



Social protection for the missing middle  
LEARNING AND PRACTICE LAB

*Concept Note for East and Southern Africa Technical Experts' Meeting*

21<sup>st</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2018, Ezulwini, Swaziland

Meeting jointly organized with the  
Technical Seminar on Extending Social Security to the informal economy  
Swaziland 21-22 February



## 1. Background

### 1.1 *Informality: a stubborn feature of African labour markets*

Globally the informal economy comprises more than half of the global labour force and more than 90% of micro and small enterprises (MSEs) worldwide. While statistics on the informal economy are generally scarce and unevenly available data suggest that currently **87.4 million citizens** of the SADC region are engaged in informal employment, including subsistence agriculture. The informal economy contributes between 22 to 52 per cent of GDP in Southern Africa, and its share in total employment ranges from 15 to over 94, while exceeding 80% on average in the region. The inability of most Southern African economies to create sufficient number of formal jobs to absorb the new labour market entrants means that many young people must create their own livelihoods in the informal economy, thus leading to even greater informalization of national economies.

It is estimated that 93% of new jobs created in sub-Saharan Africa during the 1990s were in the informal sector<sup>1</sup>. In Sub-Saharan Africa statutory social security was estimated between 5 to 19 percent of the working population, implying that, over 80 percent of workers lack adequate social protection coverage (ILO, 2002). The challenge of social protection coverage is amplified by the current labour market trends which indicate the growth of the “missing middle” a population that is neither covered by social assistance and social insurance programmes due to limitations in targeting approaches and design and structures exclude this category of the population. Mixed social protection approaches are needed to increase coverage to persons working in both the formal and informal economies.

### 1.2 *Why a Learning and Practice Lab on Extension of Social Protection to Missing Middle?*

One of the mechanisms for promoting innovative policy solutions, knowledge and experience sharing at national and regional level is through creation of a learning and practice lab on extension of coverage. The Learning and practice Lab will focus on practice, problem driven identification, co-creation of solutions and practical experimentation. The learning and practice lab will provide a policy and practice dialogue platform among practitioners in different countries. Besides providing opportunities for practical experimentation and exchange of lessons learnt, the practice lab also provides an avenue for co-creation of a mix of approaches and strategies among practitioners. Participation to the learning and practice lab will include face to face interaction, practical peer to peer learning and online exchanges to enhance policy dialogue on the future of social protection for the majority of Africans.

### 1.3 *The starting point: Gathering of East and Southern Africa practitioners*

As a first step towards defining the format and objectives of the Learning and practice Lab, a face to face meeting of experts and practitioners from Southern and Eastern African countries will take place from 21<sup>st</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2018 in Ezulwini, Swaziland.

The gathering will provide an opportunity for experts' and practitioners to engage in the process among and across country teams that will facilitate identification of challenges experimentation and iteration of solutions accompanied by enhanced capability and accountability for performance in programme implementation. The gathering will include a 3 days peer to peer dialogue and exploration of possible solutions amongst regional practitioners that will provide room to discuss possible further stages of consolidation of the learning and practice lab.

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<sup>1</sup> International Labour Organisation Project Doc on Informal Economy Support in Southern Africa (INESSA)

The gathering will also aim to collect information on ongoing experiences/projects/initiatives in the area of extension of social protection coverage to the informal economy in Southern and Eastern Africa, with a view at compiling a catalogue/repository of ongoing effective implementation practices, or emerging ones in the continent. For this purpose a first meeting with country team members was held to introduce the concept and get input on the learning and practice lab. In addition a form and preparatory materials will be circulated in advance to participating country teams in readiness for the workshop.

## **2. Objectives of the experts' Networking Meeting**

- To link practitioners and experts with similar practices in the field of extension of social protection to the informal economy ("missing middle") in Southern and Eastern Africa and provide an opportunity to promote peer to peer learning on diverse tools to support practice.
- To provide an opportunity for building a progressive knowledge base regarding programmes and practices on extension of social protection in the sub region.
- To stimulate exchange of new ideas and innovations in order to facilitate development of practical solutions among project developers in different countries.
- To provide a forum for experimenting, and reflecting on different approaches, tools and materials oriented towards improving practice on extension of social protection coverage in different domains (communications, adapted rules and regulations to cover self-employed, collaboration between public administration/departments, adapted back office administration/processing of registration and claims, customer –service interface(s), use of technology)
- To facilitate practical learning through informal peer-to-peer and tacit knowledge sharing.

Interactive approaches will be used to encourage experts' and practitioners to identify challenges experimentation and iteration of solutions. Lesson learnt and emergent experiences on practices across countries will be shared through regular peer-to-peer leaning. Formal power-point-type presentations will not be allowed in order to facilitate horizontal exchange amongst participants. Preparatory materials will be sent in advance to allow adequate preparations among country teams.

## **3. Participants**

The meeting is expected to comprise a maximum of 30 participants to encourage active discussions. Participants will comprise experts, policy makers and practitioners directly involved in social protection policy administration, research, design, and implementation and monitoring of social protection policies from Eastern and southern African countries. The meeting may include also 1/2 participants from Asia/Latin America and the academia.

**Tentative Agenda**  
**21<sup>st</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2018**

| Learning and Practice Lab- Social Protection to Missing Middle. |   | Methodology   |
|---|---|---|
| Wednesday Morning<br>21 <sup>st</sup> February 2018             | <b>Day 1</b>  |   |
| 8.30  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Registration of Participant</li> </ul>   | ILO   |
| 09.00   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Welcome, intro of participants, Country Teams</b></li> <li>Background on the Learning and Practice Lab- Social Protection to Missing Middle.</li> <li>The purpose and vision of Learning and Practise Lab Overview of Program</li> </ul>  | TBC   |
| 9.30  | <p><b><i>What are countries doing in relation to coverage of “missing middle”</i></b></p> <p><b>Format: Two sets of Round Robin</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6 country groups (including resource people from other continents) [3 groups per round, 20 mins per group].</li> <li>Country teams make a 5 min presentation using common format,</li> <li>Q&amp;A</li> </ul> <p>Total = 90 mins</p> | <p>Technical Experts exchange</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bring statistics, tools (videos, photos, brochures, ...)</li> <li>What’s currently happening in country regarding Extension of SP to Missing Middle</li> <li>What are some of the Tools being used in extending social protection in your country</li> </ul> |
| End 11.00   |   |   |
| Wednesday 21 <sup>st</sup><br>February 2018                     | <b>ISSA Technical Seminar</b>   |   |
| Morning<br>11.30  | Key note L Frota<br>Case studies  |   |
| 16.30 hrs.  | End of Day 1  |   |
|   | <b>Day 2</b>  |   |



|                                   |  |                                    |
|-----------------------------------|--|------------------------------------|
| Friday, 23 <sup>rd</sup> February | <b>Day 3 Session Work in LAB COUNTRY TEAMS</b>   |                                    |
| Morning<br>09.00hrs               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Problem formulation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How is the problem of covering the “missing middle” defined by different actors?</li> <li>- What is the problem from your perspective? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Why is the extension of coverage important from your perspective?</li> <li>○ What concerns do you have with the extension of coverage?</li> <li>○ How would a solution look like? would your answers change if you considered the implication of extending social protection 30 years from now? How?</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> |                                    |
| 10.00<br><br>10.45                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Deconstruction of Problems</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Root analysis</li> <li>○ Why it matters</li> <li>○ Who cares</li> </ul> </li> </ul>  | Fish bone analyses<br>Problem Tree |
| 11.15                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Introduction of Problem Driven Iterative Adaption Approach (PDIA)</b></li> </ul>   | PDIA Videos<br>SearchFrame         |
| 11.30                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Establishing Drivers of Change</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Existing Change Space</li> <li>○ Sequencing Practical Actions</li> </ul> </li> </ul>   | Force Field<br>Triple A            |
|                                   | <b>Tea Break</b>   |                                    |
|                                   |  |                                    |
| 13.00                             | <b>Lunch Break</b>   |                                    |
| Afternoon<br>14.00hrs             | <b>Country TEAMS Reports / Discussions</b>   |                                    |
| 15.30                             | <b>Experts Networking on how to work forward</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning and Practice Lab Tangible Results (7-9 months)</li> <li>• Plan for Country Teams Reporting Feedback/Coaching</li> <li>• Face to face Follow Up Meetings</li> <li>•</li> </ul>   |                                    |
| 16.30                             | <b>End of Day 3</b>  |                                    |