



Joint Partnership on Social Protection

Consultative Meeting on Social Protection Floor

Bangkok, 10 August 2011

Background

Social protection in Thailand

Over the years, Thailand has put in place a range of social protection schemes, including a universal coverage scheme for health care introduced in 2002 and a universal social pension. However, Thai citizens still do not yet all effectively benefit from basic adequate social protection, while coverage of the informal sector remains low. In this context, the Royal Thai Government is considering an expansion of social welfare systems and is concentrating its efforts on developing a universal coherent social protection system by 2017. This system should provide lifetime protection to all. The system, in which all stakeholders will be involved (including government, private sector, communities, civil society) is expected to involve four pillars: (i) social services; (ii) social assistance; (iii) social insurance; and (iv) social promotion. The Ministry of Social Development and Human Security (MSDHS) is responsible for coordinating implementation.

Partnership on social protection between the Royal Thai Government (RTG) and the UN

The United Nations in Thailand is currently in the process of preparing its next United Nations Partnership Framework (UNPAF) with the Royal Thai Government for the period 2012-2016. This partnership will define strategic, upstream policy and capacity building contributions of the UN system in Thailand to support government's policy, notably in **the expansion of social protection to reach a just society** (a key component of the 11th National Economic and Social Development Plan (NESDP)).

Through a joint partnership on social protection, co-chaired by the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security (MSDHS) and the International Labour Office (ILO), the UN Resident Coordinator Office and the National Social and Economic Development Board (NESDB) hosted a Development Cooperation Seminar on the theme of "Social Protection: Towards Universal Coverage in Thailand" on 5 November 2010. The seminar brought together government officials, international development agencies, civil society groups, academics and other relevant experts to review the current social protection system in Thailand within the context of the international debate on the Social Protection Floor (SPF).



A number of policy recommendations for the expansion of social protection, with a focus on universal coverage of social protection and sustainability of the system, emerged from the seminar, including the conduct of a technical assessment to review the existing schemes offered in line with needs of targeted groups (effective coverage, adequacy of benefits, availability and quality of social services, efficiency of delivery, etc.) and the identification of policy priorities in order to extend coverage.

Social Protection Floor and Assessment Based National Dialogue

A Social Protection Floor is a set of basic social rights and services that each member of a society should enjoy. It promotes income security through a basic set of guarantees including: (i) all residents have access to a nationally/provincially defined set of affordable essential health care services; (ii) all children enjoy income security through transfers in kind or in cash ensuring access to nutrition, education and care; (iii) all those in active age groups who cannot (or should not, in case of pregnancy) earn a sufficient income enjoy a minimum income security through social transfers in cash or in kind or employment guaranteed schemes ; and (iv) all residents in old age and with disabilities have income security at least at the level of the nationally defined poverty line through pensions for old age and disability or transfers in kind.

The social protection floor framework can be used to describe existing schemes in place for each of the four basic guarantees mentioned above and identify the policy and implementation gaps if any, as well as stakeholders involved. This assessment helps draw recommendations for the further design and implementation of social protection provisions to reach at least the social protection floor for all the population. This assessment should be completed by a rapid costing exercise to estimate the cost of introducing these additional social protection provisions.

Assessing existing policies and programs as well as identifying policy gaps and implementation issues are key if we want to further design, implement and develop efficient and effective social protection programs in Thailand, and establish at least a social protection floor for all. The assessment also gives an opportunity to identify possible UN assistance to the RTG for the UNPAF with all stakeholders involved.

Objective of the workshop

Within this framework, the MSDHS in collaboration with the UN team on Social Protection Floor will organize a **one-day national technical workshop on the Social Protection Floor** to assess the existing social protection situation, identify suitable policy and programs that are required for the country in the future, and areas of partnership between key stakeholders and UN agencies.

Place and Time

The workshop will take place at (*place to be confirmed*) on **Wednesday 10 August 2011 from 8.30 to 17.00**



Agenda

No	Time	Agenda	PIC
1	0830-0900	Registration of participants	
2	0900-0930	Opening remarks	Deputy Permanent Secretary of MSDHS Mr Jiyuan Wang, Director, ILO Country Office for Thailand, Cambodia and Lao PDR
3	0930-0945	UNPAF process	Mrs Barbara Orlandini, UN Resident Coordinator Office
4	0945-1015	Social Protection Floor framework and assessment methodology	Ms. Valerie Schmitt, ILO
5	10.15-10.45	Presentation of the diagnosis part of the report on Universal Welfare System	Dr Somchai Jitsuchon (TDRI)
6	10.45-11.00	Coffee Break	
7	11.00-11.45	Preliminary Finding Social Protection Floor Assessment and Matrix	Ms. Celine Felix (ILO)
8	11.45-12.15	Open Discussion- To complete the assessment	UN SPF Team member
9	12.15-12.30	Explanation of the working group sessions (World Café)	Ms Jittima Srisuknam (ILO)
10	12.30-13.30	Lunch	
11	13.30-15.30	Working group discussion- Identifying policy gaps and implementation issues and Formulating recommendations	8 facilitators (UN SPF Team) in four groups (1 Thai speaking facilitator/group)
12	15.30-15.45	Coffee break	
13	15.45-17.00	Wrap up session: presentation of the main findings of the working groups	Facilitators of each group
14		Next steps: costing, final assessment, etc.	Mr. Andrew Claypole (UNICEF)

Participants

40 technical staff from relevant government and non-government institutions, and UN agencies who are dealing with social protection related programs and policies.