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Inception Report

From October 2019 to May 2020

**EU/ILO/UNICEF/GCSPF Programme on Improving Synergies
between Social Protection and Public Finance
Management**

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1 Executive Summary

The EU-ILO-UNICEF-GCSFP programme “Improving synergies between social protection and public finance management” (hereafter, SP&PFM programme) aims to support countries in their efforts to work towards achieving universal and sustainable social protection coverage, in line with the human right to social protection and the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development.

The SP&PFM programme supports governments' efforts to expand or refine social protection measures including their financing basis and redistributive effects and considering the broader demographic, strategic, economic and fiscal context within which they are to be realized. To achieve this, the SP&PFM programme ensures that countries improve the design and financing of adequate social protection systems, including through more effective planning and spending of public social budget, in support of their efforts towards ending poverty in all its forms (SDG 1) and reducing inequalities (SDG 10). It also provides support to governments in implementing and monitoring effective gender sensitive and disability-inclusive social protection systems and programmes for all while ensuring financial sustainability and macroeconomic stability and assists beneficiary countries in developing and applying shock-sensitive social protection programmes and systems adapted to the needs of those living in protracted fragility and crises, including forcibly displaced persons.

The programme also aims at increasing the impact of EU development cooperation in a twin-track approach. On the one hand, it leverages on PFM and domestic resource mobilization to strengthen national social protection systems and ensure their sustainability. On the other hand, it will incorporate, where relevant, social protection into budget support operations, in particular of the forthcoming EU programming 2021-27, to accelerate the achievement of their general objectives of poverty eradication and inequality reduction; inclusive economic growth and job creation, crisis prevention and recovery, consolidation of democracies and peaceful societies. . Since the outbreak of the pandemic, the SP& PFM programme has provided support to the selected EU delegations in drawing up social protection in their COVID-19 responses in close coordination with national stakeholders and relevant development partner. Last but not least, the programme offers to the implementing partners, e.i. ILO, UNICEF and the Global Coalition for Social Protection Floors (here after GCSPF), political space to work more efficiently with national stakeholders on PFM in the context of social protection.

At country level, the SP&PFM programme works with ministries of finance, budget and planning, as well as ministries in charge of social policies (health, labour, social welfare, women, etc.) and social protection institutions and programmes, relevant civil society, workers and employers organizations, and academia.

The SP&PFM is implemented through two approaches. Under Approach 1, which is implemented jointly by UNICEF, ILO and the GCSPF, the programme provides three-year technical assistance to eight pre-identified countries to strengthen their social protection systems, in particular through better public finance management and improved implementation systems. It furthermore facilitates cross-country research and knowledge sharing in view of strengthening the design, implementation and sustainability of shock-responsive, gender-sensitive and disability inclusive social protection systems, with special emphasis on their financing. The eight priority countries are Angola, Ethiopia, Burkina Faso, Uganda, Senegal, Nepal, Cambodia, and Paraguay. Under Approach 2, implemented by the ILO, additional 15-20 countries, selected through calls for concept notes receive on-demand shorter term-term technical advisory services in the same context as Approach 1. A first call for concept notes was launched in April 2020 with a thematic focus on COVID-19.

A six-month inception period (October 2019 to March 2020) was designed to facilitate the preparation of the programme. The inception phase was agreed to develop project

documents, budgets, workplans, Logframes, recruitment of the programme manager, technical experts and other staff at country level, and develop a communication and visibility strategy and an evaluation plan, and set up the structures for a smooth and efficient implementation of the SP&PFM programme.^a This report covers a longer inception period of eight months (from October 2019 to May 2020) and gives a summary of the activities conducted and work accomplished during this period. As per the agreement, the financial report of the inception phase will be included in the first progress report.

The inception phase served to produce the required documents as per the agreement and thus set the SP&PFM programme on track for an efficient implementation. Implementing partners in the eight countries of the Approach 1 developed joint country-level project documents and ensured buy-in and ownership of key national stakeholders, including governments, social partners and civil society.

The Approach 2 of the SP&PFM programme, implemented by the ILO, was set-up with the objective of deploying short-term technical assistance on social protection and public finance management to selected countries through a series of calls for proposal. During the inception phase, the project document and its annexes of the Approach 2 was developed and then validated by the Steering Committee. The main activity of the Approach 2 during these first six months is the rapid completion of the call for proposals and related selection process of country proposals to contribute to the response to the COVID-19 crisis. 29 countries submitted a proposal, of which 10 were selected by the Operational Committee, based on their fulfilment of the technical criteria included in the terms of reference of the call and the strong fit with the EU budget support programmes, to receive support in their efforts to respond to the COVID-19 crisis through social protection measures: Bangladesh, Cabo Verde, Cote d'Ivoire, Ecuador, Malawi, Myanmar, Nigeria, Peru, Sri Lanka, and Togo.

In addition, the cross-country component supports the coordination and management tasks and facilitation of cross-country knowledge development and sharing and provides technical expertise for both approaches 1 and 2.

Key achievements of the inception phase include:

- Organization and facilitation, jointly with EC-DEVCO, of the inception workshop that took place in Brussels, 2-4 December 2019;
- Establishment of the SP&PFM programme's steering committee;
- Development of the eight country project documents and their annexes (budget, workplan, communication and country-specific visibility strategy) through close collaboration between ILO, UNICEF and GCSPF teams in countries and consultations with key national stakeholders;
- Development of the Project document and its annexes, for approach 2 and the cross-country component;
- Approval of the eight country project documents, approach 2 and cross-country documents through the steering committee;
- Preparation and validation of the communication and visibility strategy and evaluation plan of the programme;
- Elaboration of a research proposal, including the concept note, terms of reference for the research, and identification of a suitable research institute (Annex 2);
- Organization and documentation of one face-to-face and three virtual Steering Committee meetings for the approval of the project documents, communication and visibility strategy, evaluation plan and research proposal;
- Continued overall flow of communication between EU, ILO, UNICEF, GCSPF at global and country levels;

^a The documents are available on this workspace: <https://www.social-protection.org/gimi/ShowProjectWiki.action?id=3464&pid=3094>

- Continued technical assistance and guidance provided to project teams at country level, including for the development of the project documents and annexes, recruitment of staff, preparation of analytical work (ToRs, identification of suitable consultants), participation in coordination meetings, and reaching out to EU Delegations, among other tasks.

The main challenges of the inception phase lies in the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic that obliged countries to implement restrictive measures, including lockdown, and shifted national priorities toward urgent sanitary and socio-economic responses to the crisis. This situation has delayed the launch of the programme and recruitment of the programme's staff has been suspended in some countries for few months. However, the programme was able to support technically some governments in shaping the COVID-19 response and to participate in the discussions concerning the financial sustainability of the social protection systems post-crisis, in particular in countries where staff was already in place.

2 Summary of the inception phase, including activities under Approach 1 in the eight priority countries, cross-country activities and those under Approach 2

TASKS DELIVERY DURING THE INCEPTION PHASE ^b				
Tasks	Activities	Implementing body (ILO/UNICEF/GCSPF)	Status of the task (completed/on-track/delayed)	Description of the process (consultations with national partners, including social partners)

^b Based on the Implementation Plan

Approved PRODOCs and annexes	Develop and agree on detailed global activities, work plan, budget, and Logframe	ILO/UNICEF/ GCSFP	Completed	<p>The ILO, UNICEF and GCSFP conducted internal consultations and appraisals process in their respective headquarters to prepare the project documents, including annexes, communication and visibility strategy, evaluation plan, and global research concept of the cross-country component of Approach 1. The ILO conducted a similar process during the preparation of the project document and annexes of Approach 2 and the cross-country component.</p> <p>In all eight countries, the implementing partners, namely the ILO, UNICEF, GCSFP when relevant, in close consultation with the EU Delegations, jointly developed the project documents, including objectives, theory of change, logframe, activities and work plans. The draft documents were refined through consultations with national stakeholders (including government, civil society with the support of WSM, Oxfam and HelpAge when part of the agreement, social partners, development partners and technical groups focusing on SP and PFM). In beneficiary countries, Ministries of Finance also participated in the consultations. With the exception of Burkina Faso and Cambodia, where consultations were held bilaterally due to the COVID-19 restrictions, all other countries organized a consultation workshop with national stakeholders, prior to the lockdown imposed by the COVID-19, during the inception phase. The steering committee reviewed and provided comments on the eight country project documents and annexes, mid-March 2020. The steering committee approved all eight country, approach 2 and cross-country project documents, during the meeting on 16 April 2020. The final documents, reflecting the COVID-19 situation, were approved via email during the course of May and June.</p>
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Monitoring and evaluation framework	Collect baseline data and indicators relevant for the monitoring and evaluation of the project (logframe with indicators)	ILO	On track	<p>In addition to the evaluation plan of the overall SP&PFM programme, all project documents for the eight countries, the cross-country component of Approach 1 and Approach 2, included a logical framework with base line and target indicators to monitor progress in implementing the project and achieving results. The indicators were brought at the level of outputs, outcomes and impact. For measuring impact, reference was made to the ILO world social protection database and UNICEF social protection statistics. For tracking progress in implementing the country projects and global components, the ILO will make use of the ILO results measuring tools of its Global flagship programme on building social protection floors. Specific hands on training sessions for all project staff at country and global levels will be organized in December 2020.</p> <p>In addition, an integrated M&E framework is under development and a summary matrix of countries' projects documents highlighting their thematic focus has been developed to ensure a more effective coordination and monitoring of the programme.</p>
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Communica tion and visibility strategy	Develop and agree on communication and visibility strategy at global level	ILO/UNICEF	Completed	<p>The project management unit developed the communication and visibility strategy at global level, in accordance with the Communication and Visibility Requirements for EU External Actions and in consultation with their respective communication departments. At country level, each country included a communication and visibility strategy. The global and national strategies were endorsed by the steering committee during the inception phase.</p> <p>At global level, the project management unit is now developing the branding and style guide, including a logo, and website for the overall project. Related proposals for the key visuals will be submitted to the steering committee's members for their appreciation. The branding, style guide and logo will be then used at country level to develop a unique and visible identity of the project. The global webpage, of which the design is now being discussed, will include country webpages for posting major information concerning the project's activities and outputs. In the meantime, a temporary website is hosted on the ILO social-protection.org platform (https://www.social-protection.org/gimi/ShowProject.action?id=3099)</p> <p>All eight countries have already reported good visibility of the project, in particular among the key government institutions dealing with social protection and development partners. In particular, in Senegal, Uganda, Nepal, Cambodia, the project gained visibility during the COVID-19 crisis by actively engaging in the coordination of the development partners' support to the governments' responses in the area of social protection. In Angola, Cambodia, Nepal, and Uganda, the project is working with the development partners and in particular International Financing Institutions (IMF, WB, ADB and DFID) to discuss the cost of the social protection measures to respond to the crisis.</p> <p>Furthermore, the project has now reached good visibility with the EU Delegations in all eight countries. Additional partnership is already being discussed in Ethiopia, Cambodia and Bangladesh for instance. New</p>
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				partnerships with EU Delegations, such as in Sudan and Nigeria, are being developed in other countries based on the programming framework of the SP&PFM programme.
Project implementation structure	Establish and draft term of reference, including members, for the steering committee or coordination structure, organize the launch of the project	ILO	On-track	<p>The programme management unit, the steering committee and operational committee (for Approach 2) are set up and operational, as per the agreement.</p> <p>The role and composition of the Advisory Board is still subject to discussion. Related draft ToRs have been circulated.</p> <p>At country level, with the exception of Nepal due to the COVID-19 restrictions, all other countries have set up their steering committee. The composition is of representatives from the government, social partners (though not in all countries), and civil society, and in many countries with the participation of the EU delegation, development partners. In addition, in all countries, the ILO and UNICEF are closely coordinating the project, and in particular, its contribution to the COVID-19 response to the UN interventions.</p> <p>The global launch of the programme and all the national launches were postponed due to the COVID-19 restrictions. Because the restrictions on travelling are likely to continue, a virtual launch, connecting the respective implementation partners' headquarters, EC-DEVCO and implementing countries may be envisaged. The format, content and date are still being discussed to ensure good visibility of the event.</p>

Project team	Develop job description, proceed with recruitment and selection staff	UNICEF/ILO	On-track	<p>The overall project manager and administrative assistant (for both Approaches 1 and 2) based at the ILO are recruited respectively from 1st May 2020 and 1st October 2019. The ILO also assigned one of its ILO Social Protection Policy Experts on a part time basis to this project. The recruitment of the UNICEF project coordinator is finalized.</p> <p>At country level, the project team, with support of the regular staff of the ILO, UNICEF and GCSPF partners, is fully or partially on-board in Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Nepal, Paraguay, Senegal and Uganda. Some delays in recruiting the international staff occurred in Angola, Uganda/Ethiopia and Nepal because of the restrictions imposed by the ILO Office on staff new appointments during the COVID-19. In Uganda and Ethiopia, the ILO national staff and UNICEF international staff were able to cover for the delays in recruiting the ILO international staff. The ILO Social Protection Specialist covering Angola filled the gap as meetings were held virtually during the COVID-19. To ensure a smooth implementation of the programme despite the delay in recruitment in some countries, UNICEF and ILO regular staffs (social protection and PFM) have been assigned to work part time on the programme with no implication on the budget of the programme. A detailed table of the status of the staff recruitment is available in Annex 3 of this report.</p>
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Training and knowledge products plans	Identify and agree on work on trainings, tools, guides and publications to inform or draw on country work	ILO/UNICEF/GCSPF	On-track	<p>With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, knowledge management and learning as well as facilitating joint approaches and training is becoming even more central to the government. However, because of the COVID-19 context that intensely involved the country project teams and national partners and prohibited from organizing face-to-face training, the project management unit and steering committee agreed to defer any large training activities that would involve the country teams. During the first six months of the implementation phase, the project will determine more clearly the target audience, training objectives and content, as well as relevance of different training offers. The ITC-ILO could be a potential partner since they have already re-organized their residential training into online courses but the programme will also explore other options, including partnering with training initiatives by the Grand Bargain and TRANSFORM which may be particularly relevant in the context of the COVID-19 crisis. While it would be preferable to draw on existing training offers, developing a social protection sector specific training course on PFM could be envisaged if no offer satisfies the expectations and needs identified.</p> <p>At country level, most of the training activities included in the first year's work plan were also postponed. Some exceptions were in Uganda where capacity building within the Kampala Capital City Authority went on which facilitated not only entry points for the design and delivery of new cash transfer programmes, but it also made it possible for the existing program to continue its operations through a virtual implementation model. Arrangements were also concluded for five officials of the Ethiopian government to participate in the E-coaching training on shock-responsive social protection offered by the ITC-ILO, 15 June to 6 September 2020.</p>
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Project's support to the response to the COVID-19 through social protection measures	Participate in UN groups and governments' meeting, support the drafting of the COVID-19 response, include ILO and UNICEF's principles in the response, link with building strengthened social protection system	ILO/UNICEF/GCSPF	On-track	<p>All eight country project teams were actively engaged in the COVID-19 response. Examples are of Senegal where both ILO and UNICEF, as co-chair of the development partners' group on social protection, coordinated the social protection-related COVID-19 response. Other example is of Uganda where a simulation exercise of the cost of different cash transfers was conducted as part of the COVID-19 response. In Bangladesh, Cambodia and Ethiopia, the SP&PFM projects provided guidance to implement a cash transfer programme for affected workers in the garment industry in response to the COVID-19. More details are provided in section 2.2.</p> <p>Similarly, the development of project concept notes in response to the COVID-19 related call for proposals under approach 2 fostered engagement with national stakeholders on COVID-19 responses.</p>
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Overall delivery assessment ^c	
<input type="checkbox"/> Highly satisfactory Implementation of almost all (>80%) tasks of the inception phase is on schedule as envisaged in the implementation plan and almost all (>80%) indicator milestones have been met.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory Implementation of the majority (60-80%) of tasks is on schedule as envisaged in the implementation plan and the majority (60-80%) of indicator milestones have been met.
<input type="checkbox"/> Unsatisfactory Some (40-60%) tasks are being implemented on schedule as envisaged in the implementation plan.	<input type="checkbox"/> Very unsatisfactory Few (<40%) tasks are being implemented on schedule as envisaged

2.1 Achievement of the inception phase

The achievements during the inception phase can be summarized as follows:

At global level under the cross-country component:

- At the ILO, the recruitment of the programme manager and assistant, as well as of one expert on management of information system (on a cost-share basis with other ILO projects) as part of the Global technical facility based at the ILO Headquarters, is completed; as part of the same Facility two additional technical experts on respectively public finance and unemployment protection are also being recruited; at UNICEF, the recruitment of the project coordinator is now completed;
- the project documents and budget for the cross-country component are approved by the steering committee;
- the steering committee is set-up, while the advisory board role and terms of reference still require some discussion, before it can be established;
- the launch event of the programme was postponed due to the restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic; modalities and content for a virtual launch is now being discussed;
- the communication and visibility plan is approved, and the ILO and UNICEF communication services are working together on proposing a branding and pattern of the project and setting-up the structure of the website;
- the evaluation plan and indicators are approved by the steering committee;
- the budget is agreed and is now operational at ILO, UNICEF and GCSPF;
- the implementation agreement with Oxfam, HelpAge and WSM, as representatives of the GCSPF in respectively Cambodia, Uganda, Senegal and Nepal is signed and funds have been transferred;
- the concept note and terms of reference for the multiplier effects research are approved by the steering committee; the following countries of the SP&PFM programme will participate in the research: Angola, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Paraguay and Senegal;
- the training for project staff and key stakeholders on PFM is postponed due to the COVID-19 response;
- the joint EU/ILO/UNICEF/GCSPF workshop in Brussels in December 2019 was an important milestone for creating a joint understanding and vision for the programme and building good relations among the members of this inter-agency programme team, including also country staff.

^c This is a self-assessment

At country level (in the eight priority countries):

- the eight project documents and annexes are approved by the steering committee;
- the recruitment of the ILO or UNICEF international expert is completed in Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Senegal and on-going in Nepal, Angola, Uganda/Ethiopia, Paraguay; the ILO national project staff is recruited in Nepal, Ethiopia, Paraguay, and Senegal, recruitment on going in Uganda. Therefore, in all eight countries, full or partial project team is now operational, which allowed to engage in the COVID-19 response.
- The project teams have started implementing their work plan: social budgeting and results based budget, monitoring and evaluation framework in Cambodia; work with the Social Security Fund in Nepal; four analytical studies and overall review of the system in Burkina Faso;
- the project in every country engaged in the COVID-19 response; concrete interventions and further achievements are showcased below.

Under the Approach 2 of the programme, the following was achieved:

- the steering committee approved the project documents and annexes of the Approach 2;
- the operational committee was established;
- the terms of reference for the first call for proposals catered to respond to the COVID-19 crisis were developed and the call launch on 26 April;
- 29 countries submitted a proposal, 10 were selected: Bangladesh, Cabo Verde, Cote d'Ivoire, Ecuador, Malawi, Myanmar, Nigeria, Peru, Sri Lanka, and Togo.

2.2 Contribution of the programme to the COVID-19 response

Despite uncertainty around the situation and unprecedented working and family arrangements, at all levels, the programme management unit and project teams were highly dedicated to support countries in responding to the COVID-19 crisis. The programme contributed to the COVID-19 response through two channels: the first call for proposals of Approach 2 focussed on providing technical support to governments in designing and implementing their response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and in the eight priority countries, project teams engaged with governments on COVID-19 response as well.

The first call for proposals of Approach 2 was launched on 26 April 2020. 29 countries responded and on 20 June, the results of the deliberations of the operational committee and selection of ten countries were communicated to the countries. The selected proposals intend to support the expansion of existing cash transfer programmes (Nigeria, Cabo Verde); the consolidation of the fiscal space and sustainable financing for social protection (Malawi); the design and implementation of unemployment protection schemes (Bangladesh, Ecuador, Myanmar, Peru, Sri Lanka); and the consolidation of the government's response to extend coverage to workers in the informal economy in a sustainable manner (Cote d'Ivoire, Togo).

In the eight priority countries, the project teams are intensively engaged with the governments and development partners, and to some extent, the social partners, in shaping and supporting the COVID-19 response. Synergies have been sought in leveraging existing systems and coordinating mechanisms, such as extending cash transfer programmes, expanding social registry, extending coverage to workers in the informal economy, adapting delivery mechanisms to respect physical distancing rules. In Uganda, Nepal and Senegal, the project team led the coordination of the development partners' support to the government's response to the COVID-19. In Angola, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Senegal and Ethiopia, the project team contributed to conducting a socio-economic assessment of the COVID-19 impact. In Burkina Faso and Senegal, this resulted in recommendations to extend coverage to workers in the informal economy; in Cambodia, the assessment supported the implementation of the COVID-19 ID Poor cash transfer. In Senegal, Uganda, Cambodia, the project team provided technical guidance to support the extension of existing schemes, expansion of the social registry, and

adaptation of the delivery mechanisms. In Uganda, the project team undertook a cost simulation of different scenarios to extend cash transfers to those impacted by the COVID-19. In Burkina Faso, the project team facilitated a feasibility study for the possible introduction of an unemployment scheme. In Angola and Uganda, the project team established contact with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and will work together in Angola, to compare the cost of the IMF's social spending floor with the ILO's social protection floor; and in Uganda, the IMF and the World Bank made use of UNICEF's simulation studies. In Bangladesh, Cambodia and Ethiopia, the SP&PFM projects provided guidance to the respective Governments for the design and implementation of a cash transfer programme for workers in the garment industry hit by the COVID-19 crisis. The cash transfer programme is funded by the Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development of Germany (BMZ).

2.3 Main challenges and risks assessments for the project implementation

The appraisal process of the different project documents, both globally and nationally, took longer than expected, mainly because the process involved three implementing partners and the steering committee. The steering committee approved all eight country PRODOC and annexes on 16 April 2020, the project document of the global component of the Approach 1, Approach 2 and the other key documents (evaluation plan, communication and visibility strategy) were approved during the course of May and early June 2020. At this date, only the terms of reference for the Advisory group are being finalized, following last inputs received by the steering committee during its meeting on 14 October 2020.

The programme implementation at country level faced some risks and challenges over the inception phase, immediately or in the mid-term linked to the COVID-19 pandemic. With the outbreak of the global pandemic, restrictions on movement and face-to-face meetings were announced in all eight countries around mid-March 2020/ early April 2020. While the country PRODOCs were almost finalized at that point, consultative efforts with partners and the government to launch officially the project and start implementing the first activities were underway and these needed to be halted and transitioned to virtual platforms. Restrictions on travels also affected the availability of high-level international expertise (Cambodia). The ILO applied some restrictions on the recruitment and deployment of international staff outside headquarters. Such restrictive rules affected the recruitment of the international project coordinator in Angola, Uganda/Ethiopia and Nepal.

In addition to the different restrictions imposed as a direct response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the government's priorities re-focused on short-term mitigation, including reorganizing the government's institutions to ensure minimum services. Project teams thus had to adapt their support and in some cases work plans (Uganda, Burkina Faso, Senegal) with some delays in the implementation of certain activities (Paraguay, Nepal). The project country teams were involved in the national coordination efforts to support the government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which became the primary priority of the project with adjustments made in some country work plans (see 2.3). The restrictions on movement and meetings also hampered data collection for the analytical work, thus deferring certain activities of the project (Burkina Faso, Cambodia, and Paraguay). Finally, training and capacity building activities were postponed. The generally poor conceptualization by government actors of public finance management as an essential element for the sustainable financing of social protection across the life-cycle presented some challenges for implementing the first activities of the project for example in Uganda and Senegal.

The COVID-19 pandemic will also have an indirect impact on the project implementation, which is at present more difficult to measure. Indeed, in countries with low levels of social protection coverage and expenditures, as is the case in the eight countries of the programme, the socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 crisis on the population is not yet fully

appreciated. In Burkina Faso, the project staff contributed technically to the assessment of the socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 on the informal economy, which remains largely excluded from any social protection coverage. Although the mid-term and long-term impact of the COVID-19 crisis is yet uncertain, undeniably, the pandemic and the following contraction of the economies and fiscal space might lead governments to revisit their position towards increased social protection spending. The indicators of the results framework may have to be revised depending on how the situation develops and the project management unit agreed with country teams to discuss and evaluate the situation in Q4 of 2020.

With regards to the focus of each country-project in relation to the overall programme, the broad set-up of the programme has proven challenging to manage in the sense that countries cannot address all of the objectives stated in the programme within the given time-frame and with the resources made available: policy design, implementation issues, gender, disability, shock-responsiveness, informal economy while maintaining the strong focus on public finance management. As a result, each country project prioritizes certain aspects in line with national priorities and circumstances. This is in line with the principles of demand-oriented interventions and ensuring country ownership but it also means that it is difficult to anticipate whether all the areas stated in the programme will be covered satisfactorily. A related challenge has been the difficulty of finding qualified staff that has expertise in the various fields, in particular the combination of social protection and public finance management does not seem to be common. However, UNICEF has hired a project coordinator with experience in both social protection and public finance at headquarters level. The ILO has now completed the recruitment of an experienced expert with a strong experience on public finance management at country level, as well as with social protection. The public finance expert will complement the solid experience of the ILO Chief Technical Advisor on social protection policy. The ILO and UNICEF headquarters' social protection and public finance experts will provide training and close mentoring to the country teams to reinforce capacity at country level when needed.

2.4 Opportunities and corresponding strategy adjustments

While the COVID-19 outbreak impacts the implementation of the programme to a certain extent (as described above), governments have realized the importance of social protection to protect not only the poor but the population at large, in particular those in rural and informal economy. The crisis demonstrated that vulnerability goes beyond the usually referred criteria in the national social registries and cash transfer programmes since everyone can be affected by different life cycle risks. The COVID-19 pandemic has also opened doors for increased collaboration with development partners in advocating for increased social protection coverage. This has resulted in the preparation of joint statements and/or response strategy by development partners (Uganda, Cambodia, Paraguay), the organization of coordination meetings on a more frequent basis (weekly vs. quarterly) (Uganda, Nepal, Senegal), increased collaboration among development partners (moving from an approach of “informing others” to “consultation, feedback and partnership”) (Nepal, Uganda, Senegal), and development of joint initiatives to respond to the COVID-19 crisis (for instance, with DFID in Nepal, BMZ in Bangladesh, Cambodia and Ethiopia). During the inception phase, increased collaboration with the EU Delegations either in the eight priority countries or in those that have prepared a proposal to respond to the COVID-19 call under Approach 2 is already noticeable. Those nascent partnerships will grow stronger during the implementation of the projects. For instance, in Nigeria, in addition to the submission to the COVID-19 call, the ILO together with the FAO submitted a proposal for strengthening the social protection of population living of agriculture to the UN Basket Fund managed by the EU Delegation. In Ethiopia, the project is providing technical assistance to the EU Delegation to conduct the social policy assessment prior to the preparation of a budget support programme on social protection. In Bangladesh, the project is working closely with the EU Delegation to strengthen the social protection system, notably through the delivery of cash benefits to workers and families affected by the COVID-19 crisis.

2.5 Communication and Visibility

The steering committee approved the communication and visibility strategy of the overall programme. Each priority country also developed a clear strategy. Prior to the COVID-19 context, the country-level consultations to prepare the project documents gave visibility to the programme among national stakeholders (see picture clip). Although the COVID-19 related restrictions did not allow for organizing a launching event of the programme, at global and national level, the programme gained high visibility among development partners and national stakeholders through the COVID-19 related call for proposals and the engagement of the project team in the COVID-19 response. As a result, the partnership with the EU Delegations is growing in at least the 18 countries now covered by the programme, and with other development partners too such as BMZ in Cambodia, Bangladesh and Ethiopia, DFID in Nepal, IMF in Angola and Uganda, the Belgian government and French government in Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire and Senegal, the World Bank in most of the countries, among other examples.

In the framework of the communication and visibility activities, ILO and UNICEF are exchanging to propose the visual identity, logo and style guide of the project, and the design of the programme website. For the time being, as a temporary measure, the programme is already online under the following link: <https://www.social-protection.org/gimi/ShowProject.action?id=3099>

Finally, the Deputy Director of the ILO's Social Protection Department, participated in an Infopoint organized by the European Commission, on 4 December 2020 that introduced the programme:

https://www.ilo.org/brussels/information-resources/news/WCMS_732062/lang--en/index.htm

2.6 Lessons learned – highlights

From the review of the inception report, some additional efforts will be needed to continue engaging the representatives of workers and employers in the implementation of the project. It seems that social partners are not yet part of the national steering committee in Paraguay and Cambodia.

Overall, the government mainly led the development of the COVID-19 response plans and strategies including in the area of social protection; however, the social partners engaged actively with their members, including of micro- and small enterprises, and explored options to extend income support to workers, either through the social insurance institutions (Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, among others) or temporary cash transfers (Bangladesh, Cambodia, among others).

The coordination and joint implementation of project activities with representatives of GCSPF needs to be fully institutionalized at country level in Nepal, Senegal, Cambodia; collaboration seems closer with HelpAge in Uganda.

The COVID-19 context and need for rapid technical assistance from development partners highlighted the importance of having project teams in the country. Such presence allowed for actively engaging the programme with the governments and development partners in shaping the COVID-19 response. The responses to the COVID-19 emphasized the need for sustainable financing and institutions, including solid PFM frameworks, in order to rapidly and efficiently deploy cash transfers to populations in times of crises. The forthcoming months of implementation of the programme will continue building the ground for ensuring sustainable extension of coverage, with adequate financing and PFM focus.

Bringing together ILO as the lead agency on social protection regarding technical advice and standard setting with UNICEF's strong role at country level, the GCSPF members' strong

networks in civil society and EU technical expertise and budget support operations is bearing fruits already to deliver strong results in improving national social protection systems. However, this collaboration also requires a lot of coordination, time and good will on all sides to make operational and administrative processes of all implementing partners work together that are sometimes difficult to combine. Establishing strong and good relationships with all parties involved has been a key factor for the success of this collaboration so far, making it possible to find solutions also for challenging questions such as incompatibilities between budget structures or M&E policies.

Angola

Linkages:

Country Programme Outcome (ILO): Angola implements decent work promotion programs and strategies with emphasis on job creation and social protection (AGO101)

Country Programme Outcome (UNICEF): Strengthening capacities for decentralized convergent social services

Outcome 3. By 2022, disadvantaged girls and boys benefit from improved integrated and convergent social services at municipal, provincial and national levels

Output 3.4: Public finance management and planning at all levels is enhanced, especially to support delivery of integrated and convergent social services for girls

Sustainable Development Goal: SDG 1.3; Target 1.3 implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable

UNDAF/UNSDF Outcome: OUTCOME 1. ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

By 2022, the Angolan population, particularly the most vulnerable, has better access to quality and integrated social and productive services and to a diversified economy capable of the creation of decent employment and earnings in order to reduce poverty. Output 1.6 Decentralized and integrated systems of productive and social services (health, nutrition, HIV, education, water and sanitation, housing, social protection, justice, protection against violence, land management, rural extension, etc.) employment and income generation services, extended and budgeted at community, municipal, provincial and national levels.

Executive Summary

The inclusion of Angola as one of the 8 priority countries in the *Improving Synergies between Social Protection and Public Finance Management* project is very timely and strategic as it aligns with the country's efforts for greater transparency and for fiscal and economic reform. The expected outputs for this project are: output 1. A Social Protection Policy submitted to the Government of Angola for endorsement and approval with the following contents; output 2. A series of strategic actions are conducted for the preliminary implementation of a performance-based budgeting model in social protection institutions; output 3. a social protection policy coordinating mechanism (with political actors as established above) duly implemented and under operation; output 4. national capacities for the design, implementation and monitoring of social protection policies and programmes strengthened

The Inception Phase took place in a context of the ongoing technical assistance by the IMF to the Government of Angola within the framework of the 3.7 Billion USD loan under the Extended Fund Facility, as well as the approval and launch of the 320 Million USD national Cash Transfer (CT) programme financed by the World Bank which also seeks to strengthen the National Social Protection System and to mitigate the impact of the removal of subsidies on fuel and key amenities on the most vulnerable population. Despite these new and important developments, social protection coverage in Angola is very limited due to the lack of a comprehensive social protection policy, a weak coordination of institutions and of existing programmes, as well as the inadequacy of mechanisms, tools, and limited capacities in the institutions responsible for budgeting and planning for the social protection responses.

With regards to Public Finance Management (PFM) despite the country's efforts to increase social sector budgeting and spending in the last 3 years, Angola has persistently registered underinvestment in social protection programmes and does not have a clear strategy for increasing social protection investments or improving budget performance of existing funds.

The Project's Inception Phase sought to achieve the following key results; 1) *Situation Analysis*

and Stakeholders Mapping; 2) Stakeholders Consultation and Definition of Key Priorities and Activities (Pro-Doc); 3) Validation of Project Document by Key Stakeholders. To achieve these results, ILO and UNICEF worked closely to hire an international consultant and facilitated the consultants' contacts and meetings, including the Ministry Planning and Economy, Ministry of Social Affairs, Ministry of Labour and Social Security, as well as provided policy documents and reports for the situation analysis.

Importantly, the EU Delegation facilitated key contacts made during the Inception Phase, namely with the IMF and key meetings were held with EU Delegation at the beginning and the end of the consultants' mission on the scope and definition of the project activities. Another key development during the Inception Phase was the engagement with the Ministry of Finance, which was briefed by UNICEF on the scope of the project and key activities.

The key achievement of the Inception Phase was the in-depth stakeholder mapping, and secondly the development of a Project Document with clearly identified activities for PFM to support future investments in social protection, namely the development of costing exercise for social protection as well as fiscal space analysis and training and capacity building for a performance-based budgeting model.

These key PFM activities will provide the necessary elements for improving coordination on social protection by providing evidence-based and analytical data to strengthen the *National Social Protection Strategy* and improve future National Budget Proposals. The project also prioritizes the establishment of a *National Committee for Social Protection* to increase coordination between the existing and new projects and investments, with particular attention to be paid to EU financing such as the Direct Budget Support, which is an important opportunity to reinforce the synergies between PFM and social protection.

At the end of the Inception Phase, the COVID-19 pandemic presented a unique challenge to the implementation of the Workplan firstly due to the severe lockdown measures in Angola (*State of Emergency from March 2020-June and State of Calamity from June to present day*) as well as the prioritization by the key partners such as the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, for the implementation of shock responsive social protection programmes such as Cash Transfers and other immediate initiatives focused on the response to the pandemic.

The COVID-19 pandemic delayed the hiring of the project staff as well the implementation of activities such as seminars and public events programmed from the 3rd trimester of 2020 onwards. Despite the project registering delays, the project objectives and outputs as defined in the Project Document will be implemented and the Workplan will be updated accordingly to include the adaptation of activities to the COVID-19 biosafety measures.

Summary of the inception phase

TASKS DELIVERY DURING THE INCEPTION PHASE ^d				
Tasks	Activities	Implementing body (ILO/UNICEF/GCSPF)	Status of the task (completed/on-track/delayed)	Description of the process (consultations with national partners, including social partners)
Approved PRODOC and its annexes	Develop and agree on detailed global activities, work plan, budget, and Logframe	ILO/UNICEF	Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ILO and UNICEF established focal points to operationalize the inception phase and project implementation and consulted regularly on the recruitment of the international consultant as well as the stakeholder's analysis. - National consultation with the Ministries of Finance (MINFIN), Social Affairs (MASFAMU), Labour and Social Security (MAPTSS), Planning, the ILO Commission in Angola, the National Social Security Institute, Workers and Employer' Organizations - Meeting with EU Delegation, IMF, World Bank and UNICEF Representative in Angola - Draft PRODOC shared with national partners and EU Delegation
Monitoring and evaluation framework	Collect baseline data and indicators relevant for the monitoring and evaluation of the project (logframe with indicators)	ILO/UNICEF	Completed	The logframe includes indicators, baseline and target.
Communication and visibility strategy	Develop and agree on communication and visibility strategy at global level	ILO/UNICEF	Completed	A communication and visibility plan was developed and submitted.

^d Based on the Implementation Plan

Project implementation structure	Establish and draft term of reference, including members, for the steering committee or coordination structure, organize the launch of the project	ILO/UNICEF	On track	The project document established the implementation structure and defined the members for the steering committee. A steering Committee Meeting is planned for November 2020.
Project team	Develop job description, proceed with recruitment and selection staff	ILO/UNICEF	On track	ILO <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Job description for International and National Staff developed, and published - Recruitment of International staff in progress UNICEF <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social Protection Specialist covered by UNICEF funds in the 1st year of the project onboard - On-going recruitment for the National Staff (social protection) and UN Volunteer
Training and knowledge products plans	Identify and agree on work on trainings, tools, guides and publications to inform or draw on country work	ILO/UNICEF	On track	Trainings activities were identified in the project document

Project's support to the response to the COVID-19 through social protection measures	Participate in UN groups and governments' meeting, support the drafting of the COVID-19 response, include ILO and UNICEF's principles in the response, link with building strengthened social protection system	ILO/UNICEF	On track	<p>The project included activities in response COVID-19 in its Output 4: Public Institutions with better capacities to improve budgeting and service delivery, namely for the Capacity Building Plan for Social Protection Institutions (MINFIN. MASFAMU; MAPTESS) to include training on the Implications of the COVID-19 pandemic for the Angolan Social Protection System.</p> <p>Due to the prioritization of the key partners regarding the implementation of the shock responsive social protection programmes, namely the Top-Up and Double Payments of the existing Cash Transfers projects as well as new Emergency Cash Transfers projects, UNICEF was fully engaged in this demand and registered delays in the implementation of this Projects support to the COVID-19, and no training was held with MINFIN or MASFAMU or other partners on Implications of COVID-19 for the Social Protection System.</p> <p>Nevertheless, activities were implemented by ILO and UNICEF outside of the scope of the project which will contribute to the realization of the expected activities on COVID-19 response (cross-synergies):</p> <p>ILO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The ILO social protection Specialist facilitated and technically supported the participation of the Minister of Labour and Social Security of Angola in the webinar with Central Africa's Ministries of Labour, workers and employers' representatives, to discuss the COVID-19 response, on 23th April 2020 - The briefing note on the policy considerations for the social protection response to the COVID-19 crisis was shared with stakeholders in Angola. <p>UNICEF</p>
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				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developed a specific workplan with the Ministry of Social Action for the continuity and sustainability of the projects and programmes including cash transfers and the efforts to expand social protection as response to the COVID-19 (APROSOC Project); - Undertook online training of the Centers for Integrated Social Action (CASIs) which included the chapters on adapting the local social action work to the COVID-19 and budgeting and planning at the local level for social protection measures (APROSOC Project); - Contributed to the UN Angola's Socio-Economic Analysis published monthly since the COVID-19 and promoted the expansion of social protection measures by the Government in response to the global pandemic. <p>These activities have had no cost to the project and are presented here for information on cross-synergies of existing projects as they will contribute to the implementation of the <i>Capacity Building on the Implications of COVID-19</i> planned in the project Workplan.</p> <p>The updated framework of the Workplan will be presented in November 2020 at the Project's 1st Steering Committee Meeting for final approval.</p>
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Overall delivery assessment ⁵	
<input type="checkbox"/> Highly satisfactory Implementation of almost all (>80%) tasks of the inception phase is on schedule as envisaged in the implementation plan and almost all (>80%) indicator milestones have been met.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory Implementation of the majority (60-80%) of tasks is on schedule as envisaged in the implementation plan and the majority (60-80%) of indicator milestones have been met.
<input type="checkbox"/> Unsatisfactory Some (40-60%) tasks are being implemented on schedule as envisaged in the implementation plan.	<input type="checkbox"/> Very unsatisfactory Few (<40%) tasks are being implemented on schedule as envisaged

Achievement of the inception phase

The key achievement of the Inception Phase was the in-depth stakeholder mapping, and secondly the development of a Project Document with clearly identified activities for PFM to support future investments in social protection and for improving the coordination of existing programmes and institutions.

In addition, the inception phase led to the following results:

- The expected national counterparts for the project's success, namely the Ministries of Social Affairs (MASFAMU), Labour and Social Security (MAPTSS), ILO Commission in Angola, the National Social Security Institute (INSS), the workers and employers' organizations, were consulted and are available to participate in the implementation of the project.
- Ministry of Finance was consulted and is aware of the project's objectives and key outputs, and UNICEF continues to engage directly with MINFIN to facilitate the project implementation;
- World Bank and IMF are both informed of the project and requested coordination of efforts in the social protection sector for greater impact of activities.
- The Project Document was developed and adapted to include activities to support the capacity building of key partners with regards to COVID-19 and its impact on the social protection system in Angola.

Contribution of the project to the COVID-19 response

The project is yet to make more direct contribution to the COVID-19 response but has included funding to support the capacity building of the key partners for the analysis of the impact of COVID-19 on the social protection systems (*Output 4: Public Institutions with better capacities to improve budgeting and service delivery*), however other important activities implemented by ILO and UNICEF will be referenced as they represent activities with cross-synergies to the expected project activity:

- The project through the ILO Social Protection Specialist provided technical guidance to the Minister of Labour and Social Security of Angola prior to his participation in a webinar with Central Africa' Ministries of Labour, Workers and Employers'

⁵ This is a self-assessment

representatives, to discuss the COVID-19 response, on 23th April 2020.. In addition the brief on the policy considerations for the social protection response to the COVID 19 crisis was shared with key stakeholders in Angola.

- Upon request of the Government of Angola, UNICEF developed a specific workplan with the Ministry of Social Action for the continuity and sustainability of the projects and undertook online training within the scope of the APROSOC project which also promoted budgeting and planning at the local level for social protection measures. UNICEF also contributed to the UN Angola's Socio-Economic Analysis published monthly since the COVID-19 and promoted the expansion and geographical reach of social protection measures by the Government in response to the global pandemic.

It's important to highlight that these activities had no financial impact on the project. They have been instrumental to enhance cross-synergies between the activities already implemented by the ILO and UNICEF and the expected activities of the project with regards to the COVID-19 response.

Main challenges and risks assessments for the project implementation

The context of COVID-19 pandemic has provided a unique challenge to the internal organizational processes for both ILO and UNICEF. This was due to the strict lockdown measures implemented by the Angolan Government between March and June 2020 which restricted all travel in and out of the country as well as free movement and gatherings of groups.

The COVID-19 has also shifted government and partners' priority towards the shock responsive social protection response to the crisis such as Cash Transfers, not in the scope this project. Activities related to the National Social Protection Policy were put on hold.

Opportunities and corresponding strategy adjustments

An updated timeframe for the workplan and adapted methods for implementing activities due to the COVID-19 biosafety measures as needed (public consultations/Workshops) will be shared with the implementation partners for their approved at the 1st Steering Committee Meeting planned for November 2020.

The Project's outcomes and outputs remain relevant, particularly in the context of COVID-19 which will require the expansion and extension of social protection measures in the country while keeping in mind the need to go beyond the shock-responsive social protection programmes such as Cash Transfers and to improve the coordination and financing of social protection in the medium-long term.

Finally, the EU's confirmation of Budget Support to the Angolan State Budget which includes a focus on the support for citizens to transition from informal to the formal economy, is a unique opportunity to level-up the synergies between the existing projects and deliver on the expected outputs on PFM for social protection.

Lessons learned – highlights

Despite the challenges and delays posed by the COVID-19 crisis, the project's focus remains unchanged and aligned with Implementing Partners' expected deliverables as well as with key IFIs' priorities (IMF, World Bank, EU).

The inception phase took place in a context of ongoing discussions between the Government and the IMF for the implementation of fiscal reforms, and the preparation for the

implementation of a national cash transfer programme with the support of the World Bank. The discussions were instrumental for the design of the project that seeks to build on existing projects, identify options for sustainable financing and improved PFM, and contribute to specific deliverables that can support advocacy, planning and budgeting for the national social protection system.

There was a big convergence between the challenges of Angola's Social protection system raised by the different national actors met, as well as the priorities areas of intervention of the project especially in addressing the main bottlenecks and in enhancing coordination and evidence generation to inform planning and budgeting for social protection.

The existence of an ILO Commission in Angola including representatives from Ministry of Labour, Worker and Employers Organization is very important for the implementation of the project.

Visibility & Communication

In preparation for national consultation, information on the project was shared with all the stakeholders indicating especially that the project is supported by the EU. During meetings with stakeholders, carried out by UNICEF, ILO and the consultant, the EU was clearly mentioned as donor of the project. At all phases of the inception phase, the financial contribution of the European Union has been strongly emphasized, including the instrumental role played by the EU for the project. A monthly meeting will be organized between the implementing partners and the EU Delegation to ensure smooth coordination and better flow of communication.

Burkina Faso

Linkages:

Country Programme Outcome (ILO): Strengthening and extending social protection – DWCP 2020-2022

Sustainable Development Goal: SDG1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere "; SDG 10 Reduce inequality

UNDAF/UNSDF Outcome: outcome 3.2 - Pilar 3: Inclusive and sustainable growth, decent work and food security

Executive Summary

The project in Burkina Faso relies on a progressive approach through its three specific objectives (outcomes): Outcome 1: Enhanced conception, coordination, tracking and financing of gender-sensitive and inclusive schemes and programmes, of the social protection system of Burkina Faso towards SDGs 1 and 10; Outcome 2: To support institutional and technical actors in the implementation of universal health coverage and strengthening of local mechanisms for the extension of social protection schemes and programmes at the municipal level, adapted in particular to the needs of persons in situations of temporary and lasting vulnerability and fragility, including displaced persons; Outcome 3: Shock-responsive programmes, tailored to the needs of people in situations of vulnerability, fragility and insecurity, including displaced persons, are integrated into the national social protection system, in coherence and synergy with social insurance schemes, social assistance and social safety net programmes.

The project identification phase began in July 2019 with a first draft of objectives, results and activities developed by UNICEF and ILO. This draft was submitted and discussed with national stakeholders, including the *Secrétariat Permanent du Conseil National pour la Protection Sociale* (SP/CNPS), the *Direction de la Protection Sociale* (DGPS) from the *Ministère de la Fonction publique, du travail et de la protection sociale* (MFPTPS), the Delegation of the European Union (DEU) in Burkina Faso and social partners. An international consultant jointly selected by UNICEF and the ILO, while the contract was signed with the ILO, developed the project document in consultation with national partners and the DEU from October 2019 to February 2020.

The project manager was recruited by ILO in February 2020 and arrived in Ouagadougou on 17 March 2020, coinciding with the first cases of COVID-19 in the subregion. Burkina Faso is one of the first sub-Saharan African countries to be affected by the pandemic with the first two positive cases⁶ diagnosed on 9 March 2020. As of 6 June⁷, the country has totaled 891 confirmed cases and 53 deaths. To curb the spread of the virus, the government quickly put in place a series of restrictive measures, including staff turnover in the administration and a ban on clustering. United Nations entities, including ILO and UNICEF, have also introduced precautionary measures for their staff, including teleworking.

The inception phase and the implementation of the project are taking place in a difficult context with security and socio-political crises since 2014, and the COVID-19 pandemic. The current context is delaying the implementation of the inception phase planned for October 2019 to May 2020. It was therefore not possible to organize a kick-off workshop to present the project to the national stakeholders and development partners nor to carry out the training activities. Face to face meetings, seminars and trainings are postponed to a period more conducive to

⁶ First cases of COVID-19 https://drive.google.com/open?id=15DksWEjI3hgiuPgC_bqgM6QwOX3KbiDb

⁷ Cases and deaths as of 6 June <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/fr/operation/C3%A9rations/burkina-faso/document/burkina-faso-rapport-de-situation-n%C2%BA101-sur-l%E2%80%99C3%A9pid%C3%A9mie-%C3%A0>

the organization of workshops.

While awaiting for the enabling conditions for launching, the implementation of operational activities and a number of preparatory activities were undertaken to set up of the national steering committee of the project, the preparation of the social protection review, the relaunching of the social protection sub-group of the technical and financial partners (UNICEF, ILO, WFP, FAO, the World Bank, the EUD, AFD). In the framework of the COVID-19 response, the project team provided support in particular to the ILO's evaluation of the socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 on the informal sector.

Moreover, despite the difficult national context, the government and civil society organizations (CSO) have launched the process of developing the next national social protection policy. Since 2019, this process has been supported by UNICEF, including now as a part of the ECDEVCO-ILO-UNICEF project, with support to the SP/CNPS to carry out various studies.

At the end of this first start-up phase, activities were delayed due to restrictions in response to COVID-19. Nevertheless, there has been no questioning about the project original content, its value added and the provisional adjustments of the original workplan. Moreover, 2020 is also marked by the presidential election campaign and the election in November, which may further slowdown the activities.

Summary of the inception phase

TASKS DELIVERY DURING THE INCEPTION PHASE ⁸				
Tasks	Activities	Implementing body (ILO/UNICEF/GCSP F)	Status of the task (completed/on track/delayed)	Description of the process (consultations with national partners, including social partners)
Approved PRODOC and its annexes	Develop and agree on detailed global activities, work plan, budget, and logframe	ILO UNICEF	Completed	<p>The PRODOC and annexes were drafted jointly by ILO and UNICEF. ILO missions (September 2019 and January 2020) provided an opportunity to consult various stakeholders to discuss the project's orientations and then define the objectives and activities. The stakeholders include the SP/CNPS, the General Directorate of Social Protection and the CNAMU of the Ministry in charge of Labour and Social Protection (Ministère de la Fonction Publique, du Travail et de la Protection sociale), the employers federation of Burkina Faso (Conseil National du Patronat Burkinabé), the six workers organizations), EUD, World Bank, UNHCR. The SP/CNPS reviewed the draft and provided its comments (19 February 2020).</p> <p>The PRODOC, logframe, workplan and budget were drafted by a consultant with the support of the ILO Social Protection Specialist in Dakar, the Social Policy Chief and social protection expert of UNICEF-Burkina Faso. The Steering Committee approved the documents at the end of April 2020.</p>
Monitoring and evaluation framework	Collect baseline data and indicators relevant for the monitoring and evaluation of the project (logframe with indicators)	ILO UNICEF	On-track	<p>The logframe which contains base-line data was developed in conjunction with the PRODOC.</p> <p>Few data on social protection are immediately available and basic data will have to be collected during the review to be carried out in 2020.</p>

⁸ Based on the Implementation plan

Communication and visibility strategy	Develop and agree on communication and visibility strategies		On-track	<p>A summary presentation note of the project is under development to serve as a communication support to national and external partners of the project.</p> <p>The actions foreseen in the communication plan depend on the activities of the project and are subject to the delays caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.</p> <p>The website for the project in Burkina Faso will be developed following the template of the global programme. This website will be embedded in the global programme's website.</p>
Project implementation structure	<p>Establish and draft terms of reference, including for members of the steering committee or coordination structure.</p> <p>Organize the launch of the project</p>	ILO UNICEF	On-track	<p>The project works closely with the SP/CNP, which is attached to the Office of the Prime Minister. On the basis of the project document and discussions with ILO and UNICEF, the SP/CNPS prepared a note in May presenting the project to the Prime Minister. The note will be accompanied by a decree to institutionalize the project and place it under the guidance of the review committee of the Prime Ministry's budget programme for the promotion of human capital.</p> <p>This CNPS is the national institution with the aim to support the promotion of human capital in general, and vulnerable and disadvantaged populations in particular, within the framework of priority area 2 of the <i>Plan national de développement économique et social</i> (PNDES⁹) and its specific objective 4 "to promote decent employment and social protection for all, particularly young people and women". A first meeting and presentation of the project to the review committee is planned by the end of June, pending authorization of face-to-face meetings.</p> <p>As part of the activities supported by UNICEF since October 2019, planned studies are underway. They include the following: (i) the definition of social protection indicators and the development of metadata to enable optimal monitoring of the implementation of the PNPS ; (ii) the feasibility study for the establishment of unemployment insurance in Burkina Faso ; (iii) the definition of a financing strategy for social protection in order</p>

⁹ *Plan national de développement économique et social* (PNDES) http://cns.bf/IMG/pdf/pndes_2016-2020-4.pdf

				<p>to ensure optimal and sustainable financing of the PNPS and (iv) the realization of an investment case on social protection in order to act advocacy base evidence for social protection.</p> <p>A working group was set up to monitor progress of these studies, comprised of representatives of ministries (<i>ministère de l'Economie, des Finances et du Développement, ministère de la Femme, de la Solidarité nationale, de la Famille et de l'Action humanitaire</i>, etc.), civil society and external partners.</p>
Project team	Develop job description, proceed with recruitment and selection staff	ILO	Completed	<p>ILO launched a recruitment process for a project manager in October 2019. This P4 technical expert on international social protection started on 17 March 2020 in Ouagadougou, just before the borders closure and restrictive measures in the country. The project has an administrative assistant shared with another ILO project in Burkina Faso.</p>
Training and knowledge products plans	Identify and agree on trainings, tools, guides and publications to inform or draw on country work	ILO UNICEF	Delayed	<p>No training has been conducted despite planned. This situation is due to the COVID-19 situation and alternative solutions are being discussed, including through online trainings.</p>
Project's support to the response to the COVID-19 through social protection measures	Participate in UN groups and government meetings, support the drafting of the COVID-19 response, include ILO and UNICEF's principles in the response, link	ILO UNICEF	On-track	<p>Because of restrictions measures and lock-down, it was not possible to organize any specific activity of the project's work plan between March and May 2020, beyond the launch of the studies mentioned above. However, the ILO project staff supported the rapid assessment of the socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 on the informal sector. On 16 April, the results of the rapid-assessments were presented to the SP/CNPS, the <i>Direction Générale de la Protection Sociale</i> (DGPS) of the <i>Ministère de la Fonction publique, du Travail et de la Protection sociale</i> and the <i>Direction de l'Economie Informelle</i> (DEI) of the <i>ministère de la Jeunesse et de la Promotion de l'Entrepreneuriat des Jeunes</i>, the World Bank and the EU Delegation in Burkina Faso. All partners</p>

	with building strengthened social protection system			<p>present at the meeting have expressed their interest in the results (see details in point 3.2).</p> <p>The MFPTPS formulated a request¹⁰ to the ILO to support their efforts in designing social protection measures in response to the COVID-19 crisis. The project will support the organisation of virtual and/or face-to-face tripartite meetings on the administration and payment of social insurance contributions in times of crisis.</p>
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¹⁰ ILO countries office in Côte d'Ivoire, Bénin, Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and Togo

Overall delivery assessment	
<input type="checkbox"/> Highly satisfactory Implementation of almost all (>80%) tasks of the inception phase is on schedule as envisaged in the implementation plan and almost all (>80%) indicator milestones have been met.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory Implementation of the majority (60-80%) of tasks is on schedule as envisaged in the implementation plan and the majority (60-80%) of indicator milestones have been met.
<input type="checkbox"/> Unsatisfactory Some (40-60%) tasks are being implemented on schedule as envisaged in the implementation plan.	<input type="checkbox"/> Very unsatisfactory Few (<40%) tasks are being implemented on schedule as envisaged

Achievement of the inception phase

The particular context linked to the COVID-19 pandemic prevented the ILO project manager from visiting the national actors and external partners. It also delayed the organization of a kick-off workshop (output 1.1).

The SP/CNPS, the Social Protection Directorate and the CNAMU of the MFPTPS, the employers federation of Burkina Faso (Conseil National du Patronat Burkinabé), the six workers organizations, EUD, World Bank, UNHCR were consulted during the development phase of the project. Among the priority, the urgency to implement the universal health coverage, the need to strengthen the delivery of the cash-transfer benefits, including through the communal services, the need to extend social protection coverage among workers in the informal economy, came across strong policy priorities, in addition to the clear request for strengthening capacities and coordination on social protection. With the launch of the project in April, the SP/CNPS met the project team virtually and face-to-face to discuss, among other subjects, the modalities for setting up a project steering committee. This committee will be composed of the review committee of the Prime Ministry's "promotion of human capital" budgetary programme. Its set up has been delayed due to restrictive measures that slowed down the functioning of the administrations.

With the gradual lift of the restrictions measures since the end of May, the administrations are progressively returning to a normal rhythm and the presentation of the project to the committee is set to take place in mid-June. A kick-off workshop and the launch of the project's activities are then expected.

This context forced the project to engage in virtual discussions with other national actors, including the General Directorate of Social Protection (DGEP) of the MFPTPS, who were involved in its development and the identification of objectives, results and activities.

Despite the delay in the launch of the project, several activities have been carried out since March 2020:

- The project was presented to the development partners of the social protection sub-group during a virtual meeting on 30 April 2020. This was the first meeting of this group which had been inactive for several months.
- The review of the social protection system could not start because it required meeting the actors to collect information. Moreover, the starting point for this review process is the kick-off workshop. However, these first weeks were used to carry out a literature review, collect data on the population and the labour market, as well as on the social protection policy framework. In addition, a matrix for the collection and organization of data for the review was prepared based on the Social Protection Policy Options Tool (SPPOT) methodology developed by the Interagency Social Protection Assessments (ISPA) platform.

With technical and financial support of the project, the SP/CNPS launched a crucial evidence generation for the development of the next national social protection policy and sustainable financing of the social protection system in Burkina Faso. The following studies have been launched and are now being discussed with the national counterpart:

- the development of indicators and metadata using the SMART methodology to better monitor and evaluate performance on social protection as the policy document was not accompanied by indicators to monitor its implementation. The absence of such indicators does not allow for a proper analysis of progress on social protection.
- the development of a financing strategy for social protection in Burkina Faso, including an assessment of the conditions for setting up the national social protection fund and a road map for its operationalization. This study will permit to carry out advocacy-based evidence to ensure sustainable and optimal financing of next social protection policy from domestic resources to improve achievements for the most vulnerable.
- in Burkina Faso, one of the major social risks not covered by laws and regulations is the risk of unemployment. The government and CSOs considered that it is necessary to initiate discussions on unemployment insurance to offer people who have lost their jobs an adequate compensatory income to mitigate the effects of job loss on the living conditions of children and women. Therefore, technical and financial support are provided to the SP/CNPS to develop a feasibility study on unemployment insurance to serve as a basis for discussions with stakeholders.
- to support advocacy and policy dialogue for social protection, the SP/CNPS and CSOs are required to develop an investment case on social protection. This ex ante impact assessment on the implementation of cash transfer programmes at macro, individual and household (micro-simulation), and most vulnerable groups (women and children in particular) levels, will be used to strengthen advocacy for optimal financing of social protection.

To ensure more and effective participation of all the stakeholders and to make these processes participatory, a steering committee with multi-stakeholder (government, civil society, donors) are established by the Prime Ministry for each study. These committees, lead by the SP/CNPS, held 10 workshops to review and validate the deliverable of each study.

Contribution of the project to the COVID-19 response

The project is supporting a rapid assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on the informal sector in Burkina Faso. This assessment is being carried out by the ILO in several countries in the region, as part of the ILO's overall strategy in response to COVID-19.

In Burkina Faso, the rapid assessment is being carried out by ILO's APERP (*Appui à la Promotion de l'Emploi et la Réduction de la Pauvreté*) project aimed at supporting the development of a national strategy for migration from the informal sector to formal economy. The rapid assessment received the technical support and inputs from the project team, in particular to discuss social protection measures as part of the COVID-19 response. A presentation of the evaluation was organized for DEI, DGPS and SP/CNPS on 16 April 2020. An interim report of the rapid assessment was produced by the APERP project on 2 June and sent to these structures as well as to the World Bank and the DEU. The final report is expected at the end of June 2020.

The project is part of an ILO response to a request from the MFPTPS for support in the context of COVID-19, with a view to combating the spread of the virus in enterprises and raising awareness among the social partners. This request concerns the financing of activities and advisory support. The project supports the organization of virtual and/or face-to-face tripartite meetings on the management of social charges in times of crisis. This activity will mobilize ILO's expertise in Geneva.

Overall, the review of the national system will integrate the responses implemented by the government and external partners. These responses and the lessons learned will contribute

to the reflections of the national dialogue for the construction of a global response framework by strengthening the citizen control and the social responsibility mechanism in order to use citizens' committees in the response at the local and central levels.

Main challenges and risks assessments for the project implementation

The security context is the main challenge that Burkina Faso has faced so far. The situation has deteriorated rapidly since 2018, with an upsurge in attacks from non-state armed groups, leading to massive population displacements. Moreover, as in other countries of the subregion, 2020 is an election year and this will most likely affect the implementation of activities. Social unrest may also represent a constraint.

The impact of COVID-19 also remains an important risk for the implementation of the project, in particular due the restrictive measures which delay the organization of a kick-off workshop bringing together national actors and external partners, and training activities. Therefore, even though various activities have been carried out, the project has a low visibility among national actors and external partners.

In addition to the delay of a few weeks, COVID-19 has strongly disrupted the social and economic environment. At this point, it is not yet possible to measure precisely the extent of the impact of the restriction measures implemented in the country. The review of the national social protection system will be based on the data available from the most recent financial years of the schemes and programmes, up to 2019 at best. However, this review should be able to integrate the economic and social consequences of the pandemic and identify the social protection measures implemented.

Opportunities and corresponding strategy adjustments

The impact of COVID-19 confirmed the weaknesses of the national social protection system, especially in coordinating the interventions. The rapid assessment of the socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 on the informal sector also highlighted the inability of the social protection system to provide appropriate responses to actors in that sector, particularly those evolving in the sectors of food and meat production, transport, hotels, restaurants, hairdressing, construction and textiles industries. The lessons to be learned from this crisis will have to be exploited in the national dialogue process that will be supported by the project (outcome 1).

This particular context confirms the assumptions of the project document and the need to strengthen the guarantees of a social protection floor and the capacity to respond to shocks, particularly climatic and security ones. The logical framework of the project is therefore not modified. On the contrary, the current context reinforces the need to organize and support a process of national dialogue led by the SP/CNPS.

Another main opportunity was the new national social protection policy process. It provides an opportunity to consider other dimensions of social protection such as unemployment insurance and the national social protection fund which are weakly covered in the present policy. It also provides an opportunity to consider the lessons learned during the implementation of the policy through the independent evaluation of the *Politique Nationale de Protection Sociale* (PNPS). An investment case is therefore timely in the implementation of this process and will enable and refocus social protection issues at the heart of the political dialogue with the government. Adjustments have been made to take advantage of this opportunity.

Lessons learned – highlights

The preparatory phase raised one of the most important challenges to be addressed by the project, namely the weak coordination and coherence of social protection in Burkina Faso.

This weakness was highlighted with the COVID-19 pandemic, which saw the implementation

of various interventions, including by external partners, without coordination. These interventions were essentially oriented towards the health response (strengthening of health services) and an increase in safety nets for the poorest populations, particularly displaced people and the poorest households in regions weakened by the security crisis. On the other hand, no assistance in terms of income security for workers in the informal economy has been organized, with the exception of one-off cash transfer for small traders in the markets of Ouagadougou and Bobo-Dioulasso by the government, with the support of the World Bank.

Discussions during the virtual meeting of the members of the development partners sub-group on social protection raised their interest in carrying out a comprehensive review and mapping of the national system that will guide the shaping of the new social protection policy and allow for identifying persistent gaps in the social protection system, including financial gaps. This review is a high point of the project and should be the subject of a major communication to all stakeholders.

Visibility and Communication

The project remains low profile due to the delay in its launch. A project summary note is under development to present the project to national stakeholders and external partners. In addition, as per the communication plan described in the PRODOC, relevant activities will be implemented accordingly. The instrumental role of the EU will be emphasized at all steps.

Cambodia

Linkages:

Country Programme Outcome: By 2023, children and adolescents in Cambodia, including the most deprived benefit from effective social services and child-sensitive social protection system; Supporting NSSPF and PFM reforms in line with Rectangular Strategy Phase IV (2018-2023); Cambodia National Strategy Development Plan (NSDP)

Sustainable Development Goal: SDG 1.3: Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all; SDG 16.6: Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels

UNDAF/UNSDF Outcome: By 2023, women and men in Cambodia, in particular the marginalized and vulnerable, have their basic needs addressed equitably as they benefit from and utilize expanded quality social services and social protection in a more resilient, fairer and sustainable society

Executive Summary

The inception phase of the project started from October 2019 until the official launch of the project in April 2020. All the key activities of the inception phase have been completed with key activities and outputs of the project agreed between EU, ILO, UNICEF and the national implementing partner, namely the General Secretariat of the National Social Protection Council (NSPC). The general objective of the project is to ultimately increase the population's social protection coverage in Cambodia. The project focuses on three main outcomes which are in line with the specific objectives (SOs) set out in the global project document and are specifically linked to improved Public Finance Management (PFM). These are: Outcome 1 – Improved design and monitoring of SP programs and increased use of evidence on SP impact system contributes to increased coverage of social protection; Outcome 2 - Social Protection institutions enhance their planning, budgeting and M&E capacities in alignment with the Public Finance Management Reform Programme; and Outcome 3 - Service providers at sub-national level (SNAs) are better able to implement social protection services. Despite the challenges brought about by Covid-19, the implementation of the planned activities had progress accordingly specifically Activity 1.1.1, to implement the NSPC M&E framework, Activity 1.2.1, technical assistance to design and development of the family package of social assistance programme, Activity 1.2.2, technical assistance and financial support to strengthen delivery of the disability allowance programme, Activity 2.1.1, technical assistance to review implementation of functional classification of SP, Activity 2.1.3, providing technical assistance and support to building capacities of selected line ministries and institutions responsible for social assistance, Activity 2.2.1, Provide capacity building (training and coaching) on social budgeting forecasting model to MEF departments, and Activity 2.2.2, provide technical assistance and jointly develop tools to develop gender-sensitive social budgeting forecasting model for Cambodia.

Summary of the inception phase

TASKS DELIVERY DURING THE INCEPTION PHASE ^k				
Tasks	Activities	Implementing body (ILO/UNICEF/GCSPF)	Status of the task (completed/on-track/delayed)	Description of the process (consultations with national partners, including social partners)
Approved PRODOC and its annexes	Develop and agree on detailed global activities, work plan, budget, and Logframe	ILO	Completed	Consultation with NSPC was done in October to December 2019 and the PRODOC and activities were agreed upon for the kick off in April 2020.
Monitoring and evaluation framework	Collect baseline data and indicators relevant for the monitoring and evaluation of the project (logframe with indicators)	ILO	On-track	Collection of baseline data and indicators is ongoing with collaboration from national partners
Communication and visibility strategy	Develop and agree on communication and visibility strategy at global level	ILO/UNICEF/GCSPF	On-track	Communication and visibility strategy is agreed. However, as a number of planned activities of the communication and visibility strategies have not been completed, the communication materials have not been published
Project implementation structure	Establish and draft term of reference, including members, for the steering committee or coordination structure, organize the launch of the project	ILO/UNICEF/GCSPF	Completed	The Steering Committee and the implementation of the project will leverage on the UN SDG Fund Joint Programme which has been established between ILO/UNICEF and the focal national agency, General Secretariat for National Social Protection Council
Project team	Develop job description, proceed with recruitment and selection staff	ILO	Completed	A programme manager had been recruited by the ILO starting from May 2020

^k Based on the Implementation Plan

Training and knowledge products plans	Identify and agree on work on trainings, tools, guides and publications to inform or draw on country work	ILO/UNICEF/GCSPF	On-track	Ongoing discussion on activities which includes revisiting and looking at existing work done in the country
Project's support to the response to the COVID-19 through social protection measures	Participate in UN groups and governments' meeting, support the drafting of the COVID-19 response, include ILO and UNICEF's principles in the response, link with building strengthened social protection system	ILO/UNICEF	On-track	ILO and UNICEF are both deeply involved in the discussions, drafting and the operationalisation of the COVID-19 response, including the UN SP Strategy Paper and the COVID-19 Cash Transfer programme.

Overall delivery assessment ¹	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Highly satisfactory Implementation of almost all (>80%) tasks of the inception phase is on schedule as envisaged in the implementation plan and almost all (>80%) indicator milestones have been met.	<input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory Implementation of the majority (60-80%) of tasks is on schedule as envisaged in the implementation plan and the majority (60-80%) of indicator milestones have been met.
<input type="checkbox"/> Unsatisfactory Some (40-60%) tasks are being implemented on schedule as envisaged in the implementation plan.	<input type="checkbox"/> Very unsatisfactory Few (<40%) tasks are being implemented on schedule as envisaged

Achievement of the inception phase

The reporting period has been used to elaborate on the project results and the implementation modalities with the government partners. This has included the agreement on the project contents with the National Social Protection Council (NSPC) of Cambodia and its General Secretariat. Subsequently, the processes have been established to agree on the steps forward in the implementation of specific activities with the relevant government institutions. In this regard, an ongoing planning processes and collaboration with the Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation (MoSVY), as well as the General Secretariat of the NSPC (GS-NPSC) included elaboration and inclusion into annual workplans of the activities linked to the project outputs and targets envisaged under the Project workplan. With this framework put in place, ILO and UNICEF have accelerated implementation of specific activities, including:

1. Initial steps towards building technical capacities of MoSVY (**Activity 1.1.1**) to implement the NSPC M&E framework have been made through supporting MoSVY to develop the draft M&E frameworks for the Cash Transfer programme for the poor pregnant women and children 0-2. The draft M&E framework is aligned with the draft NSPC M&E framework and is to inform the work on the result-based frameworks implemented under the activity 2.1.3. Within COVID19 context, the support has been provided to MoSVY and a dialogue established with the GS-NPSC to support the development of the M&E tools to monitor programme delivery and assess socio-economic impacts of Covid19.
2. The technical assistance to design and develop a gender- and -child -sensitive family package of integrated social assistance programmes (**Activity 1.2.1**) has been put in place, with UNICEF engaging the Economic Policy Research Institute (EPRI) to provide technical assistance to the GS-NPSC in developing the options paper, programme document and the costed action plan for the future delivery of the integrated package. Given that the Family Package is one of the key mechanisms for the delivery of services under social assistance pillar envisaged in the National Social Protection Policy Framework 2016-2025, the initial step in the development of the options paper for the Family Package has been a comprehensive consultative process organized with the government partners, civil society organizations and the development partners. In parallel to bilateral consultation processes, a vulnerability assessment using secondary data analysis has been undertaken, as well as the Covid19 impact assessment. The institutional mapping exercise is also in process. The draft options for future Family Package were developed for the discussion with GS-NPSC and other stakeholders. The next step in the process is the elaboration on the selected options.

¹ This is a self-assessment

3. The process to support the roll-out of the disability identification process and the delivery of the disability allowance programme (**Activity 1.2.2**) has been kicked off in collaboration of MoSVY and UNICEF. The process has been discussed for endorsement by the GS-NSPC, with MoSVY issuing a letter of request for formalization of the disability identification process by the National Social Protection Council in June 2020. The disability identification is a critical initial step in the delivery of the disability allowance programme that currently has a very low coverage. The disability identification rolled-out under this project will ensure national coverage of the identification process, and increased uptake of the persons with disability. The disability identification guidelines and training materials were revised and the consultation processes with relevant stakeholders was roll-out, including consultations with the Civil Society Organizations, inter-departmental consultations within MoSVY. Currently, the inter-ministerial consultation meeting is being planned with the view of gaining consensus on use of the social-based identification mechanism. The inter-ministerial discussions will include clarification of the linkages with other identification mechanisms (e.g. health-based identification used by MoH). Additionally, technical assistance to initiate the work on the disability MIS has been put in place. Within the process, important synergies were established with the ACCESS project funded by ADF, as well as other partners such as GIZ. The national roll-out of the identification tool has been planned for Q3 and 4 of 2020, starting with the training of the commune officials on the use of the identification tool. The actual roll-out of the training and the identification will have to be informed by the evolution of the COVID19 context in Cambodia. The roll-out can face additional challenges linked to capacity of the communes, given that the commune officials are at this point charged to deliver the Covid19 Cash Transfer Programme for the ID Poor and to roll-out the On-demand ID poor programme to ensure improved inclusion of the poor in the Covid19 CT programme.
4. In collaboration with ACCESS project, UNICEF provided technical assistance to MoSVY to initiate activities aimed at development of the adequate/high-quality results-based frameworks in support of programme-based budget formulation, execution and reporting (**Activity 2.1.3**). To support MoSVY in preparing a quality budget proposal for 2021, taking into account expanding social assistance programmes (pregnant women and children, persons with disability, and elderly), UNICEF and ACCESS jointly delivered the initial training for all departments on preparation of inputs for budget strategic plan (BSP) 2021-2023 and programme budget 2021 using results of the review of the MoSVY strategic plan, BSP, and programme budget. UNICEF provided direct technical support to actual development of the budget proposal on a trial basis in three departments of MoSVY in charge of social protection and child protection. The support improved the linkages of budget to MoSVY strategic plan and policy priorities on social assistance programme using results-based planning approach. The activity is to be expanded to cover all 25 Provincial departments of social affairs (PDoSVY), as well as additional MoSVY departments. An internal guidance will be produced and provided by MoSVY to all 25 PDoSVYs to align their budget to MoSVY policy priorities with attention to three social assistance programmes. This will be done after all technical departments that have operation function at PDoSVY are clear of their priorities and performance measurement framework. UNICEF will support development of standard list of indicators to align PDoSVY to MoSVY. As the next step, UNICEF in collaboration with ACCESS will support MoSVY to conduct internal budget negotiation process between technical departments and management and to produce aide memoire for MoSVY for budget negotiation with MEF. Additionally, to support sustainable capacity building of General Secretariat of NSPC on performance informed budgeting and statistics department on social protection, UNICEF will initiate technical assistance to selected budget entities in implementing NSPC M&E Framework and linking programme M&E frameworks with RB budgeting (Activity 1.1.1).

5. Initiating the technical assistance to review implementation of the functional classification of social protection schemes (**Activity 2.1.1**) where a consultant was engaged by ILO to assess the relevant staff on the implementation of functional classification within the MEF and the respective line ministries and to sensitise the use relevant national staff on social budgeting
6. In collaboration with ADB, the discussion on providing capacity building (training and coaching) on social budgeting forecasting model to MEF departments (**Activity 2.2.1**) and to provide technical assistance to jointly develop tools and a gender-sensitive social budgeting forecast model for Cambodia (**Activity 2.2.2**). The discussion for these activities are in an advanced stage and will likely be finalised in August for a start in September this year.

Contribution of the project to the COVID-19 response

UNICEF direct technical assistance has been provided to GS-NSPC and MoSVY to design the Covid19 Cash Transfer Programme for ID Poor households. The Programme is a national programme of the Royal Government of Cambodia aimed at supporting more than half a million Cambodian households owning the ID Poor cards with an emergency cash transfer intervention. The programme is to be launched by end of June and implemented over the period of 8 months. The provided technical assistance covered the engagement in the design, including the benefit options and their costing, to the development of the guidelines and communication materials. The TA provided for the MIS development under the project will be repurposed as necessary. Additionally, the evidence-base to inform programming is being provided to GS-NSPC through the Covid19 impact modelling implemented under the Family Package development. The modelling exercise uses existing national survey data to model potential impacts of Covid19 on key development indicators under various assumed scenarios.

Main challenges and risks assessments for the project implementation

Covid19 poses continued challenges linked to the programme implementation. Key challenges include:

1. Potential delays in implementation of specific activities due to capacity gaps at implementation level, with already constrained government structures and capacities focused on Covid19 response. This may create delays in the project delivery.
2. Constraints posed by Covid19 in obtaining high-quality international technical assistance. With global focus on impacts of the crisis and social protection, the think-thanks and high-quality service providers are overstretched to respond to the increased demand for evidence and programme delivery solutions. This may impact timeliness and quality of the product delivery in 2020.

Opportunities and corresponding strategy adjustments

With Covid19 crisis, interest of the RGC and the development partners in the social protection sector has increased. This has resulted in the announcement of the national Covid19 CT programme for ID Poor households and a number of development partners pledging support to the sector's social assistance and social security pillars. This has opened opportunities for strategic engagement of the UN family with the development partners. The core activities under the project create the basis around which a longer-term engagement to strengthen social protection responses is created. Currently, the project serves as the basis for the dialogue between the UN Agencies and the EU. The direct collaboration has been established with ADB around specific project activity, whereas collaboration with other DPs, including GIZ and WB is being established to influence strategic interventions. With the increased interest of the Royal Government of Cambodia in the sector, the project components and their delivery are becoming more critical to ensure programme design, evidence-base and processes are in place to inform the evolution of the sector.

Visibility & Communication

The project and its contents were communicated to all the key stakeholders during the inception phase via specifically targeted meetings or the routine work planning processes. Where feasible, the EU logo has been displayed and EU support acknowledged, including during the consultative processes linked to disability identification.

Ethiopia

Linkages:

Country Programme Outcome (ILO): National plans and strategies in place to extend social protection through sustainable public finance management (ETH154)

Sustainable Development Goal: SDG 1 Target 1.3

UNDAF/UNSDF Outcome: Outcome 3 Target 3.4

Executive Summary

The EU funded ILO/UNICEF joint Project of Ethiopia “Public Finance Management for Social Protection” (SP&PFM) implemented a number of activities during the inception phase for the joint multi-stakeholder elaboration of the PRODOC and its accompanying documents. By the end of the SP&PFM Project in Ethiopia, it is expected that the outcome to “improve the social protection system in Ethiopia through a sustainable financing strategy with short and medium term options” is achieved by the operationalization of the three following outputs: *Output 1: Financing strategy for Social Protection in Ethiopia with short and medium-term options; Output 2: Extending social security to informal economy workers and supporting wage legislation related to social protection; Output 3: Building the capacity of MoLSA and Addis Ababa BoLSA to effectively monitor implementation of social protection programmes.* The EU, UNICEF and ILO first established a Core Group comprising of their staff that set a roadmap for the implementation of inception phase activities. Through a consultative process with key ministries and social protection actors, the Core Group secured inputs on government policy and programme priorities and gaps relevant for the Project proposal. Based on existing social protection and public finance policy documents and stakeholders’ consultations, the Core Group prepared a draft proposal that was discussed with and validated by the Reference Group which comprises of main social protection actors including policy makers. SP&PFM Ethiopia presented the Project’s concept note at the Inception workshop in December 2019 in Brussels and obtained important inputs. SP&PFM Ethiopia submitted the first draft of the Proposal to EC DEVCO containing a Project Document (PRODOC), Multi- year Implementation Plan, detailed Budget Plan as well as a Communication and Visibility strategy documents. Based on EC-DEVCO’s and steering committee’s inputs, the Project improved the PRODOC and other relevant documents and secured an approval in April 2020. Following the Project’s approval, a number of ToRs (Financing Strategy for SP, Extension of SP to informal economy workers, SSI) have been drafted and are under discussion. The project is conducting a vulnerability analysis and study on socio-economic impact of COVID-19, as part of the activities readjusted under output 1 to respond to the COVID-19 crisis. By way of building the capacity of the Ministry and Bureaus of Labour and Social Affairs, the Project is in the process of sponsoring selected officials to attend an online training on Social Protection. The online training runs from 15 June-06 September 2020.

Summary of the inception phase

TASKS DELIVERY DURING THE INCEPTION PHASE ^m				
Tasks	Activities	Implementing body (ILO/UNICEF/GCSPF)	Status of the task (completed/on-track/delayed)	Description of the process (consultations with national partners, including social partners)

^m Based on the Implementation Plan

Produce PRODOC and its annexes	Develop and agree on detailed global activities, work plan, budget, and Log frame	ILO/UNICEF	Completed	<p>The project's concept was presented to the global project Steering Committee at the Inception workshop in Brussels in December 2019. The project then established Reference Group (RG) as an advisory body for the Project and to coordinate with inter-governmental agencies as well as employers' and workers' organizations at country level. The RG comprises of government ministries and offices (Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Ministry of Finance and Federal Job creation and Food Security Agency), ILO's tripartite partners (Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Unions, Public Servants' Social Security Agency, and Private Organizations' Employees Social Security Agency), the World Bank and Addis Ababa University (representing the academia). National stakeholders are consulted individually and then through the RG. In February 2020, the project had its first introductory meeting with the RG to introduce the project, present the draft project concept note and receive inputs and comments on the outputs and deliverables of the project. The RG expressed its agreement on the proposed three outputs of the project and suggested that the project interventions should be consistent with the country's national programs and development goals which has been ensured. An additional outcome of continued consultations is that interventions that can inform and address the COVID-19 response have been identified, agreed upon and included in alignment with all three outputs of the project document.</p> <p>After consulting the RG, the ILO-UNICEF team drafted the PRODOC including a multi-annual work plan, budget, log frame as well as a communication and visibility strategy. The documents were submitted to EC DEVCO through ILO HQ in February and received feedback for improvement in March. The EU Delegation in Addis Ababa, the ILO and UNICEF worked on the commented documents, addressed the feedback from the global Steering Committee and resubmitted the final document which was approved by the global Steering Committee.</p>
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TASKS DELIVERY DURING THE INCEPTION PHASE ^m				
Tasks	Activities	Implementing body (ILO/UNICEF/GCSPF)	Status of the task (completed/on-track/delayed)	Description of the process (consultations with national partners, including social partners)
Monitoring and evaluation framework	Collect baseline data and indicators relevant for the monitoring and evaluation of the project (log frame with indicators)	ILO/UNICEF	On track	ToR for the Social Security Inquiry (SSI) monitoring tool has been drafted. A national consultant will soon be recruited to do social protection mapping and statistics. The results of the SSI exercise will be used by the Project as baseline data and indicators for M&E.
Communication and visibility strategy	Develop and agree on communication and visibility strategy at global level	ILO/UNICEF	Submitted to EU	The Communication and Visibility Strategy has been submitted along with the PRODOC but is planned to be reviewed by the EU during the implementation phase of the project.
Project implementation structure	Establish and draft term of reference, including members, for the steering committee or coordination structure, organize the launch of the project	ILO/UNICEF/EUC	Completed	The Terms of Reference for both the Core Group (UNICEF, ILO, EU) and the Reference Group (Ministries/Agencies, Employers' and workers' representatives, international development organisations, social security agencies and academia) are prepared and the structure is in place. The 1 st Reference Group meeting was held in February 2020 to introduce the Project and get feedbacks on the draft project document. This can be taken as a launch of the Project.
Project team	Develop job description, proceed with recruitment and selection staff	ILO/UNICEF	On track	UNICEF has already put in place staff responsible for Project implementation while ILO is in the process of recruitment. Job descriptions for ILO recruitment are done.

TASKS DELIVERY DURING THE INCEPTION PHASE ^m				
Tasks	Activities	Implementing body (ILO/UNICEF/GCSPF)	Status of the task (completed/on-track/delayed)	Description of the process (consultations with national partners, including social partners)
Training and knowledge products plans	Identify and agree on work on trainings, tools, guides and publications to inform or draw on country work	ILO/UNICEF	On track	<p>TRANSFORM training is one of the tools identified. The SP&PFM Project Coordinator at the ILO has taken the course from March-May 2020.</p> <p>The “E-Coaching on Social Protection: Towards Responsive Systems” of the International Training Center of the ILO (ITC-ILO) is identified as one of the best choices in the event of the COVID-19 crisis as residential or face-to-face training workshops are not possible. Therefore, from 15 June to 6 September 2020, selected staff from the Ministry of labour and Social Affairs, Regional Bureaus of Labour and Social Affairs, and Social Security Agencies will participate in the e-coaching course.</p> <p>The ToR for SP financing strategy with fiscal space analysis, costing, investment framework and financing strategy components is drafted.</p>

TASKS DELIVERY DURING THE INCEPTION PHASE ^m				
Tasks	Activities	Implementing body (ILO/UNICEF/GCSPF)	Status of the task (completed/on-track/delayed)	Description of the process (consultations with national partners, including social partners)
Project's support to the response to the COVID-19 through social protection measures	Participate in UN groups and governments' meeting, support the drafting of the COVID-19 response, include ILO and UNICEF's principles in the response, link with building strengthened social protection system	ILO/UNICEF	On track	<p>The Project outputs/activities are revised to be CoVID-19 responsive.</p> <p>As part of Output 1 of the project, a study has been launched on a vulnerability assessment of COVID-19 and the socio-economic impact of COVID-19. The project has drafted ToRs for technical assessment on extending COVID-19 responsive social protection to workers in the informal economy including through media-based awareness raising.</p> <p>By way of providing support to the COVID-19, the ILO project team has contributed to a social protection response proposal for income protection to workers in the garment and textile industry in Ethiopia to be funded by BMZ (Annex 3).</p> <p>As part of the ongoing support and engagement to MoLSA, and complementing the objectives of this project (albeit with other funding sources), UNICEF is working with MoLSA and Federal Urban Job Creation and Food Security Agency (UJCFSA) to leverage the Urban Productive Safety Net Programme (UPSNP) to provide cash transfer 'top ups' to all Permanent Direct Support households in 11 cities and all Temporary Direct Support households in Addis Ababa.</p> <p>UNICEF in collaboration with MoLSA and UJCFSA has also provided hygiene and COVID communication materials to all UPSNP households. These interventions are using the existing safety system to respond at scale to COVID-19.</p>

Overall delivery assessment ⁿ	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Highly satisfactory Implementation of almost all (>80%) tasks of the inception phase is on schedule as envisaged in the implementation plan and almost all (>80%) indicator milestones have been met.	<input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory Implementation of the majority (60-80%) of tasks is on schedule as envisaged in the implementation plan and the majority (60-80%) of indicator milestones have been met.
<input type="checkbox"/> Unsatisfactory Some (40-60%) tasks are being implemented on schedule as envisaged in the implementation plan.	<input type="checkbox"/> Very unsatisfactory Few (<40%) tasks are being implemented on schedule as envisaged

Achievement of the inception phase

The main achievements of the inception phase are:

- Establishment of the Core Group and the Reference Group with clear Terms of Reference (ToR). The Reference Group will be updated by the Core Group about once or twice a year to ensure it is kept informed of the project's progress and implementation and will be sought for strategic advice.
- Introducing the Project to social partners at the first Reference Group meeting and getting inputs on proposed outputs and activities; and presenting the project to the social protection Donor Working Group to introduce the project and invite possible partnerships.
- Completion of the PRODOC with Multi annual work plan, Budget and Communication/Visibility Strategy.
- Preparation of ToRs for studies on financing strategy for social protection (fiscal space analysis, investment case, costing); extension of social protection to informal economy workers; Social security Inquiry (SSI) for social protection mapping and monitoring (see Annexes 4 and 5). The ToR and its forthcoming work relating to the fiscal space analysis will be timed to reflect scenarios that reflect the economic impact of COVID and the fiscal space analysis will also be informed by the preceding study on the socio-economic impact assessment. Government resource allocation and spending is likely to be strongly affected by the economic impact of COVID-19 which will be reflected in the fiscal space analysis.
- Launch of the study on vulnerability assessment and socio-economic impact of COVID-19 (the study will be shared with the progress report).
- Facilitating online training on social protection, from 15 June to 6 September, for selected government staff of MoLSA, BoLSAs and social security agencies by making arrangements with ILO-ITC (Turin) partners.

Contribution of the project to the COVID-19 response

In view of strengthening the social protection system in the context of COVID-19, the Project has revised its activity plans prior to submission of the final version of the PRODOC. It has prepared to conduct analytical studies to inform policy makers on vulnerability of households affected by COVID-19 and the socio-economic impact of COVID-19 with possible short- and medium-term response measures. It has also drafted ToRs for technical assessment on extending COVID-19 responsive social protection to workers in the informal economy including through media-based awareness raising. All outputs in the PRODOC now include activities that are addressing COVID-19.

ⁿ This is a self-assessment

There are also various actions being undertaken in collaboration with MoLSA and other agencies to respond to COVID-19. UNICEF is working with MoLSA and the UJCFSa in providing cash transfer top-up to permanent direct support UPSNP beneficiaries as part of the COVID response. Hygiene and COVID communication materials are also being provided to all UPSNP households as part of the COVID-19 response collaboration. While these are financed from other sources, they are complementary, and will contribute to the objectives of this project, particularly where they are leveraging existing safety nets. As both MoLSA and UJCFSa are represented in the Reference Group of the SP&PFM project, an ongoing collaboration is already established and further coordination can also be used to leverage additional resources through collaborative partnerships.

Main challenges and risks assessments for the project implementation

The major challenge that could hinder the progress of the project is the current COVID-19 pandemic and the state of emergency declared following this health threat. COVID-19 related travel restrictions could make some deliverables challenging. For instance, output 1 and 2 of the Project that relate to the development of financing strategy for social protection and study on extending social security to informal economy workers in Ethiopia require the involvement of international consultants with a need for in-country data collection. The existing COVID-19 related restrictions could heavily influence the extent to which such data collection and analysis can be done. This could lead to some delay in the delivery of results and output quality. With social distancing measures and inability to hold face-to-face meetings and gatherings, the capacity building component of the project will also be affected until such restrictions are lifted. E-learning modalities are being looked at to ensure the continuation of the capacity building component but limited internet connectivity on the side of government offices presents a major challenge.

With COVID-19 expected to have a significant negative impact on the economy, resource mobilization is expected to be constrained leading to reduction in fiscal space. This could constrain government resourcing of social protection and challenge some of the advocacy points regarding increased domestic financing for social protection. The presentation of results and advocacy will be framed in the current economic context for better buy-in and acceptance of the results of the analytical works and recommendations of the project outputs.

Another potential risk to the project is the political instability in the country. The election which was planned to take place in August 2020 will not be held on the planned date due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Deliberation is still going on concerning the timing for the election and related constitutional issues. This is creating uncertainty in the current political climate. Although the timing may not be known now, the election may likely take place within the timeframe of this project. Given that the outcome of the election and the winning political party's commitment to financing social protection are unknown at this stage means there is a risk on the degree to which the Project's recommendations will be taken up for implementation by government.

Opportunities and corresponding strategy adjustments

The current COVID-19 pandemic has brought the discussion on social protection to the forefront and opened up opportunities for partnership among development partners. The EU delegation in Ethiopia is working with the project on social protection policy eligibility assessment, which is an input towards making a case for consideration of budget support for social protection. BMZ is also willing to provide wage subsidy to workers in the garment and textile industry affected by the COVID-19 crisis. There is, thus, increased interest from government institutions and the donor community on investing in social protection to deal with the negative impact of the pandemic on the poor and vulnerable section of the population. Such increased engagement is an opportunity for the project to hold a centre stage in the social protection related assessments and dialogues. The current government and donors' focus on

social protection could pave the way for the project to impact the sector both in the short, medium, and long term through providing relevant strategies and frameworks to ensure the financial sustainability of sector. Among COVID- 19 response plans that can be considered as opportunities for social protection improvement, the following could be cited:

- COVID 19 National emergency response (April 2020)
- COVID 19 Workplace protocol (March 2020)
- Socio-economic response and recovery in the aftermath of COVID 19 (May 2020)
- Protection for garment and textile workers from COVID 19 impact (May 2020)

Lessons learned – highlights

Working with the Reference Group and the day-to-day collaboration and communication with the technical Core Group (EU, ILO, and UNICEF) has proved useful in enhancing collaboration, supporting the development of an acceptable project document, and paving a conducive work environment for the project interventions and partnership with stakeholders.

The project implementing environment has recently changed since COVID-19 pandemic. One of the lessons learnt is adopting and contextualizing the project to respond to the timely need. This has resulted in increased interest from the government and donor partners as the relevance of the project is amplified in the current crisis.

The traditional capacity building exercises such as trainings and workshops are challenged by current restrictions. Innovative online training and coaching engagement are being adopted. Although such arrangements have their own drawbacks, especially in situations where internet connectivity is a challenge, they also open new opportunities for higher number of participants and access to high skilled trainers and training materials.

Visibility & Communication

In line with the project's requirement, the communication and visibility strategy for Ethiopia was developed and submitted along with the PRODOC but will be approved by the EU during the implementation phase of the project. The project was officially launched in February 2020 during the project's first meeting with the Reference Group. A project launch event with a wider public audience could not be conducted as planned due to COVID-19 related restrictions and alternative options are being looked into.

Nepal

Linkages:

Country Programme Outcome (ILO): Social protection institutions have implemented the Contribution-based Social Security Act (2017) and Regulations (2018)

Sustainable Development Goal: This project directly contributes to a standalone target in SDG 1, with target 1.3 aiming to “implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030, achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable.” In addition, this project also contributes to improve well-being by improving food security, stimulating demand for health and education services and reducing child labour, including for persons with disabilities – contributing to SDG Goals 2, 3, 4, and 5 (ending hunger, healthy lives, education, gender equality), pro-poor growth, decent work (SDGs 8) reducing inequality and promoting peace (SDGs 10, 16) whilst leaving no one behind.

UNDAF/UNSDF Outcome: The expected results will contribute towards UNDAF Outcome 2 on Social Development, which aims to support improved, equitable access, availability and utilisation of quality basic social services for all, particularly for vulnerable people by 2022, including: Strengthened nutrition and food security system (Target 2.1) Improved delivery of contribution-based SP schemes (Targets 3.8, 10.4, 8.5) Improved coordination, monitoring and reporting on employment guarantee scheme recently launched by the Government (Targets 1.2, 8.5) The results will also contribute towards UNDAF Output 3, which aims to support environmental management, sustainable recovery and reconstruction, and resilience to climate change while disaster are strengthened at all levels, including: Institutional mechanism and action plan for disaster response and recovery for rural and urban municipalities guided by new policy and legislation in place (Target 3.3)

Executive Summary

This project "Enhancing Social Protection System: Towards Investments for Results " aims to support government in improving social protection policies; financing strategies; coordination mechanism; and implementation and monitoring systems in order to increase coverage to the excluded, including PWDs, informal sector workers and people with disaster risks. In line with the objective, the following results are envisaged: Result 1. Increased capacity of GoN and key stakeholders to develop resilient, inclusive national social protection policies, sustainable financing strategies and legal frameworks at Federal and Provincial levels; Result 2. Government enabled to establish and operationalise a high-level social protection coordination, monitoring and evaluation mechanism at Federal level; Result 3. Increased capacity of Federal and Provincial Governments to plan, budget, implement and monitor extension of contribution –based social protection systems and programmes, overcoming the challenges such as informality, while ensuring financial sustainability of the contributory system; Result 4: Increased capacity of Federal and Local Governments to address the financing gap and implement, monitor and report on social assistance programmes; Result 5: Enhanced accountability mechanism at local government level in Province 2 and 6 including registrations, claim handling, Grievances Redress Mechanism (GRM), monitoring, evaluation and reporting in line with international social security standards and principles; Result 6: Nepali Civil Society Organisations and Trade Unions are meaningfully and structurally involved in the development, implementation and monitoring of policy processes regarding social protection and public finance management due to improved coordination and enhanced capacities .

During the Inception period October 2019 to May 2020 the country specific project document has been developed through a consultative process and document finalized after incorporating inputs from donor, national stakeholders and experts from UNICEF and the ILO. ILO has completed its internal appraisal process. As DFID and World Bank are also key player on social protection, the project team coordinated and shared the project document to ensure

complementarity and synergy. This took more time than expected. DFID has also agreed to support some activities that need additional support within this project. Coordination and collaboration has been established with GIZ in order to strengthen the national capacity on expanding social protection services to workers.

Project document including the log frame and an output based work plan has been finalized. UNICEF has completed recruitment of project staff with a key international P-4 post put on hold for the time being after the first attempt at recruitment was unsuccessful. ILO has initiated the recruitment process for an international Social Protection Technical Officer (P-3) and a National Project Coordinator. Both expected to start from early July. Coordination with key strategic partners have been established. Formation of the Project steering committee is delayed because of the COVID-19.

One of the key achievements made during this reporting period is draft national framework on social protection (only available in Nepali language). The National Planning commission has prepared a draft which is currently being reviewed and commented by the experts, including the project team. Another significant achievement is that despite resource constraints the government has announced scaling up the child grant through the budget and asked the development partner to cover the cost for one year and government takes it forward from the next year. UNICEF has been in discussion with the Ministry of Finance for advancing public finance for children through evidence-based policy making and capacity building initiatives, amongst others. A concept note was submitted to MoF but the process was halted due to transfer of a key official and engagement of the government officials in COVID-19 response. Efforts are underway to build rapport and strengthen advocacy with senior officials at the Ministry for advancing PF4C. Likewise, with the aim of tracking social protection expenditure for strengthening advocacy efforts with the policy makers, including parliamentarians, social budget briefs have been developed which will be widely disseminated.

ILO has initiated the implementation of planned capacity building of Social Security Fund (SSF) team. Online on-the-job coaching of staffs in different units are ongoing. A Training-of-Trainers on social protection to potential trainers in SSF, Employers' and Workers' Organizations and Civil-Society Organizations has been designed, which will be delivered by the ILO-ITC in Turin after the lifting of lock down. Actuarial assessment to guide policy for old-age benefit schemes for workers is being discussed. ILO is also engaged in Actuarial Valuation of the universal Health Insurance Scheme in collaboration with GIZ, which directly contributes to expand social protection coverage to workers.

Because of the COVID some lessons have already been learnt to work during the lockdown while maintaining distancing. This has opened up new ways of virtual communication and consultations which probably will continue even beyond COVID-19 as this is more time and resource effective.

Some adjustments on the project's **activities and timeframe** may be needed in the months to come, following discussion with partners and the government counterparts. **For example, capacity development activities that included study visits to learn from successful experience in the Region will have to be re-oriented online; the recruitment of the professional staff was also delayed to the COVID-19 situation.** In overall the project's **priorities, objectives and expected** results have not been hampered until now and **implementation** has moved as expected. .

Summary of the inception phase

TASKS DELIVERY DURING THE INCEPTION PHASE °				
Tasks	Activities	Implementing body (ILO/UNICEF/GCSPF)	Status of the task (completed/on-track/delayed)	Description of the process (consultations with national partners, including social partners)
Approved PRODOC and its annexes	Develop and agree on detailed global activities, work plan, budget, and Log frame		Completed	The draft Project document, work plan and logical framework were presented and discussed with the National Planning Commission including representative from key Ministries.
Monitoring and evaluation framework	Collect baseline data and indicators relevant for the monitoring and evaluation of the project (log frame with indicators)		On track	Project log-frame has been developed and baseline data are identified to the extent possible. If not available, base line will be established in the beginning of project implementation. Log-frame provides indicators at outcome as well as at output levels.
Communication and visibility strategy	Develop and agree on communication and visibility strategy at global level		On track	The Communication strategy is developed and mentioned in the project document. As part of this a Education Budget is being printed under joint UNICEF-EU logo. More activities are under way.
Project implementation structure	Establish and draft term of reference, including members, for the steering committee or coordination structure, organize the launch of the project		Delayed	The Project steering committee has not yet formed and launching of the project is delayed because of current COVID-19 context.

° Based on the Implementation Plan

EU-ILO-UNICEF-GCSPF SP&PFM Programme - Inception Report

Project team	Develop job description, proceed with recruitment and selection staff	ILO, UNICEF	On track	<p>UNICEF has prepared all the Job descriptions, recruitment of one National Officer completed and already on board. Selection process of an international staff has been put on hold in discussion with EU country office due to COVID-19.</p> <p>ILO: JDs developed, and clearance received from relevant technical specialists. Hiring process for 2 technical staff (one international at P-3 level and one National at NO-B level has been started. Position has been advertised for P-3. For NO-B, position was advertised, and written test and interview completed. However, none of the candidates met the needed competency level. Process ongoing for direct selection. Positions for ADFIN staff and part time driver to be filled in internally. Staffs identified.</p>
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Training and knowledge products plans	Identify and agree on work on trainings, tools, guides and publications to inform or draw on country work	ILO/UNICEF	On track	<p>ILO: The project activities will also be complemented by another DFID funded ILO project “Skills for Employment” (ILO-SEP). Some of the planned social protection orientation activities under the ECDEVCO support within Social Security Fund (SSF), have been initiated under the DFID support. In 2019, ILO-SEP together with SSF conducted a complete technical review of fund operations. The review outlined critical constraints in scheme design, mechanisms, human resources, and administration. A series of meetings between SSF, GiZ and ILO SEP helped develop a joint plan for technical support in November 2019, under which ILO SEP has continued to provide training and other administrative capacity building support to the SSF. A senior social protection expert -international) was hired to work closely with SSF and provide on-the job orientation to all new staff of SSF. Actuarial study to guide old age benefit policies has been identified as a priority. Discussions are ongoing on the modality and scope of the study. Project has also ensured senior IT Expert’s support to SSF, especially in terms of assessing the SSF IT system capacity to handle big data and to ensure the data security/confidentiality.</p> <p>Additional training tools, guidelines and publications will be prepared as we move ahead</p>
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Project's support to the response to the COVID-19 through social protection measures	Participate in UN groups and governments' meeting, support the drafting of the COVID-19 response, include ILO and UNICEF's principles in the response, link with building strengthened social protection system		On Track	<p>Both UNICEF and ILO have been actively engaged in UN and government Meetings, UNICEF is co-leading various clusters including social economic /recovery cluster. UNICEF is monitoring the social economic impact of COVID-19 to inform response planning. UNICEF is also contributing the Social and Economic Impact assessment being conducted by the National Planning Commission. UNICEF is leading an inter-agency coordination effort on COVID and Disaster Cash Response which is being helped by the project staff.</p> <p>ILO is continuously engaged in dialogue with workers and employers' organisations and government at different levels to identify COVID-19 response needs. The emphasis has been strengthened system from all sides and income support to the workers whose livelihoods depend on daily labour-self-or wage employed, with no or very little savings. ILO, in collaboration with other UN agencies is implementing interventions to meet the immediate income gap of the most affected workers. Discussions are ongoing with MOLESS and SSF for potential social protection measures in response to the COVID-19 under the Project.</p>
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Overall delivery assessment ¹⁶

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Highly satisfactory
Implementation of almost all (>80%) tasks of the inception phase is on schedule as envisaged in the implementation plan and almost all (>80%) indicator milestones have been met. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory
Implementation of the majority (60-80%) of tasks is on schedule as envisaged in the implementation plan and the majority (60-80%) of indicator milestones have been met. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Unsatisfactory
Some (40-60%) tasks are being implemented on schedule as envisaged in the implementation plan. | <input type="checkbox"/> Very unsatisfactory
Few (<40%) tasks are being implemented on schedule as envisaged |

Achievement of the inception phase

1. Country specific Project Document finalised in consultation with several stakeholders A joint project planning workshop was organized on 04 February 2020 by UNICEF, ILO and the National Planning Commission where World Bank, DFID and EU delegation in Nepal attended. UNICEF presented the project document on behalf of UNICEF, ILO and WSM and the government counterparts from various Ministries gave feedback to improve the project documents. Project implementation and monitoring tools (work plan, Log frame and Output based-budget finalised and agreed with Government counterpart. A separate meeting at the EU delegation was also organized to discuss the project documents among ILO UNICEF and WSM representatives including some civil society partners.

2 ILO has completed its internal project appraisal requirements.

3 Both UNICEF and ILO have established coordination with strategic partners, such as NPC, MOHA, GIZ to meet the technical assistance requirement of SSF.

4 ILO has agreed a Training of Trainers' of Social Protection plan with ILO-ITC Turin in order to build national capacity to promote and implement social protection programmes.

5 ILO has completed on-the-job coaching to newly appointed Officials of SSF in order to orient them in their specific responsibilities and help them understand general social protection concepts and principles.

6 Recruitment of Project Management Team: Recruitment of project management team is ongoing. UNICEF has already recruited a National Officer is on board from April 2020. Recruitment of a project coordinator was also finalized. However, because of COVID-19, the selected candidates declined the offer. ILO has initiated project staff recruitment process.

7 Advocacy and Policy Support: Both UNICEF and ILO were advocating for strengthening social protection policies and programmes during the inception phase.

During the inception phase significant achievement has been made in the area of policy development. With UNICEF's technical support, the National Planning Commission has come up with draft of An Integrated National Social Protection Framework. The draft has been reviewed by the national experts and stakeholders' consultations were organised for collecting feedback on the draft and is expected to be endorsed by the National Planning Commission in a couple of

¹⁶ This is a self-assessment

months.

Government was reluctant to expand the child grant because of the priority to invest on health response in the COVID-19 context. However, with strategic engagement with government as well as civil society and development partners we were able to influence the government to expand the child grant horizontally as response to COVID-19. The government has allocated 3 million USD to expand the child grant in the budget that was presented to the parliament in 28 May 2020.

With mutual understanding and trust, WSM as representative of the GCSPF in Nepal, worked closely with ILO and UNICEF in the process of the elaboration of the proposal. WSM took the initiative to consult all the various stakeholders, including UNICEF, ILO, GCSPF constituents and related CSOs active in Nepal. Feedback of the discussions within CSOs and trade unions with the leadership of WSM, was regularly provided to ILO and UNICEF team in charge of social protection and this specific project.

Representatives of CSOs and trade unions that were identified by WSM, including ITUC-NAC (trade unions umbrella organisation) and SPCSN (umbrella NGOs) organized two stakeholders meetings with over 50 representatives from various international and national CSOs. They mandated a CSO steering committee of 9 members to draft activities and select project locations, in line or coherent with UNICEF and ILO plans.

The GCSPF through WSM and its local representative will be included in the overall steering committee of the project. This is very important considering that ILO, UNICEF and the GCSPF are the three co-implementing organisations of this Global Action funded by the EU. The actions of the GCSPF have also been incorporated in a specific outcome in the overall PRODOC, though the partners agreed involvement of civil society is to be ensured in the other planned outcomes as well.

Contribution of the project to the COVID-19 response

UNICEF, ILO and other UN agencies are supporting the government to access and monitor the impact of COVID-19 and to develop a national response plan. UNICEF is conducting a telephone survey to monitor social and economic impact, particularly among the children and most vulnerable groups. The findings of the survey are expected to feed the COVID-19 response planning and programming.

In addition, UNICEF country office has also prepared a draft advocacy paper COVID and Beyond that recommends the government to take COVID-19 as an opportunity to expand the social protection including expansion of the child grant, universalization of social health Insurance and social protection response to most vulnerable populations affected by the lockdown and income loss.

ILO has been discussing with MOLESS, Workers' and Employers' Organisation for necessary COVID response technical support.

UNICEF has also provided technical support to Provincial government in province 2 to plan social protection response through incoming 2020 budget.

Challenges and risks assessments for the project implementation

- ☐ Unexpected change in external environment, in particular assess the risk of impact of the COVID-19 and economic crisis on the outcomes and results of the project
- ☐ Community/political opposition
- ☐ Policy changes

- ☐ Difficulties in inter-agency coordination
- ☐ Lack of constituent or implementing partner commitment/ownership
- ☐ Implementing partner (constituents or other entities) performance
- ☐ Inadequate cost estimates
- ☐ Budget processing (revision/disbursement etc.) and/or other administrative delays
- ☐ HR difficulties (recruitment, contracts)

Because the COVID crisis there will be resource constraints. It is expected that the GDP will be reduced by 5 percentage points and will be about 2 per cent in 2020. Fiscal space for investing additional resource in social protection might be not enough. The expansion of the child grant was on hold because of the COVID-19. However, because of the project's advocacy, DFID has agreed to fund the expansion through budget support to the government.

Since the passing of Contribution-based Social Security Act, 2017, enrolment by formal sector employers with Social Security Fund (SSF) and contribution (20 %) in the social security fund for schemes implementation was gradually increasing after the announcement of mandatory enrolment. Several employers/enterprises, especially in tourism sector have been hard hit by COVID-19. This will have negative impact on expected compliance of the Act by employers. Similarly, many workers are expected to lose jobs affecting their participation in social security schemes negatively. This situation will affect the achievement of the project objective in terms of expanding contribution-based social protection benefit to workers.

Opportunities and corresponding strategy adjustments

Present opportunities to do/achieve more than expected (gains in effectiveness, contribution to organizational learning, building alliances, etc.) and adjustments made to be able to make the most of these opportunities. Provide explanation in the possible impact of the COVID-19 and economic crisis on the achievement of the outcomes and results of the project. Present any corresponding reformulations of the logical framework.

The COVID-19 pandemic has further re-enforced the importance of shock responsive social protection. Despite the resource constraint the government has agreed to expand the child grant so that the social registry will be comprehensive and contributes to expand the social protection in case of shock or disasters.

There is increasing recognition from policy makers and planners on the importance of strong social protection system to address crisis like COVID-19 pandemic. With no system in place, government has faced huge challenges to reach out to informal sector workers during the crisis. This realisation at different levels of government is expected to enhance government's commitment on building social protection systems. Timely response to request for technical support towards strengthening the system and technical capacities will be prioritised to capitalise this opportunity. There is also an increased realisation of vulnerability of workers during crisis due to lack of social protection coverage. This provides the right momentum for workers organisations to advocate expansion of social protection coverage to workers and to address the financing gaps. Workers' organisations will be provided with information and tools for evidenced-based advocacy towards increased financing, system building and extension of social protection coverage to workers.

We will keep the strategic discussion with project partners and the government counterparts on the project results and priorities and propose required adjustments or changes in coming months.

Lessons learned – highlights

Describe any lessons, positive and negative, that have been learned during the inception phase. You may want to organize the lessons using the headings below:

- ☐ Context and implementing environment

- ☐ Project strategy and design
- ☐ Advocacy, communication
- ☐ Capacity building
- ☐ Communication and visibility
- ☐ Implementation and institutional arrangements

1. COVID-19 has further established the importance of shock responsive Social protection systems.
2. We probably need to focus and use technology to strengthen our approach to communication and visibility.
3. We are now more conversant with technology-based meeting and workshops which could be more cost effective and quick.
4. More online courses, and e-coaching need to be developed for training even during crisis.

Visibility & Communication

Describe how this project has been communicated to stakeholders. Indicate how the donor support for this project is made public and what steps are taken to comply with visibility obligations. Please include in the Annexes photos, illustrations of visibility, multimedia products prepared to ensure the project's and development partners' visibility in the reported period. Make sure the relevant donor logos are included as per the specific requirements of each donor. Provide information on any activities you are planning or have implemented for the project launch.

The project has been introduced, discussed and agreed with the government counterparts at the Federal level and to workers 'and employers' organizations through bi-lateral meetings. Project document has been shared with all the constituents. In all meetings, the donor of the project was mentioned. Project document explicitly mentions the donor. A multi-stakeholder launching programme has been planned immediately after the lockdown has been lifted. Preparation are undergoing for this launching programme.

The project was briefly discussed with the provincial government. Now we need to strengthen communication with the provincial and local government.

Advocacy papers and policy briefs such as social budget brief which are being produced as part of the project ensures acknowledgement and visibility of donor support through wider dissemination to different platforms such as Social Protection Task Team (SPTT) and Cash Coordination Group as well with the government counterparts in the form of concept note, draft briefs for feedback and dissemination of the final product. Evidences and research supported by the project includes donor logo and recognition of support for improving visibility.

Likewise, stakeholder consultations at provincial level that were organised to understand the impact of COVID-19 and social protection response, reiterated (through presentations) donor engagement and support from the project.

Paraguay

Linkages:

Country Programme Outcome (ILO): Outcome 8: “Comprehensive and sustainable social protection for all” and Output 8.3 “Increased capacity of the member States to integrate social protection in comprehensive policy responses to support and protect workers and employers during their life and work transitions”.

Country Programme Outcome (UNICEF): Outcome 3: By 2024, more children and adolescents benefit from policies, plans and programmes, especially at the local level, based on evidence and results management. Output 3.2: The institutions of the national protection system have the capacity to formulate evidence-based policies, plans and programmes.

Sustainable Development Goal: SDG 1, Target 1.3; SDG 3 and SDG 10

UNDAF/UNSDF Outcome: Pillar 1: “People and Social Development”

Executive Summary

Between October 2019 and April 2020, ILO and UNICEF, in close collaboration with the Paraguayan government and the EU Delegation in Asunción, developed the project proposal to strengthen the Social Protection System ¡Vamos! The project was submitted for approval to the Steering Committee of the global programme in early March 2020 and, after revisions, was finally approved in May 2020.

The project was the result of analysis and consultations carried out by ILO and UNICEF with key stakeholders such as the staff at the Ministry of Finance and the Technical Unit of the Social Cabinet, workers and employers organizations and the staff at the Delegation of the European Union in Paraguay. The project's main outcome is to “improve Paraguay’s design, financing and implementation of the Social Protection System ¡Vamos!” This project, and the outcome in particular, complements the broader actions of the EU in Paraguay, in particular, the budget support initiative that is currently in Congress waiting for approval (expected by end 2020)

The project’s outcome is composed of four outputs that seek to find space to mobilize resources for social protection through efficiency, effectiveness and fiscal space to make social protection funding sustainable over time, support the implementation of the system, generate institutional capacity in social protection and results-based budgets, and give visibility to the system. The four outputs are: output 1: Opportunities for fiscal space and increase in public finance efficacy and efficiency of the SPS identified; output 2: First phase of the SPS ¡Vamos! is implemented in selected territories (as of February 10th, the following districts have been prioritized: Villeta, San Juan Nepomuceno, Santa Rosa del Aguairay and Mcal. Estigarribia; output 3: Capacity of public service professionals and civil society organizations to monitor and evaluate social protection programs in the context of results-based budgeting is strengthened; output 4: Knowledge, awareness and ownership of the SPS ¡Vamos! in public institutions, beneficiaries and civil society is increased.

Technical assistance will strengthen capacities of the institutions leading the Social Protection System (SPS), namely the Unidad Técnica del Gabinete Social (UTGS) and Dirección General de Presupuestos (DGP) in the Ministry of Finance, on public finance management, including results-based budgeting. Assistance will also seek to identify fiscal space for the scaling up of the social protection system, as well as supporting its implementation and communications.

The inception period lasted between October 2019-May 2020. This report describes the main activities carried out during this period describing the expenditures up to date as well.

Summary of the inception phase

TASKS DELIVERY DURING THE INCEPTION PHASE ¹⁷				
Tasks	Activities	Implementing body (ILO/UNICEF/GCSPF)	Status of the task (completed/on-track/delayed)	Description of the process (consultations with national partners including social partners)
Approved PRODOC and its annexes	Develop and agree on detailed global activities, work plan, budget, and Logframe	ILO/UNICEF	Completed	<p>The project proposal was developed and drafted jointly between ILO and UNICEF between the months of November and February (first draft), March and April (second and final drafts).</p> <p>The proposal benefitted from consultation between ILO and UNICEF with government and other stakeholders conducted as described below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asunción, October 8, 2019: Meeting between UTGS, MoF, EU, ILO and UNICEF to validate the main themes identified and agree on the main objectives of the project, aligned to government priorities and EU, ILO and UNICEF's planned activities in Paraguay. During this meeting, the EU Delegation in Paraguay emphasized the linkage between this project and the new budget support, at the time in design stage. This project will complement the budget support initiative and is expected to take into account the objectives, indicators, guidelines and activities in both EU financed initiatives. Geneva, November 26, 2019: Meeting between the EU, ILO and UTGS for a preliminary definition of the activities to be carried out under each agreed objective. Brussels, December 3-4, 2019: Workshop with EU, ILO and UNICEF to validate the objectives and general plan of action as part of the worldwide EU Action on Social Protection. Asunción, January 14, 2020: Meeting between UTGS, DGP, EU, ILO and UNICEF to validate the first group of activities to be carried out and draft project proposal. Asunción, January 15, 2020: Meeting between ILO, workers and employers organizations to validate the training and communication objectives of the project, as well as the objectives to strengthen public finance for social protection.

¹⁷ Based on the Implementation Plan

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asunción, January 20, 2020: Meeting between UTGS, MoF, EU, ILO and UNICEF to validate the second and last group of activities to be carried out as part of the project. March 19, 2020, the proposal was evaluated and reviewed by the Global Project Steering Committee. March - Early April, ILO and UNICEF revised and included the SC suggestions to the project proposal for final approval. April 15, 2020, the final revised version of the project document was submitted. May 19, 2020, meeting between UTGS, MoF, EU, ILO and UNICEF to assess the need to reevaluate the project's log frame within the new COVID-19 context, resulting in no immediate changes as the planned outcomes and outputs remain relevant. May 29, 2020, Technical Coordination Team (TCC)'s first meeting to introduce the designated participants from each institution (UTGS, MoF, EU, ILO and UNICEF) and to inform and plan the activities for the following weeks.
Monitoring and evaluation framework	Collect baseline data and indicators relevant for the monitoring and evaluation of the project (logframe with indicators)	ILO-UNICEF	On track	ILO and UNICEF conducted meetings with UTGS and MoF to define indicators for the project's monitoring and evaluation. As a result, indicators are aligned with the SDGs, National Development Plan, ILO and UNICEF Country Program Outcomes and Government priorities for the SPS ¡Vamos! program.
Communication and visibility strategy	Develop and agree on communication and visibility strategy at global level		N/A	The project team has started preliminary discussion with the EU Delegation on the material and branding related to the project. ILO, UNICEF, EU Delegation and the government of Paraguay agreed to wait until the approval of the Budget Support Initiative before communicating and making the project visible. Terms of References for the local communication strategy of the project have been developed.
Project implementation structure			On track	A Technical Coordination Committee (TCC) was established in order to monitor timely project implementation, inform progress, agree on priority and consider any adjustment needed. As of May 2020, the following appointed representatives are part of the TCC : ILO – Guillermo Montt and Veronica Herken UNICEF - Rigoberto Astorga

	Establish and draft terms of reference, including members, for the steering committee or coordination structure, organize the launch of the project	ILO - UNICEF and Project TCC.	On track	<p>UTGS - Olga Guerra MoF- Maria Cecilia Facetti and Elvira Pereira EU Paraguay - Vera Valente.</p> <p>The TCC will meet on a monthly basis and will be responsible for monitoring the implementation of activities, exchanging critical information among all those involved and recommending technical modifications or adjustment if needed.</p> <p>The active participation of the UE Delegation representative in the TCC will prompt linkages and synergies with the priority initiatives being implemented in the country, such as the budget support planned to start in 2020.</p> <p>Although a project launch was originally planned for April 2020, due to the COVID 19 emergency this activity is currently in revision by the TCC. This will allow us to identify the most appropriate time and platform for a better positioning of the project.</p>
Project team	Develop job description, proceed with recruitment and selection staff	ILO - UNICEF	On track	<p>ILO. The NPC has been supporting the project since the start of the inception phase, financed from local resources, and expected to be financed by the project starting July 2021. The recruitment process of an administrative assistant is on-going.</p> <p>UNICEF: One Social Protection Officer will be hired with the project resources. The recruitment process is almost finalized. One Social Inclusion Officer will support the action part time.</p>
Training and knowledge products plans	Identify and agree on work on trainings, tools, guides and publications to inform or draw on country work			Consultation with the ILO HQ project management team and ILO technical specialists in public finance management to agree on tools to be implemented as part of the project's Output 1.
Project's support to the response to the COVID-19 through social protection measures	Participate in UN groups and governments' meeting, support the drafting of the COVID-19 response, include	ILO- UNICEF	On track	Meeting between UTGS, MoF, EU, ILO and UNICEF to assess the need to reevaluate the project's log frame within the new COVID-19 context. As of now, all four components of the project remain relevant with an urgent need to start implementing outcome 4 "communication".

	ILO and UNICEF's principles in the response, link with building strengthened social protection system			ILO and UNICEF have also been active participants in the United Nations Country Team meetings and drafting of COVID-19 response actions in order to ensure that the proposed responses are also aligned and take into account the project's expected outputs and outcomes when relevant. As of May 2020, the COVID-19 response was in draft mode. The project activities were expected to be reflected in the document under Pillar 2: Protect people: Social Protection and Basic Services.
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Overall delivery assessment ^r	
<input type="checkbox"/> Highly satisfactory Implementation of almost all (>80%) tasks of the inception phase is on schedule as envisaged in the implementation plan and almost all (>80%) indicator milestones have been met.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory Implementation of the majority (60-80%) of tasks is on schedule as envisaged in the implementation plan and the majority (60-80%) of indicator milestones have been met.
<input type="checkbox"/> Unsatisfactory Some (40-60%) tasks are being implemented on schedule as envisaged in the implementation plan.	<input type="checkbox"/> Very unsatisfactory Few (<40%) tasks are being implemented on schedule as envisaged

Achievement of the inception phase

- The project proposal design was successfully completed, submitted and approved.
- All stakeholders involved reached a strong consensus on the main components of the project.
- All stakeholder remained committed and motivated to start implementation as soon as possible.
- Focal points from each institution designated and Technical Coordination Committee established and activated.

Contribution of the project to the COVID-19 response

As originally defined, the project remains relevant in the context of the COVID-19 crisis. This project was designed to accompany the first instances of implementation of the new Social Protection System ¡Vamos! The COVID-19 crisis has increased the urgency of responding to the need for an integrated and efficient system, giving priority to actions planned from the national government of Paraguay. As of May 2020, no significant changes to the planned activities were reported by the UTGS or DGP-MH, needing to redirect or adjust the project's activities. UTGS remains interested in receiving support on the SPS ¡Vamos! implementation in selected territories and the Communications Strategy. It will probably need to take into account the COVID-19 crisis when implemented. The DGP-MH remains interested in the fiscal space analysis and the capacity building in RbB, which has acquired even more relevance and need under the COVID-19 crisis. In result, though no direct contribution to the COVID 19 has been implemented to date, the project will contribute to building more effective and efficient social protection systems, with identified fiscal space and institutional capacity to sustain future shocks. These activities gain more relevance in the context of a stronger commitment to social protection by social partners in the context of the Covid-19 crisis. The TCC agreed to evaluate the country's situation on a regular basis to determine whether immediate needs arise and changes and redirect resources and activities.

Main challenges and risks assessments for the project implementation

Although the current COVID-19 situation has not represented a main challenge on the relevance of the proposed log frame, adjustments on activities regarding timeline and specific approaches will be needed. Although fiscal space identification may experience challenges due to the economy contraction, it could also be identified as an opportunity as the COVID-19 has evidenced the need of a robust SPS with timely response to shocks. The planned analysis on the political economy of fiscal space expansion and the study of gaps and priority process remain highly relevant under the current situation and with a medium and long term horizon.

^r This is a self-assessment

These activities have been specifically requested and expressed to be of high interest by the government counterparts when designing the project document and subsequent meetings. At the same time, these activities complement and provide sustainability to the EU budget support for the SPS ¡Vamos! which is still pending approval to start its own implementation

Some adjustments to the implementation timeline and adaptation for remote application in some activities will be needed. For example, in-person training planned will be switched to remote platforms and strategies and the delivery of such planned trainings will likely be postponed. At the same time, Output 2 “On the ground implementation of SPS ¡Vamos!” will need to be adjusted to reflect the Government's reprogramming of activities such as the planned implementation timeline in selected territories or the RbB related capacity building and trainings. As of May 2020, the government counterparts were still assessing the COVID-19 situation and the effect on their planned activities.

Opportunities and corresponding strategy adjustments

After consulting with government counterparts, it was concluded that all four project outputs remain relevant in the new context. Government counterparts have recognized the special need to accelerate the implementation of Output 4: “Knowledge, awareness and ownership”. UTGS has expressed special need in accelerating the implementation of the design of the SPS ¡Vamos! Communication Strategy. This has been prioritized by the technical team.

The TCC will remain vigilant to ensure that changes in the current country context merit changes to the project's scope and activities. They will be taken in consideration and presented to the SC for approval.

If any, the Covid-19 crisis has underscored the need for stronger and more comprehensive social protection systems, strengthening the case for the project and the opportunity to establish the SPS ¡Vamos! with broad public and political support.

Lessons learned – highlights

- Project strategy and design: Although challenging at the beginning due to the number of actors involved, early engagement of all stakeholders from the start has resulted in a unified and shared understanding of the problem and common vision of the expected outcome. This has also contributed to the development of a highly robust log frame that has remained relevant during the COVID-19 emergency. Additionally this has resulted in a sense of ownership among all the participant institutions.
- Implementation and institutional arrangements: The establishment of a TCC has facilitated the consensus and the coordination of efforts at a technical level, thus positively impacting the implementation plan.

Visibility & Communication

- A Communications Team was created with representatives from ILO, UNICEF and the EU Delegation in order to oversee all the resulting products and initiatives which result from the project outputs and ensure consistency and coordination.
- The launch of the project was originally planned for April 2020, due to the COVID 19 emergency this activity is currently in revision by the TCC. This will allow us to identify the most appropriate date and platform for a better positioning of the project in coordination with the Global EU Project and the EU Delegation visibility and communications priorities. It has been agreed that any launch should complement the communications and visibility strategy of the EU Budget Support Initiative (which is still pending for approval to begin implementation).
- A basic Visibility and Communication approach considering EU guidelines was developed as part of the country proposal. This general approach will be turned into a Visibility and Communications strategy following the Global EU Project guidelines and proposal and

will be reviewed and presented to the TCC.

Senegal

Linkages:

Country Programme Outcome (ILO): SEN 126: La couverture de la protection sociale est améliorée à travers des programmes couvrant notamment les travailleurs de l'économie informelle et de l'économie rurale

Sustainable Development Goal: Goal 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere - Target 1.3 Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable Goal 10. Reduce inequality within and among countries – Target 10.4 Adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality

UNDAF/UNSD Outcome: "by 2023, the most vulnerable populations will benefit improved social protection and protection against violence and harmful and discriminatory practices"

Executive Summary

Important prerequisites have been put in place for the implementation of the EU/UNICEF/ILO intervention. The project document has been developed in participatory way involving civil society organizations, the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Community Development and the Ministry of Labour. Some members of the GCSPF such as WSM participated actively in the design of this project. Social Protection development partners in the country have also been consulted to ensure the planned activities are complemented to their individual actions to avoid any duplication. Each planned activity has been discussed with the Social Protection Delegation with all the above stakeholders to ensure the planned activities are in line with the social protection strategy.

The project will contribute to the establishment of a comprehensive social protection system, including a social protection floor, supported by adequate, sustainable and gender-sensitive financing, transparent governance and targeted measures to extend coverage to groups not yet covered, including people with disabilities and workers in the informal and rural economy. To achieve this development objective, the project is based on the achievement of three specific and interconnected objectives : Specific objective 1: The design and financing of gender-sensitive and inclusive schemes and programmes of Senegal's national social protection system are strengthened in favour of SDGs 1 and 10; Specific objective 2: Institutional and technical actors are supported in the implementation and monitoring of gender-sensitive and inclusive social protection schemes and programmes for all, while ensuring visibility and financial sustainability and macroeconomic stability; Specific objective 3: Coordination mechanisms between social protection schemes and programmes and shock response programmes and the capacities of actors to implement such coordination are strengthened.

However, the project implementation has been constrained by the global pandemic that affected Senegal early March. The defined first activities which are training, workshop did not take place because of the restriction rules set up by the Government. UNICEF and ILO as the co-chairs of the Social Protection Development Partners' Group in Senegal, played a convening role, to ensure that the Government's response is well designed based on the existing social protection programmes and mechanisms, properly coordinated with other donors' interventions and supports the recovery phase. This EU-ILO joint coordination role enables to ensure more coherence and synergy between the EU/UNICEF/ILO intervention and other donors' interventions. Positively, most of initially planned activities of the project remain relevant in the new context. The risks and assumption are still relevant under the new

context and the pandemic creates an unprecedented momentum to advocate for increased financing in social protection, including with a strengthened shock responsive role, in Senegal.

Based on the Government's request, some new activities will be supported by this project to fill the new gaps created by the pandemic. To take into account the new context of COVID-19, UNICEF and the ILO engaged consultation with the national counterparts to integrate new activities and revise consequently the initial budget. This revision is to reflect new emerging needs of technical assistance expressed by the Social Protection Delegation. New activities were agreed with the Government to be included under the project to reflect priorities in the COVID-19 context, notably the need to quickly extend social protection coverage to beneficiaries included in the National Single Registry (Registre National Unique – RNU) but not yet identified as recipient of the social net benefits or to individuals and families not yet included in the RNU. Indeed, the COVID 19 crisis showed that the RNU was not able to cover a considerable proportion of the vulnerable in need and some new vulnerable groups affected by COVID-19. Henceforth, the data and methodology of the RNU were used by the government and organizations for complementary targeting. This highlights the importance of leading an audit of the current situation of the RNU, evaluate its utilization in the social protection response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and investigate how it could be extended to the new vulnerable groups affected by COVID-19 through a feasibility study.

The COVID 19 crisis revealed the weakness and importance of communication for the Social Protection Delegation (DGPSN), which will mainly manage the financing and public finance measures of the project. It is therefore important to support the development of the communication strategy and the website of the DGPSN for better visibility of both DGPSN's activities and EC-DEVCO actions.

At this end, the new activities proposed under the project are:

- a) the audit of the National Single Registry (RNU);
- b) the feasibility study of the extension of the RNU to the new vulnerable groups affected by COVID-19 such as street children, informal individual small business, old age or people with several disabilities;
- c) formative evaluation of the utilization of the RNU in the social protection response to the COVID-19 pandemic;
- d) Supporting the communication plan of the Social Protection Delegation and the Ministry of labour targeting the world of work and the vulnerable people against COVID-19.

The project also initiated activities related to the single registry and the strengthening of the social protection system in Senegal, in response to the COVID-19 crisis. These are aligned with the EU support budget in Senegal. Additional actions initiated through the project, in particular the component 'cash +' of the PBNSF that improves food security and nutrition are strongly linked to the EU budget support.

ILO, GCSPF and UNICEF organize a monthly joint meeting to review progresses and discuss constraints related to the implementation of the project under the COVID-19 circumstances. Addition of new activities did not impact the list of activities initially included in the project document as they link and complement well those activities. To ensure a good communication and to reinforce synergy with the EU budget support, the EU focal point in Senegal will join the group.

Summary of the inception phase

TASKS DELIVERY DURING THE INCEPTION PHASE ^s				
Tasks	Activities	Implementing body (ILO/UNICEF/GCSPF)	Status of the task (completed/on-track/delayed)	Description of the process (consultations with national partners, including social partners)

^s Based on the Implementation Plan

Approved PRODOC and its annexes	Develop and agree on detailed global activities, work plan, budget, and Logframe	ILO/UNICEF /GCSPF	Completed	<p>This inception phase has been carried out through a participatory approach with full participation of the different stakeholders in the project design in relation to the national context and priorities.</p> <p>Wide consultation with many civil society organisations such as Réseau Multi-acteurs de Protection Sociale du Sénégal (REMAPS), Confédération nationale des Travailleurs Sénégalais (CNTS) and CONGAD (NGO network) to get their feedbacks on the proposed strategy for the project, suggest specific project activities to be implemented by the GCSPF. Representatives of the 3 CSOs and trade Unions involved, were identified through a comprehensive mapping by WSM (We Social Movements), as representative of the GCSPF in Senegal. The major CSOs and trade unions identified include apart from the three above, the Federation of Associations of Persons with Disability, the National coalition of Associations of children's rights (CONAFE), the Elderly Association Federation, Women organisations and others.</p> <p>Bilateral consultations with the government (Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Community Development, Social Protection Delegation - DGPSN, etc.), Trade unions (CNTS, CSA, UNSAS), employers' organisations (Conseil National du Patronat (CNP). The inception phase involved also consultation with relevant social protection donors (World Bank, European Union, IMF, etc.) to ensure the planned results, activities of the project are linked and complemented to the other existing donors interventions of social protection.</p> <p>The inception workshop was a unique moment to share and discuss the draft of the project document (PRODOC). The project work plan, results chain, the monitoring framework, the Theory of Change as well as the project governance arrangement have been revised and validated by all these above stakeholders.</p>
Monitoring and evaluation framework	Collect baseline data and indicators relevant for the monitoring and evaluation of the project (logframe with indicators)	ILO/UNICEF /GCSPF	Completed	<p>The monitoring and evaluation framework have been developed jointly by all involved stakeholders during the inception workshop under the guidance of the local consultant and UNICEF and ILO staff. It is worth to mention that the monitoring and evaluation framework has been informed by the social protection system review undertook in 2019 by the ILO.</p>

Communication and visibility strategy	Develop and agree on communication and visibility strategy at global level	ILO/UNICEF /GCSPF	Completed	
Project implementation structure	Establish and draft term of reference, including members, for the steering committee or coordination structure, organize the launch of the project	ILO/UNICEF /GCSPF	Delayed	<p>During the inception phase, the project team agreed with stakeholders on a two-level governance body for the project: a steering committee assuming the overall guidance and a technical working group providing expertise and feedback in the daily implementation.</p> <p>The ToRs of the Steering Committee and the technical working group as well the membership are under discussion with the Government counterparts.</p>
Project team	Develop job description, proceed with recruitment and selection staff	ILO/UNICEF	Completed	<p>UNICEF: In addition to the Chief Social Policy and Social Policy Specialist who are partly involved in the implementation of the project, it was planned to recruit a social protection specialist. The recruitment process has been completed and the new staff joined the team on 1st July 2020.</p> <p>ILO: In line with the project document (PRODOC), the ILO filled two posts which were reserved for local staff, namely: an administrative and financial assistant; and a national project coordinator. The coordinator is already in place and the assistant will take up her duties as of 1st July 2020. This team will be supported by the ILO Technical Specialist for Social Protection for West Africa, as ILO in-kind contribution.</p> <p>GCSPF: no additional staff was planned to be recruited, this specific project component will be managed and monitored through existing WSM and REMAPS staff working on social Protection in Senegal</p>
Training and knowledge products plans	Identify and agree on work on trainings, tools, guides and publications to inform or draw on country work	ILO/UNICEF /GCSPF	Completed	<p>The training activities are clearly identified with counterparts. However, implementation was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Based on previous experiences, online training is less efficient for a senior civil servant on a new or technical content topic such as public finance or budget settlement for instance. The implementation will start as soon as the COVID situation allows.</p> <p>In case the pandemic situation remains unchanged, new measures will put in place to organize e-learning workshops or in some cases, small discussions groups to limit the number of participants.</p>

Project's support to the response to the COVID-19 through social protection measures	Participate in UN groups and governments' meeting, support the drafting of the COVID-19 response, include ILO and UNICEF's principles in the response, link with building strengthened social protection system	ILO/UNICEF	On track	ILO and UNICEF are co-chairing the Social Protection Group and are leading the whole technical dialogue on the development of the social protection response to COVID-19 crisis. The Social Protection Group provided support/guidance to the Government for the implementation of the Government funded food distribution in response to COVID-19. The targeting of this intervention was mainly based on the Single registry. Both agencies (UNICEF & ILO) engaged into political advocacy to seek the best ways to cover vulnerable groups who are not yet included in the single registry, such as street children, micro individual businessman who are operating in the informal sector. Also, some activities that were already part of the project work plan, are still relevant in the new context and have been identified as a structural response to the COVID crisis by the government. Some of these activities are: (i) the simplified scheme for informal workers; (ii) the update of the single registry. Moreover, UNICEF engaged dialogue with EU, WFP and FAO to ensure their response to COVID 19 are in coherence with the national response and fill the existing gaps.
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Overall delivery assessment ^t	
<input type="checkbox"/> Highly satisfactory Implementation of almost all (>80%) tasks of the inception phase is on schedule as envisaged in the implementation plan and almost all (>80%) indicator milestones have been met.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory Implementation of the majority (60-80%) of tasks is on schedule as envisaged in the implementation plan and the majority (60-80%) of indicator milestones have been met.
<input type="checkbox"/> Unsatisfactory Some (40-60%) tasks are being implemented on schedule as envisaged in the implementation plan.	<input type="checkbox"/> Very unsatisfactory Few (<40%) tasks are being implemented on schedule as envisaged

Achievement of the inception phase

Some progress has been achieved by the two agencies over the inception period:

- Inception workshop with good participation of the Ministry of Budget and Finance, Social Protection, Civil Society Organisations and other relevant government actors;
- Development of the project document with inputs from GCSPF and final approval of National Social Protection and Solidarity Delegation (DGPSN) of the Ministry of Community Development and Social and Territorial Equity (ministry in charge of social protection);
- Meeting with the Minister of Social Protection to present and discuss the EU/ILO/UNICEF project;
- Set up of the project team;
- Technical dialogue to feed the DGPSN Annual Work Plan with some activities planned under the EU/ILO/UNICEF actions;
- Technical dialogue with the Director of the Budget planning in the Minister of Finance and Budget to present the objective and activities of the project and agreed on the frequency and modalities to track social protection budget execution throughout the year;
- Finalization of the recruitment of the project staff. UNICEF has finalized the recruitment of the Social Protection Specialist who will be dedicated to the project implementation. He will start on 1st July 2020. On the ILO side, the national coordinator is already in place and the administrative assistant will start on 1st July.
- A specific workshop gathering the most representative and active CSOs and trade unions on social protection, was organised to prepare their inputs in the overall inception workshop, share their visions on social protection and analyse the overall regulatory and policy national framework on social protection, with a specific methodological tool developed by WSM.

Contribution of the project to the COVID-19 response

As chair and co-chair of the Social Protection Group, the project gives more comfort to engage and lead technical dialogue with Government and donors to coordinate the national social protection response. This also facilitate technical discussion with the EU Delegation in Dakar in developing the EU response to COVID-19 and the finalisation of the food security Programme (PUSA).

New emerging technical assistance needs has been discussed with the DGPSN and will be funded by the EU/ILO/UNICEF/GCSPF project These activities include:

- e) the audit of the Single Registry (RNU);
- f) the feasibility study of the extension of the RNU to the new vulnerable groups affected

^t This is a self-assessment

- by COVID-19 such as street children, informal individual small business, old people or people with multiple disabilities;
- g) formative evaluation of the utilization of the RNU in the social protection response to the COVID-19 pandemic;
 - h) Supporting the communication plan of the DGPSN and the Ministry of labour targeting public and private workers and vulnerable people against COVID-19 pandemic.

All these activities have not yet implemented but should take place by December 2020.

Main challenges and risks assessments for the project implementation

The COVID-19 crisis reveals the weakness of the health system in Senegal and the importance to build an effective and adaptative social protection system to respond in real-time the need of most affected population. The existence of a single registry and the ongoing national cash transfer programme has facilitated the implementation of the national response. However, the pandemic reveals some new affected groups who were not included in the single registry, making it difficult to provide required assistance. To fill this gap, UNICEF and ILO will support a feasibility analysis to integrate these vulnerable groups (street children, individual businesses in informal sector, old people or people with multiple disabilities,...).

Under the EU/UNICEF/ILO/GCSPF project, many activities related to capacity building were supposed to start in the first year to give good understanding, knowledge and capacity to the stakeholders. Unfortunately, with the COVID-19 situation, none of these activities took place. The situation is closely monitored and the activities will resume when the situation and government instructions will allow. Some of these activities are mainly those under Results 2.1 & 2.2:

- 2.1.1 Provide technical assistance for the effective implementation of the simplified scheme for independent workers and workers in the informal economy
- 2.1.2. Build capacity of the line Ministries, IPRES, CSS, ANCMU, workers' organizations to effectively run the simplified scheme and apply the new procedures;
- 2.2.1. Build capacity of sub-national government's institutions for an improved implementation of the SNPS and social protection programmes (platform) ;
- 2.2.2. Build capacity of the OSBS for a real-time monitoring, adequacy and sustainability of public spending in social protection sectors
- 2.2.3. Strengthen knowledge and capacity of parliamentarians and members of the CESE, HCCT, HCDS for a better understanding of the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) and draft of national budgets;
- 2.2.6. Enhanced local and national media and press capacities to support advocacy messages to increase social protection funding;

In particular activities under Results 2.1.2 and 2.2.2 will be postponed to 2021. The dialogue for the adoption of the new Social Security Code that will include the simplified regime, has been postponed by trade unions and employer organizations because of the COVID context and the high level of involvement in the response and now recovery design. The focus is on the response to the crisis, the prevention of COVID and the economic consequences (disruption of production, bankruptcy, employment, etc.).

In the context of COVID-19, where all activities that lead to the assembly of more than 20 persons was banned by Government, the activities related to the promotion of essential family practices (Behaviour change communication activities), that was supposed to be supported by EU/UNICEF/ILO/GCSPF intervention did not take place. These activities could not also take place with communities' radios because of the Government instruction. Indeed, all the country's communications means were requested for only the purpose of promoting

key practices around the COVID-19. Moreover, the update of the single registry in one of the country region did not take place because of the COVID-19.

It is worth to mention that the institutional and human risks that were identified during the inception workshop remain also relevant in the context of COVID-19.

Opportunities and corresponding strategy adjustments

The COVID-19 raises the importance to have a strong shock responsive and inclusive social protection system in place in the Senegal context. It puts also emphasis on the importance to allocate sufficient and adequate resource to social protection interventions. It brings also the opportunity to expand the number of potential beneficiaries of social protection interventions by covering the new vulnerable groups (horizontal expansion). Government and partners are engaging to expand the number of households in the single registry from 558,000 to 650,000 i.e almost 50% of households in the country, including workers in vulnerable situation and workers in the informal economy.

The COVID create a momentum to advocate for more resources for social protection. More and more donors are engaging to provide direct assistance to poorest populations through the social protection system. The number of social protection interventions has sharply increased since the outbreak of COVID-19. The pandemic is creating an enabling environment to advocate for financing social protection in Senegal, even beyond the pandemic.

Beside the national responses plan and all the social protection interventions adopted, we may take advantage to learn about what works and what does not. We can also learn about the efficiency of some of key interventions in the context of pandemic. The EU/ILO/UNICEF project will discuss with the government and check their interest in such study.

Lessons learned – highlights

Some few lessons have been learned during the inception phase:

- (1) One the key lesson learned during the inception phase and the new context of COVID-19 is that almost the entire activities identified under this intervention remain relevant in the COVID-19 pandemic context;
- (2) Trainings on new technical subjects for specific audience such as parliament members, Economic Council members, journalist are not feasible by Visio conference, since the subject is not a refreshment for this kind of audience. We need a physical workshop which is a great challenge in these times;
- (3) Training is a prerequisite for some advocacy activities to engage with public stakeholders involved in this project. Considering the point above, being unable to train/inform these actors, constrained our ability to delivers some results;
- (4) The other lesson learned is about the adaption of the methods and time frame for the communication due to the COVID-19 restrictions. On the other hand, the COVID-19 crisis and frequent meetings with development partners and government representatives brought great visibility to the project, in particular through the immediate support provided to the COVID-19 crisis. In addition, the Government communication plan for COVID-19 give an opportunity to make visible the project action.
- (5) The COVID-19 crisis creates a good momentum to advocate for more resources for social protection. Great attention will put on Social Protection programmes to response to the most vulnerable people in this COVID-19 times. The COVID-19 context will enable a good policy dialogue to implement the action points of the ongoing fiscal space study supported by ILO and EU.
- (6) Specific trainings and consultation meetings for CSOs and trade unions, with the coordination of an organisation having an expertise in their coaching and support, are crucial to help them have a common vision on social protection, strengthen mutual trust

and prepare their constructive contribution in the overall project and elaborate joint position papers in the future.

- (7) Regular feedback on the various contacts to ILO and UNICEF has allowed to develop mutual trust and understanding between WSM, as representative of the GCSPF and the two major implementers of the project. As a result, WSM and its local representative will be involved in the overall steering committee.

Visibility & Communication

During this inception phase, ILO, UNICEF and GCSPF always mention that this initiative is financed by the European Union. UNICEF Representative and ILO Country Director have separately had the opportunity to present the project in two formal audiences with the Ministry of Community Development. An official letter to all involved ministers is under preparation to inform them on this EU support.

At technical level, all actors of the social protection sector were invited and informed during the inception workshop to discuss the activities of the project. The development partners are very well informed of the project through the Social Protection Group co-chaired by the ILO and UNICEF. UNICEF will support the Social Protection Delegation Communication Plan with the EU logo for more visibility. This includes the development of the Social Protection Delegation with clear mention of the fund source, communication strategy and other communication material with the EU logo. Moreover, as mentioned above, some communication activities will be supported with clear visibility of the EU logo.

Furthermore, the project will develop a set of branded materials such as bloc-notes, pens, USB flash drive, rollup to be used along the implementation in the workshop and other meeting. A communication campaign will be organized as soon as the context allows, and the environment becomes more suitable, not focusing only on COVID. In addition to all this, to ensure good visibility of the results, the media will be invited in all workshops. Also, we aim to train a core group of journalists to be aware of social protection and the necessity to ensure more

Uganda

Linkages:

Country Programme Outcome (ILO):

Well-coordinated policy dialogue for establishment of comprehensive national social protection framework

Sustainable Development Goal:

Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere

UNDAF/UNSDF Outcome:

Outcome 3.1- By 2025, people, especially the vulnerable and marginalized, have equitable access to and utilization of quality basic social and protection services

Executive Summary

The EU Joint Action “Improving Synergies Between Social Protection and Public Finance Management,” jointly implemented in Uganda by the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and HelpAge International (HAI) on behalf of the Global Coalition for Social Protection Floors (GCSPF). The Action is aimed at increasing the population’s social protection (SP) coverage with a particular focus on the poor and vulnerable, to ensure that Uganda progressively moves to universal social protection and effectively leverages public financial management (PFM). More specifically, in collaboration with government and other key stakeholders, the Action aims to improve the design and financing of Uganda’s social protection system towards SDGs 1 and 10, and support the government in implementing and monitoring effective gender-sensitive and disability-inclusive social protection systems and programmes for all, while ensuring financial sustainability and macroeconomic stability. The project will pursue the following four results: R1.1 Increased dialogue and coherence among sectors for the sustainable and adequate financing of universal social protection; R 1.2 Enhanced evidence and availability of tools that support the development of a national social protection floor and evidence-based decision-making; R2.1 Strengthened capacities of partners to achieve the best impact of diversified sources of funding for social protection, prioritizing children, workers in the informal sector, and older persons; R2.2 Strengthened knowledge and technical capacities of government officials and civil society organisations to deliver, monitor and report on social protection programmes, with participation of training institutions and civil society.

Following the approval of the global description of the Joint Action, implementing partners in Uganda came together to determine priority areas of support and to develop detailed project documents (PRODOCs), workplans, indicators matrices, and country budgets during the inception phase, to be approved by the Project Steering Committee. This Inception Report covers the period from October 2019 to May 2020.

Highlighted achievements during the inception phase included: reaching a common understanding of the overall objectives, intended results, and strategy of the Action; formulating the objectives, results and activities for Uganda; developing a country-specific budget; preparing a visibility and communication strategy; elaborating a logical framework and related indicators, including data collection and assumptions; engaging stakeholders and obtaining the validation of the proposed approach; drafting the project document and all of its subcomponents; validating the project document by national stakeholders; obtaining the approval of the final PRODOC by the global Steering Committee; and initiating the

implementation phase.

Key activities included: consultations with global counterparts and national stakeholders (including the EU country delegation, government stakeholders, development partners, civil society, and others); drafting, iterating, and finalizing the PRODOC for submission; participation in a validation workshop in Brussels; organizing in-country consultation events and workshops; securing Steering Committee approval of the PRODOC; and starting the programme implementation phase, through stakeholder coordination and support for the implementation of the National Social Protection Policy, governance discussions with the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MoGLSD), and the design and preparation for research activities and stakeholder engagement.

Due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, inception activities also included coordination and technical support to national stakeholders (development partners and government) in designing a social protection response and assessing the country's readiness for COVID-19 and its economic aftermath. Furthermore, efforts were made to assess the impact of a wide range of potential SP interventions, including design tweaks, piggybacking, and both vertical and horizontal expansion of cash transfer programming. Further analyses included the refinement of proposed models based on rates of multidimensional poverty, ultimately resulting in alignment with government priorities. Working closely with the World Bank (WB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), these analyses served to inform the design of the WB's Development Programme Operations (DPO), as well as the approved IMF programme. The analyses were also leveraged by social protection development partners and the donor economist group to present and prioritize options for government leadership.^u

^u This work was led by UNICEF

Summary of the inception phase

TASKS DELIVERY DURING THE INCEPTION PHASE [∨]				
Tasks	Activities	Implementing body (ILO/UNICEF/GCSPF)	Status of the task (completed/on-track/delayed)	Description of the process (consultations with national partners, including social partners)
Approved PRODOC and its annexes	Develop and agree on detailed global activities, work plan, budget, and Logframe	ILO / UNICEF / GCSPF	Completed	Consultations were held internally with the implementing partners (IPs: ILO/UNICEF/GCSPF) and the PRODOC was developed and refined through consultations with IPs, HQs, national stakeholders (including government, civil society, key stakeholders, and technical groups focusing on SP and PFM), in addition to the EU and the ILO social partners. The objectives, activities and work plans were finalized through open consultations and review by experts (including the EU Joint Action Steering Committee), and approved in April 2020.
Monitoring and evaluation framework	Collect baseline data and indicators relevant for the monitoring and evaluation of the project (logframe with indicators)	ILO / UNICEF / GCSPF	Completed	The PRODOC M&E framework, including baseline data and indicators, was developed leveraging existing data sources, and in alignment with the draft National Development Plan III (2020/2021 – 2025/2026) and draft United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (2021-2025). It also leveraged the existing scaffolding of systems and frameworks to build on the priorities of the government, the EU country delegation, and the IPs, with the vision of contributing to the SDGs and the country's development goals. The M&E framework was also fully aligned with the SP&PFM programme results logframe and indicators.
Communication and visibility strategy	Develop and agree on communication and visibility strategy at global level	ILO / UNICEF / GCSPF	Completed	The communication and visibility plan (CVP) was developed in consultation with IPs and partners, with the vision of leveraging communication towards public advocacy objectives, as well as to ensure appropriate visibility of the set milestones of the funding contributions. The CVP will further integrate components around policy implications to be derived from the planned knowledge products and delivered through public/national dialogue platforms. The strategy was tailored to the local context and developed in alignment with the EU's global-level communication and visibility strategy.

[∨] Based on the Implementation Plan

Project implementation structure	Establish and draft term of reference, including members, for the steering committee or coordination structure, organize the launch of the project	ILO / UNICEF / GCSPF	On-track	<p>The project implementation structure was designed and proposed to the EU country delegation and the government of Uganda, with the strategy of embedding the country programme Steering Committee into existing national structures under the umbrella of the MoGLSD (responsible for Social Protection). On 26 May, an inception meeting was held with the MoGLSD^w following the approval of the PRODOC, and they agreed to incorporate the EU, ILO, HAI, Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA) and Social Partners into the national Steering Committee of the Expanding Social Protection Programme.</p> <p>Representing the GCSPF, HAI convened a meeting for the Uganda CSO Country-Level Steering Group, which introduced the project while inaugurating a Ugandan CSO Steering Committee that would be tasked to monitor and guide the implementation of the project.</p> <p>The project launch has not yet occurred (given COVID-19) and may take place virtually or in person, depending on the government's guidelines.</p>
Project team	Develop job description, proceed with recruitment and selection staff	ILO / UNICEF / GCSPF	On-track	<p>The IPs have leveraged existing staffing structures to implement the programme. The ILO has leveraged staff at headquarters, regional and national level, and is finalising recruitment of support staff, expected to start in November 2020. UNICEF has not recruited additional staff for this programme and did not include staff costs into their budget. HAI is leveraging existing staff and has included staff costs into their budget.</p>
Training and knowledge products plans	Identify and agree on work on trainings, tools, guides and publications to inform or draw on country work	ILO / UNICEF / GCSPF	On-track	<p>Training and knowledge products have been defined by the IPs, and initial products are being developed. The detailed plans are in the process of being designed and developed and will require consultation with partners (paused due to COVID-19 at present). The project has mapped out SP analytical tools and methodologies, such as SSPOT, which will be applied for the implementation of the project but is hoping to facilitate in-person workshops to implement these analyses.</p>

^w The meeting was held virtually on 26 May 2020

Project's support to the response to the COVID-19 through social protection measures	Participate in UN groups and governments' meeting, support the drafting of the COVID-19 response, include ILO and UNICEF's principles in the response, link with building strengthened social protection system	ILO / UNICEF / GCSPF	On-track	<p>There has been significant engagement on the COVID-19 response plan by the UN and other development partners, in collaboration with government bodies and the National Task Force. In the realm of social protection, there have been frequent engagements with development partners and the government, particularly through assessments of the potential impact of COVID-19 and analyses of options for expanding Social Protection responses. The challenging political environment, the refugee situation and natural climatic disasters coupled with limited prior investments in social protection systems (low coverage, no registry, limited number of programmes) have further exacerbated the difficulty of scaling up SP responses through vertical or horizontal expansion.</p> <p>Furthermore, a key advocacy strategy was to highlight the need for comprehensive coverage, whilst prioritizing meeting the needs of the most vulnerable groups. Coordination meetings have been held on a weekly basis with local development partners' groups (donor economists' group, public financial management group, SP development partners' group, as well as numerous bilateral meetings and engagements). A key contribution to these deliberations has been a series of analyses of potential cash transfer packages for vulnerable groups, primarily targeting four categories (informal workers, labour-constrained households, recipients 65+ and recipients with children under 2). These were further refined to consider geographic targeting (of areas with high levels of multidimensional poverty) and leveraged by donors (including the WB and IMF). In particular, the IMF used the simulations to make estimates in their COVID-19 disbursement and the WB heavily engaged with UNICEF to structure a U2 child grant into their DPO. Engagement with the government to define the SP package to the COVID-19 response is ongoing, but the political environment is challenging.</p>
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Overall delivery assessment ^x	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Highly satisfactory Implementation of almost all (>80%) tasks of the inception phase is on schedule as envisaged in the implementation plan and almost all (>80%) indicator milestones have been met.	<input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory Implementation of the majority (60-80%) of tasks is on schedule as envisaged in the implementation plan and the majority (60-80%) of indicator milestones have been met.
<input type="checkbox"/> Unsatisfactory Some (40-60%) tasks are being implemented on schedule as envisaged in the implementation plan.	<input type="checkbox"/> Very unsatisfactory Few (<40%) tasks are being implemented on schedule as envisaged

Achievement of the inception phase

The primary results and achievements during the inception phase included: the successful finalization and approval of the PRODOC; the effective coordination of the programme design with key partners and presentation of the programme to key stakeholders (MoGLSD, SP and PFM development partners groups, civil society groups, etc.); and the swift engagement on the COVID-19 response, including along the humanitarian-development continuum.

Importantly, the PRODOC development coincided with the preparation of Uganda's Third National Development Plan (NDP III) and the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF), so not only was the PRODOC aligned with these important framing documents, but IPs also contributed to the development of SP strategies within them. Furthermore, they were able to advocate, and demonstrate the need for, comprehensive SP approaches for both government and development partners.

The establishment of strengthened bi-lateral consultations between the IPs and the EU country delegation broadened the understanding of current and planned EU programme support to the government of Uganda. This enabled the IPs to appropriately situate the EU Action within the expectations of the broader EU programme support to Uganda, with the vision of developing a more comprehensive and coherent social protection framework and for the EU Action to effectively contribute to policy dialogue on strategic themes around public financing of social protection programmes, including the recurrent budget frameworks.

The IPs also conducted two stakeholders' consultative and validation workshop for CSOs and social partners. The IPs convened a consultative workshop of CSOs /TU in order to integrate needs and perspectives of key population groups and potential vulnerabilities into the PRODOC.^y The consultative workshop with social partners and national representatives was also designed to present the programme approach and integrate direct feedback.^z The CSO validated the CSO Steering Committee, as well as the development of a draft work plans. Further, the programme was similarly shared with national stakeholders and development partners, with discussions held with the Social Protection Development Partners' Group and the Public Financial Management Working Group.^{aa} These activities confirmed the buy-in and support from CSOs, social partners, development partners (including the EU country delegation), and key national stakeholders, and provided important insights that were incorporated into the design of the EU Action project, as highlighted in the PRODOC.

^x This is a self-assessment

^y This was led by HAI

^z This was led by the ILO

^{aa} This was led by UNICEF

The Uganda IPs also participated in the global inception workshop^{bb} that was held in Brussels, Belgium at the European Commission in December 2019. The team engaged in discussions around the design and implementation of the Action, including through providing an update on the focus of the respective country proposals and progress on the development of the PRODOCs. The workshop also included discussions of cross-cutting issues, research questions and communication and visibility requirements. These efforts were all reflected in the final Project Document, which was approved by the Steering Committee.

Contribution of the project to the COVID-19 response

The contribution of the project to the COVID-19 response was three-fold: (1) through coordination and engagement with development partners and key government stakeholders; (2) through investments in analysis and evidence generation towards defining specific intervention options and facilitating decision-making by key stakeholders (including the government, development partners and others); and (3) through strengthening systems for the delivery of urban social protection, which also became the preferred global SP response given the COVID-19 social distancing measures and challenges of urban density.

More specifically, UNICEF worked to coordinate weekly meetings with SP development partners, participated in cash working groups to strengthen linkages across the humanitarian-development continuum, and coordinated information sharing through global trackers on government-linked and humanitarian SP and cash transfer interventions. Further knowledge-sharing was done to support existing interventions considering cash top-ups, as well as collaboration with key funders (World Bank, IMF, DFID, Irish Aid, USAID, WFP, Sida, etc.) in the social protection space, with the objective of assessing SP options and implementation modalities. In addition, UNICEF implemented a number of studies and analyses on COVID-19 responses and assessments of the readiness of Uganda to respond to the crisis and worked with UN partners to estimate the socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 crisis in the country. It also worked closely with the World Bank and the IMF to inform the preparation of their funding packages, as well as other development partners. In particular the WB and the IMF referred to the results of the simulations to shape their SP response to the COVID-19. The IPs further coordinated to avoid working in silos and to ensure alignment between the project goals and objectives, and joint actions.

Finally, given the mobility restrictions associated with the containment of COVID-19, there emerged a need for targeted SP interventions in urban contexts, to support the immediate needs of the urban poor. The EU Joint Action in Uganda was already designed to include an urban lens through systems strengthening for an existing SP intervention targeting adolescent girls. As a result, capacity building within the Kampala Capital City Authority had been ongoing, and this facilitated not only entry points for the design and delivery of new cash transfer programs, but it also made it possible for the existing program to continue its operations and shift to a virtual implementation model the day that the restrictions were announced by the government. In addition to the program implementation shifted to a fully virtual modality, a new cash transfer top-up was also designed to nudge adolescent girls towards returning to school once the schools are re-opened (at the time of writing of this report, the schools were still closed and the top-up not yet implemented), and linkages are being sought with humanitarian actors (UNHCR / WFP) implementing cash transfers for urban refugees.

Main challenges and risks assessments for the project implementation

The program implementation faced some risks and challenges over the inception phase, with some linked to COVID-19 and others independent of the pandemic. Those independent risks have been outlined in the PRODOC and included the existing challenges of implementing the programme in a country with low levels of SP coverage and investments in social development.

^{bb} The ILO and HAI participated in-person, while UNICEF participated virtually
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In addition, the generally poor conceptualization of PFM as an essential element for the sustainable financing of SP across the life-cycle among government actors presented some challenges for implementation.

This nascent SP environment and limited focus on social development investments has resulted in a national narrative of SP being framed as important, but also taken care of, given the presence of a programme with “national coverage” (currently in the process of geographic expansion) of the Senior Citizens’ Grant (SCG). This is despite the fact that the actual coverage of the programme is limited due to eligibility criteria (aged 80+ with valid ID and restricted to Ugandan citizens). The national SP dialogue, at the time of the inception phase, was therefore primarily concentrated on the operationalization of the SCG national expansion, leaving little space for discussion on strengthening other SP interventions (such as those targeting other vulnerable groups, or addressing the deficiencies in social care and support services that had been identified and highlighted in the 2019 Social Protection Sub-Sector Review).

With the outbreak of the global pandemic (COVID-19), restrictions on movement and in-person meetings were announced in mid-March 2020. While the PRODOC was almost finalized at that point, socialization efforts with partners and the government were underway and these needed to be halted and transitioned to virtual platforms. This transition took some time, and the government’s priorities were focused on short-term mitigation, including, among others, establishing guidelines for the safe continuation of the provision of services (including social care and support, as well as the SCG payments and pay-for-work schemes).

While the IPs focused their activities on supporting the COVID-19 response, as described above, planned programme activities (such as the socialization of the programme, evidence generation and stakeholder engagements) were implemented, but with some delays. It is expected that these delays will continue in the coming months, as the government continues to face the repercussions from the pandemic, and the ability to hold in-person meetings may continue to be restricted. Furthermore, travel by international experts may be limited and therefore slow progress is expected on some deliverables (including stakeholder dialogues and research). When it comes to in-person meetings, trainings and conferences will likely not take place for the remainder of the year 2020, but government-issued guidelines will be followed and alternative (virtual) modalities will be used where feasible, while other activities might need to be postponed. Where possible, the IPs will adopt a flexible implementation approach to meet programme commitments, meaning that activities during the second half of the year will focus on the preparation of assessment tools, training modules and scoping studies, which should be largely unaffected by COVID-19.

While COVID-19 risks undermining programme implementation, and in particular the organization of in-person meetings and trainings, it also holds the potential to negatively affect the livelihoods of Uganda’s most vulnerable populations, including older people. This is why the IPs prioritized the pandemic response in their activities and factored COVID-19 related risks into operations and planning. As travel restrictions are being put into place, with some flexibility around the modalities, the IPs are confident that the project can be delivered as planned. For the most part, activities in 2020 focus on the preparation of training modules, scoping studies and evidence generation, as well as coordination with the government and CSO counterparts, which should be largely unaffected by COVID-19.

Opportunities and corresponding strategy adjustments

While the COVID-19 outbreak has impacted the implementation of the programme (as described above), it has also opened doors for increased collaboration with development partners in shaping advocacy for increased social protection coverage. While interagency collaboration has not been fully aligned (given individual agency priorities on issues, target groups, and contributions), significant efforts have been made to align messaging and streamline advocacy efforts. This has resulted in the preparation of joint statements by

development partners, the organization of coordination meetings on a more frequent basis (weekly vs. quarterly), and collaboration (moving from an approach of “informing others” to “seeking consultation, feedback and partnership”). Synergies have also been sought in leveraging existing systems, such as identifying channels through which cash transfers might be structured and implemented (tapping into existing systems, including operational protocols and fast-tracking the single registry). However, while efficiencies have been gained and opportunities for increased collaboration leveraged, it should be noted that the government is still evaluating the SP response opportunities and discussions are still ongoing.

Expected delays in the implementation of the annual work plan are primarily associated with in-person engagements such as consultative meetings and workshops (including those requiring the presence of international experts, who are still unable to travel), capacity building efforts (especially those involving international travel by local government and civil society representatives), and the in-person collection of data (including evidence generation that would have required the presence of international researchers on the ground). These activities remain important to the programme implementation and to achieving the planned objectives, so these will most likely experience delays but should still remain as planned activities.

The effects of the lockdown due to COVID-19 have negatively affected both formal and informal small and medium enterprises (SMEs), largely in terms of temporary suspensions and worker lay-offs, reduced wages, and disruptions of business operations. Confronted with this dire situation, Parliamentarians, social security institutions, trade unions and CSOs have had meaningful dialogues on the possibility for providing partial mid-term benefits to members – tapping into the NSSF Amendment Act (2019) – opening opportunities for contributory social security space and packages to support informal workers. These reforms can provide the foundation on which the Action can work to improve the capacity of SP systems and structures

Lessons learned – highlights

One of the key lessons learned during the inception period was the need for rapid adaptation to the implementing environment. While the programme implementation was originally structured methodically, with a clear outline for linear engagement with stakeholders, the competing priorities for government and development partners made it clear that the IPs needed to adapt quickly to the changing country context and implementing environment. For example, they needed to identify government priorities and map out political preferences in order to tailor advocacy messages and analytical products aimed at supporting SP responses to the COVID-19 outbreak. Aligning to government preferences and working through established systems and structures also required a thorough understanding of national priorities and careful managing of diplomatic relationships whilst pursuing advocacy objectives.

This means that while technical meetings with development partners could be focused on strategic priorities and questions of operationalization, meetings with government partners needed to be aligned with their real priorities and preferences, and flexibility to adapt to those was a necessity. For example, while advocating for one-off transfers and top-ups to vulnerable households embedded into existing social protection interventions and fully funded by development partners (SCG to provide top-ups not only to existing registered households of 80+ but expanding down to recipients 65+ years of age), the Ministry of Finance advised that this approach would not be acceptable, as it could raise expectations for the expansion of social protection (which the government was not ready to introduce or finance). Recognizing these challenges, and respecting government priorities, therefore proved key to ensuring long-term systems strengthening, evidence generation and sustained dialogue.

On the other hand, an opportunity arose to strengthen linkages and cross-sectoral collaboration through humanitarian interventions, through the provision of cash transfers to households experiencing urban poverty. While this COVID-19 response was being led by humanitarian actors, its implementation was steered through coordination with urban

authorities. Notably, collaboration was strengthened by ensuring the participation of the KCCA Director of Gender, Community Services and Production, who is also leading on the urban SP programme for adolescent girls, who had already benefited from experience in the design, management, and advocacy for urban SP. Seeking synergies along the humanitarian-development continuum towards more comprehensive social protection coverage, whilst highlighting the broader need for shock-responsive social protection, was an unexpected benefit of the confluence between the programme and the emergence of the global pandemic.

Visibility & Communication

The programme was communicated to stakeholders at different stages throughout the inception period. Initial communication was done through bilateral meetings, first with local EU partners to discuss priorities for the programme (September 7, 2019) and then in broader discussions during the inception workshops in Brussels, Belgium (December 2, 2019). Further, the SP&PFM programme was revealed at the African Regional Labour Administration Centre (ARLAC) meeting that took place in Kampala (February 12-14, 2020), underscoring the EC-DEVCO partnership in providing technical assistance through tailoring and delivering analytical products for the attainment of a more coherent and comprehensive social protection framework, including financing for Uganda.

Furthermore, consultations were held with national stakeholders, including civil society leaders (February 12, 2019) and government representatives (February 14, 2019). The programme was also socialized with development partners and CSO platforms, including through formal presentations of the programme and its strategic objectives at the SP Development Partners' quarterly meeting (February 26, 2020) and the PFM Working Group meeting (March 19, 2020). Following the announcement of the global pandemic and restrictions on movement in the country, the Inception Meeting with the MoGLSD was postponed but organized virtually (May 26, 2020). The role of partners was highlighted in all these presentations (including their logos), and the driving role of government emphasized throughout these engagements.

The official project launch has been postponed due to COVID-19, and conversations are ongoing as to how best to organize this event and engage stakeholders virtually or in-person. Additional efforts to underscore the importance of social protection in the wake of COVID-19, outside direct engagements with government and stakeholders highlighted above, include leveraging social media to highlight key advocacy issues on social protection by civil society. While not funded through the EU programme, these engagements seek to further shed light on the evidence supporting the need for SP. Highlights from these efforts are included below.

The IPs, in collaboration with the EU country delegation, plan to organize an official launch event to gather beneficiaries, Uganda government officials, and other development partners, to inform them about the programme and its objectives. The aim of this activity is to awareness of the EU Joint Action (and highlight the funding contribution from the EU), encourage collaboration, and elevate visibility of key issues. This event will be complemented by other technical presentations and coordination meetings with relevant sector working groups, during which the funding from the EU will be clearly visible and acknowledged.

Annex 1: Visibility and Communication

Uganda: CSO/TU Consultative Workshop, organized during the inception phase of the EU Joint Action (February 12, 2020)



David Mawejje, National Coordinator,
International Labour Organisation (ILO)
Uganda



Gloria Nakajubi, Communication Specialist,
Uganda Parliamentary Forum on Social
Protection

Dissemination of evidence and SP advocacy messages by a project team member who was invited by civil society to participate in a live Twitter chat on Child-Responsive SP during and post COVID-19 (not organized / funded by the EU project) (April 23, 2020)

Examples of Tweets posted:

It is estimated that 42-66 million children will fall into #extremepoverty as a result of the pandemic (adding to the 386M #ultrapoor children in 2019)
#SocialProtection4COVID #SPresponses
#COVID19UG <http://tiny.cc/n9llnz>

Economic hardship resulting from the pandemic will increase #malnutrition, infant mortality, and mental health (among others). #Refugees are especially vulnerable #SocialProtection4COVID #SPresponses #COVID19UG Read more from @UNICEFUganda:
<http://tiny.cc/vfmlnz>

#Socialprotection has positive impact on poverty, education, health, nutrition, and other outcomes for children. 133 countries have planned, introduced or adapted 564 #SPresponses and jobs measures (Apr 17, 2020) www.ugogentilini.net
#SocialProtection4COVID #SPresponses

EU Joint Action

Improving Synergies Between Public Financial Management and Social Protection: PFM4SP

Presentation for MoGLSD Inception Meeting, May 26, 2020

Partners (in Uganda)

- ILO Uganda
- UNICEF Uganda
- Global Coalition for Social Protection Floors, represented by HelpAge International in Uganda
- EU in Uganda
- Key stakeholders: GoU (MoGLSD, MoFPED, KCCA, etc.), CSOs, Social Protection Development Partners, Researchers, etc.



Global objective of the EU Joint Action

To increase the population's universal social protection coverage in partner countries preferably but not limited to those benefiting from EU funded budget support operations

Specific objectives prioritized in Uganda

- SO1: To improve partner countries' design and financing of social protection systems in support of their efforts towards SDGs 1 and 10
- SO2: To support governments in implementing and monitoring effective gender-sensitive and disability-inclusive social protection systems and programmes for all while ensuring financial sustainability and macroeconomic stability

Expected results

- R1.1 Increased dialogue and coherence among sectors for the sustainable and adequate financing of universal social protection.
- R1.2 Enhanced evidence and availability of tools that support the development of a national social protection floor and evidence-based decision-making.
- R2.1. Strengthened capacities of partners to achieve the best impact of diversified sources of funding for social protection, prioritizing children, workers in the informal sector, and older persons.
- R2.2 Strengthened knowledge and technical capacities of government officials and civil society organisations to deliver, monitor and report on social protection programmes, with participation of training institutions and civil society.

Ethiopia: Consultative meeting for the preparation of the proposal



Annex 2: Research proposal

Annex 3: Summary table of content of Approach 1 project documents

Annex 4 : List of staff recruited under the SP&PFM programme (ILO)

Annexes 5 : Products from Approach 1 countries