and integrated into respective institutions charged with M&E at the national, regional and local levels. To ensure effective M&E policy implementation and track developments in social protection holistically, a three-tier system of M&E will be deployed. This will include individual level M&E by respective implementing MDAs; operational level M&E by local councils and overall policy level by NSPA and relevant parliamentary select committees.

Individual programme level: at this level, each component programme shall have an inbuilt, fully functioning M&E system that identifies key results indicators, collect and manage data and report regularly. Individual programme monitoring shall be the responsibility of the implementing institution.

Operation level: at this level, respective MDAs shall be responsible for oversight of all social protection activities in their operational localities. MDAs shall deploy their in-built M&E mechanisms to conduct periodic M&E activities including on-the-spot checks and verify performance on key results indicators reported by individual programmes.

Overall policy level: at this level, an overarching M&E framework shall be deployed. The M&E framework shall be designed to track in a timely manner inter-sectoral and inter-programme performance in social protection in accordance with the objectives, strategies and interventions of the policy. The system shall be anchored at the NSPS and overseen by the NSPA with participation of the relevant Parliamentary committee and stake-holding MDAs.

The programme, operational and overarching M&E systems shall be closely aligned to the national M&E system overseen by NSPA. NSPA shall also receive reports from the SP Secretariat emanating from SP National, Regional and District Technical Steering Committees.

5.6. Performance Measurement

For the Policy to be effective, evidence shall be provided on the extent to which the intended beneficiaries are reached. Towards this end, a scorecard will be generated on the NSPP. This will be used as input into the overall National Social Protection Report and provide a detailed evidence of performance. The scorecard shall be applied to each of the policy measures and interventions described in **Chapter 3**. The information collected through the scorecard will support performance-based monitoring, budgeting, planning and coordination among implementing MDAs.

Outcome key performance indicators; measure the progress towards the national development objectives in the different strategic sectors in line with the country strategic development plan. The structure of the scorecard caters for short and medium term targets, hence periodic evaluation will be undertaken to provide an understanding of the performance of the various policies and interventions

5.7 The National Social Protection Policy Review

The NSPP shall be reviewed every 5 years to ensure it is responsive to emerging issues and challenges, and to address fundamental challenges identified in the M&E process. The NSPS shall facilitate the review of the Policy. All key stakeholders shall be involved in the review to ensure that their views, perspectives and concerns are collected and considered in the process.