

# **Draft Message**

## **COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAMME FOR EVD SURVIVORS (CPES)**

**Our memory of the EVD fight will be of no use with the exclusion of Ebola Survivors. To support the good intentions of HE Dr. Ernest B. Koroma, he has placed Survivors in a special place in his heart. “Capacity building and support for all survivors in the implementation of post Ebola recovery” says President Koroma. The Ministry of Health and Sanitation (MOHS) and the Ministry of Social Welfare Gender and Children Affairs (MSWGCA) with support from International Partners are addressing the needs of Ebola Survivors**

### **Honor Our Ebola Survivors!**

#### **It is safe to be around someone who has survived Ebola.**

- We must honor those who have survived Ebola, we are all Ebola fighters!
- Our survivors are heroes.
- Survivors played a key role during the Response and give us hope for the future.
- If a person has survived and recovered from Ebola, they can no longer spread Ebola to others through casual contact.
- Men who recover from Ebola should abstain from sex or wear a condom during sexual contact for at least 9 months after recovery. However, it is otherwise safe to be around this person.

### **Viral Persistence**

- Preliminary study finds that Ebola virus fragments can persist in the semen of survivors for at least nine months.
- Semen testing is important for survivors as well the nation as a whole.
- The semen testing help survivors know their status and also help to build confidence in Ebola survivors.

### **The aim of CPES**

- To respond in a comprehensive manner to the needs of EVD Survivors; reflecting the integration of basic services to EVD Survivors in the National Health and Social Welfare Systems, aligned with the wider essential service Programmes for all Sierra Leoneans.
- Facilitate the provision of medical and psychosocial services by identifying their individual medical needs and responding to these and providing the basic health Programme for all EVD Survivors.
- Address the risk of EVD resurgence associated with extended EBOV Persistence.
- Strengthen coordination between MOHS, MSWGCA and partners on the provision of a comprehensive programme of services to the EVD Survivors.

**It is safe to be around someone who has survived Ebola.**

- Facilitate the reintegration of survivors into their communities by identifying their individual psychosocial needs, reducing stigma, and community engagement by empowering the EVD Survivors and supporting their livelihood reconstruction.

**To achieve these, the following has been put in place.**

- Free services made available at government hospitals to survivors including treatment for:
  - i. Acute Eye Disease.
  - ii. Neurologic Problems
  - iii. Mental Health and Psychosocial Care.
  - iv. Rheumatology
  - v. Rehabilitation & Physiotherapy.
- Establishment of 13 Survivor Clinics to provide basic health services in 9 Districts and the provision of outreach services through mobile medical teams in 12 Districts.
- Follow up of specialty services/treatment as per individual needs.

**PROJECT SHIELD**

Project Shield is a Short to Medium Term Risk Mitigation Package within the CPES

The intent of Project SHIELD is to implement rapidly a package of psychosocial and physical measures designed to reduce the risks of sexual transmission through survivors. It will include :

- enhancement and updating of the survivor registration programmes; (Phase One)
- education (on the risks of sexual transmission, PFA) for survivors and partners; (Phase Two)
- training (in safer sexual practices, PFA); (Phase Two)
- distribution of condoms (male-female), empowering the female partner(s); (Phase Three)
- Counselling on Safe Sexual Practices and Semen Testing (Phase Four)
- and (ultimately) vaccination of survivor contacts when extended viral persistence is documented. (Phase Five)

Project SHIELD is being implemented incrementally into highest priority Districts, Wards and Chiefdoms. It has begun with a pilot experience in a suitable area (Wards 371 to 374 in WA). It focuses on males  $\geq 15$  yrs old who had onset of symptoms within last 9 months.

Project SHIELD will leverage and empower the Sierra Leone Association of Ebola Survivors (SLAES) as a key component of the delivery programme. i.e. Frontline delivery. Survivor advocates.

**It is safe to be around someone who has survived Ebola.**